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Omar urges Cabinet...

& Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo; Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmad Rana; Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election, Javid Ahmad Dar; Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma; Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, and Administrative Secretaries were also present during the meeting.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo presented a detailed briefing, highlighting the notable achievements of various departments, the current status of ongoing projects, and the deadlines for completion of projects.

Discussions included future strategies to improve governance and enhance service delivery across Jammu & Kashmir.

The Chief Minister reiterated the necessity of adhering to deadlines and urged his cabinet colleagues to actively monitor and review the departments assigned to them.

"The reviews will provide us with a clear understanding of where we stand and help us move forward effectively," he stated.

Omar Abdullah further announced that his office would also begin reviewing other departments directly under his purview, ensuring comprehensive oversight of government functions.

"The government is committed to fostering a transparent and accountable administration, and it is vital that each department works in unison to deliver the benefits of development to the grassroots level," the Chief Minister added.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister personally visited the office chambers of his Cabinet colleagues in the Civil Secretariat here to congratulate them on formally assuming their respective duties. The Chief Minister extended his heartfelt congratulations to Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, and Cabinet Ministers Sakeena Itoo, Javed Ahmad Rana, Javid Ahmad Dar, Satish Sharma and Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani.

Accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, the Chief Minister expressed his confidence in the newly appointed ministers and Advisor, expressing hope that they would carry out their responsibilities diligently and contribute to the effective governance of the Union Territory.

He highlighted the importance of their roles in advancing the government's developmental agenda and ensuring the welfare of the people. The ministers, in turn, expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the Chief Minister's visit and his encouraging words. They reaffirmed their commitment to working collectively under his leadership to deliver on the promises made to the public.

PFI wanted to...

has attached fresh assets worth more than Rs 35 crore that are "beneficially-owned and controlled" by the PFI "in the name of various trusts, companies and individuals" as part of its ongoing probe against the outfit and entities linked to it.

The PFI was banned by the Centre in September 2022 after the ED, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and various state police forces carried out countrywide raids against its office-bearers and establishments.

The ED alleged that the real objectives of the PFI, formed in 2006 in Kerala but headquartered in Delhi, are "different" from the ones stated in its constitution.

"Real objectives of PFI include formation of an organisation for carrying out an Islamic movement in India through jihad, through PFI masquerades itself as a social movement.

"PFI claimed use of non-violent forms of protest but evidence reveals that the methods of protest employed by them are violent in nature," the agency alleged.

It described some of the methods of protest used by the outfit for the preparation of a "civil war" by creating unrest and strife in the society, through "non-violent air raids, guerrilla theatre (street plays on social and political issues), alternative communication systems (non-mainstream media outlets) etc.". It alleged that the PFI deployed some methods of cruelty and subjugation like haunting and taunting officials, fraternisation (establishing unethical relations or contacts), mock funerals, interdict (a strong prohibitory order), Lysistratie non-action or sexual abstinence.

The agency said the PFI undertook civil disobedience of laws, propounded dual sovereignty (holding more than one sovereign), creating parallel governments and disclosing identities of secret agents in order to "undermine" the unity and sovereignty of the country.

The outfit deployed tactics of "politically-motivated counterfeiting", "preclusive purchasing" (buying strategic commodities in global markets to prevent an opponent from purchasing those), non-violent land seizure, seizure of assets, "selective patronage", dumping (selling a commodity at a price lower than its market value to pressure an opponent) etc.

It has also been alleged by the ED that the PFI gave arms training under the garb of physical education classes, where they imparted "offensive and defensive" manoeuvres using different variations of blows, punches, kicks, knife and stick attacks. The outfit, according to the ED, was imparting "intensive" violent training to its cadre for attacks using punches, kicks, blows and also weapons like knives, sticks, sickles and swords. The PFI has also been charged with being "actively involved" in "inciting" violence and "fomenting trouble" during the February 2020 Delhi riots. It has also been alleged that PFI and CFI (Campus Front of India, the PFI's student wing) members visited Hathras in Uttar Pradesh a few years ago with an intent to disturb communal harmony, incite communal riots and spread terror.

The ED has alleged that the PFI had planned to form a "terrorist gang" by collecting deadly weapons and explosive devices to launch attacks on important and sensitive places and individuals with an intent to undermine India's unity, integrity and sovereignty, and disturb communal harmony.

The outfit has been accused of organising a training camp with an intent to cause disturbance during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Patna on July 12, 2022 and printing "incriminating" literature that had the potential to pose a threat to the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country.

It has been alleged that the PFI conspired and raised funds from within the country and abroad through banking channels, "hawala", donations etc. for "committing and financing" terror acts across India. "PFI had more than 13,000 active members in Singapore and Gulf countries, including Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

"PFI has formed well-defined district executive committees (DECs) for the non-resident Muslim diaspora living in the Gulf, which was tasked with collection of funds," the ED said.

