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(raising funds for terrorist act) of the UAPA.

During the hearing, Malik contended he had given up violence in the year 1994.

After the ceasefire in the year 1994, he had declared that he would follow the peaceful path of Mahatma Gandhi and engage in a non-violent political struggle. He has further contended that since then there is no evidence against him that in the last 28 years he had provided any hideout to any militant or had provided any logistic support to any terrorist organisation, the court noted from Malik's submission.

Malik told the court he had met all the prime ministers since the time of V P Singh till Atal Bihari Vajpayee who engaged with him and gave him a political platform.

Government of India had provided him all the platforms to express his opinion in India as well as outside, and government cannot be considered to be a fool to give an opportunity to a person who was engaged in terrorist acts. He has further contended that it has been alleged that he was engaged in acts of violence in the valley post the killing of Burhan Wani.

"However; immediately after the death of Burhan Wani, he was arrested and remained in custody till November 2016. Therefore, he could not have engaged in violent protests, the judge said.

On NIA's submission that Malik was responsible for the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits and their exodus, the judge said since the issue is not before the court and has not been adjudicated upon it cannot allow itself to be swayed by the argument.

I accordingly find that this case does not call for awarding death sentence as demanded, the judge said, rejecting NIA's plea for awarding Malik capital punishment.

On Malik's submission that he gave up the gun in 1994 and, thereafter, he was recognised as a legitimate political player, the judge said, In my opinion, there was no reformation of this convict.

It may be correct that the convict may have given up the gun in the year 1994, but he had never expressed any regret for the violence he had committed prior to the year 1994.

"It is to be noticed that, when he claimed to have given up the path of violence after the year 1994, the government of India took it upon its face value and gave him an opportunity to reform, and in good faith, tried to engage in a meaningful dialogue with him, and as admitted by him, gave him every platform to express his opinion, the judge said.

However, the convict did not desist from violence, he noted.

Rather betraying the good intentions of government he took a different path to orchestrate violence in the guise of political struggle. The convict has claimed that he had followed Gandhian principle of non-violence and was spearheading a peaceful non-violent struggle.

"However; the evidence on the basis of which charges were framed and to which convict has pleaded guilty, speaks otherwise, the judge noted.

The entire movement, he said, was planned to be violent.

I must observe here that the convict cannot invoke the Mahatma and claim to be his follower because in Mahatma Gandhi's principles there was no place for violence, howsoever high the objective might be. It only took one small incident of violence at Chauri Chaura for the Mahatma to call off the entire non-cooperation movement," the judge said.

He noted that Malik, despite the large-scale of violence engulfing the valley, neither condemned it nor withdrew his calendar of protest.

The judge said, in the present case, the primary consideration for awarding sentence should be that it should serve as deterrence for those who seek to follow a similar path.

The court awarded Malik 10 year jail term each under sections 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 121-A (conspiracy to wage war against the government of India) of IPC and sections 15 (terrorism), 18 (conspiracy for terrorism) and 20 (being member of terror organisation) of UAPA.

It also awarded five year jail term each under sections 13 (unlawful act), 38 (offence related to membership of terrorism) and 39 (support given to terrorism) of UAPA.

All the sentences will run concurrently.

The court premises was under heavy security blanket through the day, with police and paramilitary forces standing guard.

Before Malik was brought into the court, personnel from the NIA, the anti-terror federal agency, pressed into service sniffer dogs and conducted a thermal scanning.

After the pronouncement of the sentence, a group of people raised the Indian tricolour and shouted slogans against Malik outside the court premises.

Parts of Srinagar observed a shutdown ahead of the court's order.

Most of the shops and business establishments in Maisuma and adjoining areas, including some in Lal Chowk, were shut. Shops in some areas of the old city were also closed, but public transport was normal.

Clashes erupted between supporters of Malik, the JKLF chairman, and security forces in Maisuma locality in Srinagar.

Life comes full...

daughter, had announced Gandhian way of protest after his release and was perceived to be a moderate voice in the separatist camp.

