
India Court orders seizure of 'Offensive' MF Husain artworks



Published on January 22, 2025

Document Date: Fri, Jan 23 2026 12:13:05 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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A Delhi court has ordered the seizure of two paintings by legendary Indian artist MF Husain, following complaints that the works, which depicted Hindu deities alongside nude figures, “hurt religious sentiments.”

The Delhi Art Gallery (DAG), where the works were displayed as part of a retrospective exhibition,

maintains that the paintings were in line with artistic expression and denies any wrongdoing. The exhibition, “Husain: The Timeless Modernist,” ran from October 26 to December 14 and attracted significant attention, both positive and controversial.

The complainant, Amita Sachdeva, a lawyer, filed a police complaint after photographing the paintings at the gallery. She accused the gallery of not displaying the artworks as claimed and alleged the police had failed to file an adequate report. The court granted permission for the paintings’ seizure after the gallery’s CCTV footage was reviewed.

Husain, who passed away in 2011, was no stranger to controversy. His works, particularly those featuring nudity and depictions of Hindu gods, sparked outrage over the years. Despite facing numerous legal challenges and accusations of obscenity, Husain’s artistic legacy remains influential.

In 2006, Husain publicly apologized for his controversial “Mother India” painting and subsequently went into self-imposed exile, living in London until his death. His works continue to be valued highly in the art world, although they remain a source of tension in Indian society.