The agency said it has seized assets worth a total Rs 61.72 crore as part of its probe, arrested 26 PFI members and filed nine chargesheets.

Modi proposes holding...

he said. Modi said at the conclave attended by 17 chief ministers and 18 deputy chief ministers from the BJP and its several allies that smooth governance, fast decision-making and transparency in governance have helped in attracting investors and investment in the states ruled by the NDA.

The NDA is fulfilling the rising aspirations of the common citizens and it has been the distinction of its government to

ensure the last mile delivery which has helped in building the trust in public towards the government since 2014, he said.

Modi dwelt on the concept of pro-people pro-active good governance (P2G2), stressing the need for greater interaction between all NDA-ruled states, as also among ministers and MLAs and advocated the use of social media for this.

The prime minister lauded the BJP's win in Haryana as significant and historic, saying the NDA has secured the trust and support of all sections of society.

The opposition, he said, tried to portray a false narrative of the NDA being anti-farmer whereas it was the farmers who came out in large numbers to support the ruling party. People gave a clear message that they stand with progress and the good governance agenda of the NDA.

He said good governance ultimately means finding solutions to people's problems, asserting that solution-centric governance with focus on grievance-redressal is a distinctive identity of all NDA state governments.

The statement said, "The prime minister complimented the gathering describing it as the largest group of non-Congress political parties post 1975. A total of 17 chief ministers and 18 deputy chief ministers participated in this conclave. The PM suggested that such meetings should be held twice every year."

A total of six resolutions were passed in the meeting, including Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's proposal on the celebration of 75 years of the making of Constitution of India as "Samvidhan ka Anruti Mahotsav" and Home Minister Amit Shah's proposal to observe 2025 as the 50th year of the "murder of democracy", a reference to Emergency.'

Andhra Pradesh CM and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu initiated the discussion on the concept of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and lauded Modi's initiatives.

Buoyed by its win in the Haryana assembly polls, where political experts were almost unanimous in projecting a win for the Congress, the BJP decided to hold the meeting of all NDA chief ministers, a first in many years, in the state where the ruling alliance leaders were invited to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new state government.

Following its relatively muted performance in the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP is looking to build on the political momentum generated by its win in Haryana ahead of the contest against the INDIA bloc in Maharashtra and Jharkhand assembly polls next month.

Two JKAS officers...

currently serving as Under Secretary in the Labour and Employment Department, will now assume the role of Additional Private Secretary to Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister," the order added.

Kejriwal Govt completely...

he added.

This failure, Chugh said, reflects the gross inefficiency of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPPC) and other agencies responsible for safeguarding the environment under the AAP regime.

He said despite the Delhi government's multiple action plans, the AAP has failed to improve sewage treatment and clean major drains. Their effectiveness remains highly questionable as pollution persists, he added.

Chugh remarked that the rising pollution demonstrates the AAP government's complete lack of commitment to protecting water resources and its inability to regulate industrial waste disposal effectively.

He emphasized that the presence of pollutants poses long-term environmental hazards, including serious health risks for both humans and aquatic life.

The AAP government's failure to implement proper regulations on these pollutants reveals a total disregard for public health, leaving Delhi's environment and future generations in jeopardy, he said.

Tarun Chugh said the AAP government, led by CM Atishi, should be held accountable for environmental mismanagement and failure to act on its promises.

He strongly condemned the government's inability to protect Delhi's natural resources and to provide a healthy living environment for its citizens. Immediate and decisive action is required to mitigate the damage caused, he said.

However, Chugh expressed doubts that such action would be taken under the current incompetent AAP leadership.

The BJP, he stated, remains committed to ensuring a cleaner and healthier future for Delhi's citizens-something the AAP government has clearly failed to deliver."

Tarun Chugh also criticized the performance of the Bhagwant Mann-led government.

He said that the central government provided financial support, amounting to approximately Rs 41,000 crores for paddy procurement. Despite this substantial funding, he said, the Punjab government has been accused of mismanagement and inefficiency, leading to failures in critical areas such as agriculture, infrastructure, and public services.

The assertion that Punjab is drowning in debt, with reports indicating a deficit of Rs 18,000 crores, underscores the economic distress faced by the state.

Chugh argued that instead of effectively utilizing central funds to enhance agricultural productivity and farmer welfare, the Maan-led government has struggled to deliver on its promises, exacerbating the financial burden on residents.

He added that both Punjab and Delhi governments are called out for a perceived lack of accountability and transparency. "The leadership has not adequately addressed the pressing issues faced by the populace, resulting in growing discontent among citizens. The inability to translate financial support into tangible benefits for the people raises questions about governance and priorities," Chugh said.