He was arrested in early 2019 in connection with a 2017 terror-funding case registered by National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Born on March 3, 1966 in Maisuma locality in the heart of Srinagar, Malik is also facing trial in the much-publicized abduction case of Rubaiya Sayeed, daughter of the then Union home minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in 1989, and an attack by JKLF militants on LAF personnel in Srinagar that left four dead and many others injured in 1990.

Malik started his anti-national activities at a very young age in 1980s when he formed Tala party which was involved in an attempt to disrupt the 1983 cricket match between India and West Indies in the Shere-e-Kashmir Stadium in Srinagar besides staging a protest against the hanging of JKLF founder Mohammad Maqbool Bhat in Delhi's Tihar Jail on February 11, 1984.

After undergoing detention for months together on different occasions, Malik's activities increased after his Tala party was renamed as Islamic Students League (ISL) that campaigned vigorously for Muslim United Front (MUF) candidates in the 1987 assembly elections.

The MUF candidates including Mohammad Yousuf Shah lost the elections amid allegations of mass rigging. Shah alias Syed Sallabuddin is now the supreme commander of banned Hizbul Mujahideen based in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Both Shah and Malik were prominent faces among many others arrested for several months in the aftermath of the elections without a formal charge.

After his release, Malik was among the first batch of youths who crossed the Line of Control (LoC) into PoK for arms training in 1988 to join JKLF.

Malik along with Hameed Sheikh, Ashfaq Wani and Javed Mir formed the core group of the JKLF. While Wani died in a gunfight with security forces in March 1990, Malik was captured in an injured condition in August 1990 and remained imprisoned till May 1994. Sheikh and six other JKLF militants were killed at Ali Kadal in downtown Srinagar on November 19, 1992, while Mir is now heading a separate faction of JKLF.

After his release on bail in May 1994, Malik declared an indefinite unilateral ceasefire to follow non-violent struggle for so-called "independence" of Jammu and Kashmir from both India and Pakistan.

Pakistan-based JKLF founder Amanullah Khan removed Malik as the president of the party in 1995. However, Malik in return expelled Khan from the chairmanship and enjoyed support from his party colleagues in Pakistan and abroad.

He joined as a member of the powerful executive body of Hurriyat Conference, an amalgam of various separatist organisations, which was formed in 1993 but adopted a neutral stance when the conglomerate split between hardliners and moderates in September 2003.

He married Mushtaq Hussain Mullaik, an alumnus of the London School of Economics (LSE), in 2009 and the couple has a 10-year-old daughter, Razia Sultana, who lives with her mother in Pakistan.

Malik had an opportunity to meet world leaders including former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and also visited the US for medical treatment in 2001.

His sharing a dais with banned Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed at a protest in Islamabad in February 2013 against the hanging of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru was widely condemned in India.

He was also part of separatist leaders who visited PoK aboard 'Karvan-e-Aman' (peace caravan), a bus service started as a confidence building measure between the two divided parts of India and Pakistan on April 7, 2005.

Malik, who actively campaigned for boycott of elections, was arrested in 1999 under Public Safety Act (PSA) and released in 2002.

He was also in limelight for a campaign by his group, known as 'Safar-i-Azadi' (journey of freedom), in 2007 to garner support for the right of self-determination for the people in Jammu and Kashmir.

Govt job given...

grenade attack victim, and handed over the appointment letter to his daughter Shivani Kumari under SRO 43, an official said.

Earlier, Kundal had provided ex-gratia assistance of Rs 1 lakh to Singh's family.

The official said the district administration is in constant touch with the victim's family for any kind of assistance.

On May 17, a burqa-clad terrorist walked up to a newly-opened wine shop at Dewan Bagh in Baramulla and dropped a grenade inside through the porthole window, causing an explosion that killed Singh and left three others injured.

The grenade attack case was solved by police within 48 hours with the arrest of four Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists and a terror associate.

Newborn, found alive...

6.30 am at the neonatal intensive care unit.

She was found alive after her family had been forced to dig up her grave when local people in Hollan village objected to her burial at their graveyard.

The baby was admitted to the Srinagar hospital on Monday soon after she was found breathing, Choudhary told PTI.

"She was a premature baby, had low birth weight with respiratory distress and was admitted in the ICU at the hospital," he said.

The baby belonged to Basharat Ahmad Gujjar and Shameema Begum, who had a normal delivery on Monday morning at the sub-district hospital in Banihal, Jammu.

