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Centre signals no repeal of new farm laws, will make fresh proposals today

New Delhi: A select group of farmers' leaders who attended a meeting called by Union home minister Amit Shah late Tuesday said they will wait for the Centre's fresh proposals Wednesday on contentious farm laws and return to the negotiating table after deciding on their stance.

Following the late-evening meeting, the sixth round of talks between farmer leaders and the government scheduled for Wednesday has been cancelled, sources said. The government reportedly said that it will not repeal the laws.

Some 13 farmer leaders were called for the meeting that started after 8 pm.

Three Union ministers — Narendra Singh Tomar (agriculture), Piyush Goyal (food) and Som Parkash (commerce and industry),



Traffic near Mysore Bank Circle was diverted as farmers and netizens took out a rally during Tuesday's Bharat Bandh in Bengaluru. (P. Z.)

who have been leading the government's consultations with the agitating farmers — also attended the meeting. Sources said the participating farmer leaders included

Hannan Mollah of the All India Kisan Sabha and Rakesh Tikait of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU). AGENCIES

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Bharat bandh gets lukewarm response in states

The Bharat Bandh called on Tuesday in support of farmers got a lukewarm response across the country, with reports of disruptions to normal life from only a few states like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.

While there were no reports of violence in Punjab, movement of vehicles, including buses, was affected due to closure of roads at various places by farmers. Though government offices were open, attendance was thin as many of the employees joined the protest. Neighbouring Haryana remained peaceful. TNN

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Outfits divided over meeting with Amit Shah

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Details of the proposal were not known. However, the meeting appeared to have created discord among the organisations spearheading the protests on Delhi's borders for the past 12 days with the head of the BKU (Ugrahan), which is one of the largest outfits in the bloc, questioning the rationale of the talks a day before the scheduled official consultations.

In a social-media post, Joginder Singh Ugrahan, who was not invited to the meeting with Shah, said there was no need for the talks before official consultations and hoped that the leaders attending Tuesday's meet would keep in mind the view of the larger group.

Farmer leaders have been firm on their demand for repeal of three new farm laws enacted in September, which they claim will benefit corporates and end the mandi system and the minimum support price (MSP) regime.

Row erupts over Delhi CM's alleged house arrest

New Delhi: High drama was witnessed outside Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence on Tuesday after his deputy Manish Sisodia went there and accused the Delhi police of putting the former under house arrest. Police denied Kejriwal was under any kind of restraint. Sisodia along with hundreds of party workers assembled near the CM's residence and urged police to allow them to meet the chief minister. However, the Delhi police asked him to speak to the officer concerned.

An agitated Sisodia then asked from whom he needed permission. "A deputy CM wants to meet the chief minister and we are not allowed to go there," he told the Delhi police personnel deployed at the spot. The face-off at the residence of Kejriwal started after the Delhi police on Tuesday denied AAP claims that Kejriwal has been put under house arrest.

DCP North Anto Alphonse tweeted a picture of the



Delhi deputy CM Manish Sisodia along with other ministers and AAP workers outside Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's residence in New Delhi on Tuesday

chief minister's residence and said: "This claim of CM Delhi put in house arrest is incorrect. He exercises his right to free movement within the law of the land. A picture of the house entrance says it all."

Earlier in the day, AAP tweeted: "Delhi Police has put Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal under house arrest after he visited farmers at Singhu border yesterday."

Sisodia accused the Delhi

police of putting the AAP leader under house arrest as Kejriwal denied them the permission to convert nine stadiums in Delhi into temporary jails to lodged farmers in case they were arrested.

"The chief minister denied permission to convert stadiums into temporary jails for protesting farmers. Now, public is not being allowed to meet him. Does this mean he is under house arrest? Why are all these security personnel posted here?" He further said that the chief minister wants to meet these people (AAP workers) but the police is not allowing them. "This clearly means that he is under house arrest," he said.

During the day, hundreds of AAP leaders and supporters, including party MLAs, rallied at the ITO to demand that they be allowed to meet Kejriwal. As traffic flow was hampered in the area, police put up barricades to keep the protesters in check and diverted commuters on alternate routes. IANS

No party netas allowed to address farmers

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Neighbouring Haryana remained peaceful as farmers sat at various places on state and national highways carrying their tractor-trolleys and hookahs. No political leader was allowed to address the gathering of farmers. In Kaithal, farmers restrained senior Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala from addressing the gathering.

A 32-year-old farmer reportedly died on Tuesday near Sonipat border where farmers are camping for the protest. He reportedly died due to a heart attack while a 58-year-old died during a chakkajam on the Jind-Patiala national highway due to

In Kaithal, farmers restrained Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala from addressing the gathering

cardiac arrest. In Odisha, normal life was affected as offices, shops, commercial establishments remained largely closed in the forenoon. All state government offices were closed for the day. Buses remained off the road.

At least three trains got halted for around one hour in Bhubaneswar station as members of Left parties staged a symbolic rail roko. The bandh drew mixed response in Jharkhand despite the JMM-Congress-RJD coa-

lition government supporting it. Coalition leaders along with others from non-NDA parties hit the streets to enforce bandh.

In Rajasthan too, despite support from the Congress government, the bandh received mixed response in the state. However, Chhattisgarh, where the Congress and chief minister Bhupesh Baghel came out in support of the bandh, saw widespread impact of the bandh call. Business and establishments stayed shut till 2pm. Chhattisgarh Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the state chapter of Confederation of All India Traders extended support to bandh.

In Bihar, opposition party leaders and supporters

held demonstrations, put up road blockades and disrupted rail and road traffic across the state to register their protest. At some places like Ara in Bhojpur, Araria and Jehanabad, the bandh supporters clashed with the police. In Patna, protesters overpowered constables manning traffic, burnt the effigies of PM Narendra Modi and CM Nitish Kumar.

In western Uttar Pradesh, farmers blocked all major highways leading to Delhi, including Yamuna Expressway and NH2 in Mathura, Aligarh-Palwal road in Aligarh and Pilibhit-Basti national highway in Pilibhit on Tuesday, but allowed operation of all emergency services.