Infamous Gulmarg land Scam: HC transfers Challan from Barmulla to Srinagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a much publicized Gulmarg Land Scam, Justice Rajnesh Oswal of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court allowed the appeal filed by CBI and transferred the case from Special Judge Anticorruption Baramulla to Special Judge CBI Srinagar.

The applicant-Central Bureau of Investigation(CBI) has preferred this application for transfer of charge-sheet, titled, "VOK vs Mehboob Iqbal and others" pending before the court of learned Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Baramulla to the court of learned Special Judge (CBI), Srinagar, on the ground that pursuant to the directions issued by the High Court of J&K vide its order dated October 9, 2020 in PIL No.19/2011, titled, as "Prof. S. K. Bhalla vs State of J&K and others", the applicant had approached the court of learned Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Baramulla for providing original documents to the applicant for conducting further and thorough investigation and for transfer of the charge-sheet to the court of Special Judge (CBI), Srinagar.

Both the applications of the applicant were dismissed by the court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Baramulla vide order dated May 25, 2021 with the observation that the court cannot transfer the charge-sheet to the court of

coordinate jurisdiction and further no such direction for transfer of the charge-sheet to the court of Special Judge (CBI) Srinagar, has been issued by the High Court vide order dated October 9, 2020.

It is stated in the application that the supplementary charge-sheet, if any, is required to be filed before the designated court i.e. Special Judge (CBI) Srinagar as the matter has been further investigated by the applicant. It is further pleaded that supplementary charge-sheet is always filed before the court where the main charge-sheet is pending, therefore, the main charge sheet is required to be transferred to the designated court i.e. Special Judge (CBI) Srinagar.

Justice Rajnesh Oswal after hearing both the sides observed that in terms of the directions of the Division Bench of this Court, the applicant-CBI has been directed to conduct thorough investigation in all the cases wherein charge sheets have been filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau and if necessary, file additional charge sheets in those cases.

High Court further observed that this is an admitted fact that the charge sheet in the instant case is pending before the court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Baramulla and the said court has declined to transfer the

THRT delegation meets LG, urges for temple heritage restoration efforts

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant move to preserve the cultural and religious heritage of Jammu and Kashmir, Rahul Prashar, Founder of the Temple Heritage Restoration Trust (THRT), recently met with the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha.

The meeting centered on vital initiatives aimed at restoring and conserving ancient temples and cultural sites.

During the discussions, Prashar detailed the Trust's progress in temple restoration and emphasized the need for continued government collaboration.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed strong support for these initiatives, highlighting the critical role cultural



Temple Heritage Restoration Trust delegation calling on LG Manoj Sinha.

heritage plays in enhancing tourism and reinforcing the community's spiritual identity.

Additionally, Prashar had the privilege of engaging with Dr. Karan Singh, a prominent statesman and cultural ambassador known for his advocacy of heritage preservation.

In a separate meeting, G.

Kishan Reddy, the Union Minister of Culture, Tourism, and Development of the North Eastern Region, also expressed his support.

Minister Reddy discussed the potential for increased central funding for temple restoration projects, emphasizing how such efforts could elevate Jammu and Kashmir

as a premier heritage tourism destination.

"Our discussions with the LG Sinha, Dr. Karan Singh, and Minister Reddy have been incredibly productive," said Prashar.

"We are committed to creating a sustainable plan for preserving our temples, which will not only protect our spiritual heritage but also stimulate cultural tourism and foster socio-economic development in the region."

The Temple Heritage Restoration Trust continues its mission to restore and preserve the historic temples of Jammu and Kashmir, working alongside local communities, government bodies, and national leaders to ensure the future of these cultural treasures.

Bullet-riddled body found in Wachi Shopian

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A bullet-riddled body of a non-local man was on Friday recovered in Shopian district, officials said.

The body was recovered from Wachi area of Zainapora in the south Kashmir district, they said.

They said the body, apparently of a non-local, bore bullet injuries.

The body has been taken to a hospital for medico-legal formalities, the officials said, adding, an investigation has started.

Congress forms panel to asses poor performance in Assembly polls

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Congress on Friday constituted a high-powered fact-finding committee to ascertain the reasons behind its poor performance in the recent Assembly elections in the Union Territory, and suggest measures for strengthening the party in J-K.

A party spokesman said that J-K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq Hameed Karra constituted the seven-member committee in consul-

tation with the AICC leadership to analyse the reasons behind the Congress winning only a handful of seats in the elections and to suggest measures to strengthen the party organisation in J-K.

The panel headed by senior Congress leader Ravinder Sharma as its chairman includes Jehangir Mir, Naresh Gupta, Thakur Balwan Singh, Shah Mohammad Chowdhary, Ved Mahajan and Dina Nath Baghat as members, he said.

It is expected to submit a report of its findings within

30 days, the spokesman added.

