

Senari Massacre (1999)

The caste dispute between the MCC and the upper caste residents of the village is thought to have led to the Senari massacre. The MCC cadres rebelled mostly against the "Ranvir Sena," a militia that pretended to be a landlord organisation. The Laxmanpur-Bathe massacre in Jehanabad in 1997 is said to have involved the Ranvir Sena. In the Bihar area of Khagaria, where 16 OBC people perished, there was another caste slaughter in 2009.

Senari Massacre: Overview

On March 18, 1999, 34 upper-caste men were reportedly hauled out of their houses in the Senari village, located in the Jehanabad district, and were killed near the town temple by militants of the now-defunct MCC (Maoist Communist Centre).

The Maoists allegedly carried out the slaughter in retaliation for the Ranvir Sena, a private security force of upper-caste individuals, supposedly killing 56 Dalit individuals in Laxmanpur Bathe in the year 1996 and another 23 in Shankarbigha in the year 1999.

People from the upper castes, particularly the Ranvir Sena, were headed by Barmeshwar Mukhiya, who was imprisoned in 2012.

Senari Massacre: History

Between 1990 and 2000, Bihar saw nearly 400 individuals killed, including a number of police officers, in a dozen caste massacres. The MCC and upper caste private troops engaged in a brutal attrition war that led to these executions.

- One such atrocity was the "Laxmanpur-Bathe massacre" in Jehanabad in 1997, in which Ranvir Sena murdered 58 Dalits and OBCs. 16 OBC persons were murdered in Alauli, in the Bihar district of Khagaria, in October 2009, in what is considered to be the final significant caste massacre. Following these caste massacres, Left Wing Extremism gained ground in the state.
- The Senari Massacre resulted in far more high caste victims (34) than the massacre of the Dalelchak-Bhagora in Aurangabad in the year 1987, which slaughtered 42 upper caste individuals, mainly 21 from a single family.
- Brahmeshwar Singh, the Ranvir Sena's head or also known as the Mukhiya, was an upper-caste landowner from Bihar's Bhojpur area.
- He was a key figure in igniting the conflict between both the state's upper-caste landlords and landless Lower castes (Dalits). The Sena massacred about 1000 individuals under his command.
- Militia groups assumed the deaths were in revenge for Maoist murders. To defend their acts, the Sena claimed that the scheduled castes encouraged the Red terror.

Senari Massacre: Court Proceedings

For more than a decade, the continually extending verdicts in the court system and conferences across the nation were a source of stress. The court proceedings in the judiciary have been growing as a result of the growing population and, at the same time, an increase in the

awareness of genuine rights among residents. The court battle for the Senari Massacre has been a long one. The main points have been briefly explained below;

- On November 15, 2016, a Jehanabad court sentenced 11 defendants to death and three others to life in prison. The conviction was then contested in High Court by three of those found guilty.
- On May 21, 2021, the Patna High Court exonerated all 14 defendants. The Jehanabad court's decision was overturned by a division bench made up of Justices Ashwini Kumar Singh and Arvind Srivastava, who cited insufficient evidence.
- The Bihar administration will now make a compelling argument to the top court. The prosecution has presented 23 witnesses to the Supreme Court, including 13 eyewitnesses who have lost loved ones in the atrocity.