The baby was declared dead after being born, following which her family decided to bury her at Hollan village.

However, when they were returning to the hospital, local people objected to the burial, forcing the family to dig out the grave nearly an hour later.

When the baby was taken out of the grave, she was found to be alive, and the family rushed her to the medical facility, from where she was referred to Srinagar for specialised treatment.

The incident sparked protests by the family and others inside the hospital complex against the "non-professional attitude of the doctors and the hospital staff".

Banihal Block Medical Officer Dr Rabia Khan said an inquiry has been ordered into the incident.

"We have already placed a junior staff nurse and sweeper working in the gynaecology section under suspension with immediate effect, pending an inquiry," she said.

Station House Officer of Banihal police station Muneer Ahmad Khan said an open FIR under relevant sections of the law has already been registered in connection with the incident.

"We are awaiting for the outcome of the investigation ordered by the government and will act accordingly," he said.

The Directorate of Health Services, Jammu, had on Tuesday constituted a four-member panel to probe a complaint against the Banihal community health centre where the newborn was allegedly wrongly declared dead just after her birth.

Headed by Sanjay Turkey, Assistant Director (Schemes), DHS Jammu, the committee has been asked to submit its report within two days.

3 Pakistani JeM...

neutralise Pakistani terrorists", Kumar added.

The IGP paid rich tributes to the martyr Mudasir Ahmad for his supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

Asked about the Tuesday's attack in Soura area of the city in which a cop was killed, while his daughter injured, the IGP said two local terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) behind the attack have been identified.

Adil from Ganderbal, a local commander of TRF/LeT, and another newly-recruited terrorist, are behind the killing. We will neutralise them soon, he said.

He said the slain cop's daughter was undergoing treatment at a hospital, but her condition is stable.

Appealing to the society to condemn such attacks, Kumar said the time has come even for the families of terrorists to come out on the roads and raise their voice against terrorism.

In order to pay honour and respect to martyr Mudasir Ahmad Sheikh, a wreath laying ceremony was held at District Police Lines, Baramulla. Civil, CAPFs and Police officers led by IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar laid floral wreaths on the mortal remains and paid rich tributes to the martyr for his supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. Besides, DIG NKR Baramulla Udaya Bhaskar Billa, Commander 10 Sector RR Alok Dass, DIG CRPF NKOR Baramulla Anvesh Sirohi, SSP Baramulla Rayees Mohammad Bhat, CO 52RR, CO 53Bn CRPF and other officers and officials of Police and Security forces also paid rich floral tributes to the martyr.

1,500 girl students...

by the upGrad Foundation for enabling positive career outcomes for the learners. The initiative will educate and empower female learners coming from underserved sections and marginalised backgrounds and connect them with role models to guide and inspire them to follow in their footsteps. It will also provide 70 per cent scholarship for reputed PG courses in Management and Executive PG programme in Human Resource Management.

While access to Higher Education and focus on skills are among the major goals of the National Education Policy 2020, substantially increasing the number of youths with relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship will also significantly contribute towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030.

With females being hit the hardest by the pandemic, the girl students especially in remote areas were facing challenges in terms of higher education and employment. The support of the upGrad Foundation in getting women learners to access the mainstream job market through digitization and upskilling will be a tremendous boost. The said initiative is initially being introduced in 16 colleges but can be expanded later on.

This is one of the many initiatives of the Higher Education Department to improve access to quality education, skills and knowledge to remote and distant areas and especially to girl children. The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Rohtak is already running an Entrepreneurial Internship programme focused on women learners for Jammu and Kashmir.

The department too is also promoting skilling initiatives on a large scale and has integrated skill education seamlessly with mainstream education. Add on skill courses will now be offered as 30 credit integrated courses in 12+18 format wherein 12 credits will be either embedded or as add on component while as 18 credits will be offered as Skill training by respective Sector Skill Councils under the certification of NSDC. Infrastructure in the HEIs has been created in a Skill development infrastructure in the Higher Educational Institutions of J&K has been created in a Hub and Spoke Model and 15 Hub and 75 Spoke centers stand already established with a seed money of Rs. 10.00 Crore. The domains offered include Electronics, Computers & IT, Horticulture, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Paramedical, Food Science Technology, Fashion Technology, Epicure, Sericulture, Veterinary Sciences, Financial Management, Engineering, etc.