Congress' poll performance hit an all-time low as only one of its 29 candidates managed to win in the Jammu region, while its prominent leaders, including two working presidents, lost the elections.

In all, the Congress, which contested the elections in an alliance with the National Conference that won 42 seats, managed just six seats -- five in the Valley and the lone seat in the Jammu division.

SC frames slew of guidelines to eradicate child marriages

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Terming the prevalence of "social evil" of child marriages as "sobering", the Supreme Court on Friday passed a slew of directions to the Centre, states and other authorities to eradicate the malaise.

In a 141-page judgment, a bench of Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, therefore, issued several directions to the stakeholders under nine heads, including for appointment of officers solely responsible for discharging the functions of Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO) at the district level in the country.

The court further said, "Child marriage is a social evil, and its commission is a criminal offence. Despite the near-universal agreement on the ills of child marriage, its commission and prevalence have been sobering. Child marriage is the phenomenon of children being married before they attain the minimum legal age under the law."

Dealing with the contentious issue whether the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 would prevail over personal laws governing marriage, it said the Centre had failed to provide conflicting judgements of various high courts on the issue as claimed.

"The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amending) Bill 2021 was introduced in Parliament on December 21, 2021. The Bill was referred for examination to the Department Related Standing Committee on education, women, children, youth and sports. The Bill sought to amend the PCMA to expressly state the overriding effect of the statute over various personal laws. The issue, therefore, is pending consideration before Parliament," said the bench.

Under the title of "Legal

Enforcement", the top court said, "State governments and Union Territories (UTs) must appoint officers solely responsible for discharging the functions of CMPO at the district level. These officers should not be burdened with additional duties that could impede their focus on preventing child marriage."

Observing the term child marriage was an "oxymoron", the bench said, "A child implies a person whose capacity to make legal decisions is not fully developed. On the other hand, marriage is an institution with legal standing... Marriage dictates the framework rules of permissible and impermissible social behaviours. However, a child is incapable of understanding the broad and serious obligations expected from members of a marital union."

Such marriages often deprive children of intellectual, social and psychological development and carry life-threatening risks, it underscored.

The top court opined child marriages needed an intersectional approach towards the vulnerabilities experienced by children, especially girls from marginalised communities.

"Intersectionality involves considering factors like gender, caste, socioeconomic status, and geography, which often increase the risks of early marriage. Preventive strategies should therefore be tailored to the unique needs of various communities and focus on addressing the root causes of child marriage, such as poverty, gender inequality, lack of education, and entrenched cultural practices," it said.

Framing guidelines, it said these would prioritise "prevention before protection and protection before penalisation" as it was cognisant of the impact that criminalisation has on families and communities.

"To ensure effective use of penal provisions in the PCMA, it is imperative that there is widespread awareness and education about child marriage and the legal consequences of its commission," the bench said, adding it should not be understood to discourage prosecution of those who commit illegal acts.

It directed the ministries of Women and Child Development and Home in states and UTs to conduct quarterly performance reviews of CMPOs and law enforcement agencies to assess the effectiveness of child marriage prevention initiatives and response times besides outcomes of a reported case.

It fixed the district-level responsibility for prevention of child marriages and said, "In addition to the mandate of the CMPO ...the collectors and superintendents of police in each district across India shall also be responsible for actively preventing child marriages within their districts."

The top court further ordered the establishment of a specialised police unit to stop child marriages.

"Recognising the sensitivity and unique aspects of child marriage cases, a specialised police unit is deemed essential. The state Ministries of Home Affairs shall consider the viability of integrating the Special Juvenile Police Unit into the child marriage prevention framework," directed the apex court.

It also empowered magistrates to take suo-motu action and issue preventive orders under the title "Judicial Measures".

Strict disciplinary and legal action was directed to be taken against any public servant found to be in deliberate neglect of duty concerning child marriage cases.

The verdict came on a PIL seeking stronger enforcement mechanisms to curb child marriages.

Government at Srinagar:

The contention raised by the private respondents that the order pursuant to which the further investigation was conducted by the applicant is under review before the Division Bench of this Court as such, proceedings in the present application deserve to be deferred till the decision of the review by the Division Bench, is misconceived and as such, the same is rejected. If the proceedings are deferred, it would delay the disposal of the charge sheet. The judgment relied upon by the learned senior counsel does not lay down any law so far as the present case is concerned.

In view of the above this Court of the considered view that the charge sheet, titled, "VOK vs. Mehboob Iqbal and others" pending before the Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Baramulla is required to be transferred to the court of Special Judge, CBI, Srinagar.

The Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Baramulla is directed to transmit the record of the charge sheet to the court of Special Judge CBI Srinagar forthwith.

The parties to appear before the transferee court on November 18, 2024. Court further observed that the CBI shall be at liberty to file supplementary charge sheet before the transferee court i.e. Special Judge CBI, Srinagar.