The department is also planning to set up 15 centres for Innovation and Incubation to encourage start ups and help incubate promising ideas. It is also setting up Research and Innovation hubs in colleges and designating universities as mentor institutions to create an ecosystem of research and innovation.

Woman 'TV artist'...

Investigation is in progress and officers continue to work to establish the full circumstances of this terror crime.

The area has been cordoned off and a hunt has been launched to nab the terrorists.

J&K received investment...

linked incentive and working capital interest subvention.

Moreover, in order to boost industrial development in UT, the government of J&K has also notified the J&K Industrial Policy, J&K Private Industrial Estate Development Policy and J&K Industrial Land Allotment Policy, the spokesman said.

Jammu and Kashmir had signed six agreements that will bring investments in the Union Territory's real estate, infrastructure, tourism, healthcare and manpower employment sectors among others at Dubai Expo 2020, he said.

The spokesman said several UAE-based businesses signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Jammu & Kashmir which included Al Maya Group, MATU Investments LLC, GL Employment Brokerage LLC, Century Financial, and Noon E-commerce. One Letter of Intent (LOI) was signed with Magna Waves Private Limited, Emaar Group and Lulu International.

For economic empowerment of Jammu and Kashmir; a 36-member business delegation from the UAE visited Kashmir the valley to explore business opportunities.

Yasin Malik punished...

He criticised mainstream leaders from Jammu and Kashmir; including former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti and said they are sympathizing with Malik, ignoring the fact that the terrorists were involved in killings of a large number of innocent Muslims, besides minority community members.

Raina said the police will take care of those who have come on the roads in Srinagar to protest the court verdict against Malik.

Meanwhile, Nirmal Khanna, wife of slain Indian Air Force squadron leader Ravi Khanna, also welcomed the court verdict against Malik and said she is patiently waiting for the court decision in her case against the JKLF chief.

Raina was among four IAF personnel who were killed in a terror attack in Srinagar in January 1990 and Malik is one of the accused facing trial in the case.

The case will come up for hearing in July. I have been waiting for justice for the past 32 years. I want blood for blood in this case, Nirmal told reporters at her residence here.

Congratulating the people for the court verdict against Malik, she said it is better late than never. He got the sentence in one case and cannot escape punishment in other cases as well. We should all wait for the court decision.

The wife of slain IAF officer said she is sure that she will get justice from the court.

She also said some people might have got relief over the life sentence awarded to Malik but I am not at peace as I have pledged to myself that I will fight my case till the last breath and ensure that justice is done.

She thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah and said, The previous governments were not willing to proceed against them (separatists). I am sure this government will overcome the shortcomings in the laws to avoid delay in providing justice to the victims.

In a related development, Shiv Sena Dogra Front (SSDF) activists led by Ashok Gupta burst crackers and beat the drums to celebrate the court verdict against Malik in the old city here.

The NIA court by awarding life sentence to Malik conveyed a message that terrorism will not be tolerated. No one will ever think of becoming a terrorist, Gupta said, expressing confidence that the BJP-led government at the Centre and Lt Governor-led administration in

Jammu and Kashmir will wipe out terrorism from the Union territory.

'Govt on course...

also said the divestment of BPCL is also on the card and fresh bids will be invited.

The government had to cancel the sale as only a single bidder was left in the fray, sources said.

The government had planned to sell its entire 52.98 per cent stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and invited Expression of Interest from bidders in March 2020. At least three bids came in by November 2020 but only one remains now after the others withdrew from the race.

On the strategic sale of Container Corporation of India (Concor), sources said, there are some issues and the process would be undertaken after those are resolved.

The Cabinet, in November 2019, had approved the strategic sale of a 30.8 per cent stake, along with management control, in Concor out of the government equity of 54.80 per cent. The government will retain 24 per cent stake post-sell-off but without any veto powers.

The government think-tank NITI Aayog has already suggested two banks and one insurance company to the Core Group of Secretaries on Disinvestment for privatisation.