

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Over 25.78 lakh...

total of 7,76,674 registered voters, including 3,87,722 males, 3,88,922 females, and 30 transgender voters across eight Assembly constituencies. A total of 932 polling stations are spread across these constituencies, ensuring that every registered voter has opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

The Rajouri has 4,92,008 electorates which includes 2,56,215 males, 2,35,786 females, and 7 transgender voters. A comprehensive network of 745 polling stations has been established across the district.

The Budgam District has a total of 5,11,864 voters across its five Assembly constituencies; 2,59,688 male voters, 2,52,163 female voters, and 13 transgender voters. A total of 639 polling stations are spread across the District, ensuring that every registered voter has the opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

Poonch District is divided into three Assembly constituencies, with a total of 3,52,330 registered voters; 1,80,584 males and 1,71,746 females. To facilitate the voting process, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has established 483 polling stations across these constituencies.

The Reasi district has registered a total of 2,37,205 voters, including 1,24,359 males, 1,12,843 females, and 3 transgender across its three Assembly constituencies. ECI has established 436 polling stations throughout the district.

The Ganderbal district has 2,08,018 registered voters, including 1,04,162 male and 1,03,856 female voters. A comprehensive network of 267 polling stations has been established by the ECI for free, fair and transparent elections.

To facilitate the voters for smooth and hassle free electoral participation, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has established 3502 polling stations with 100% webcasting across 26 Assembly Constituencies. These include 1056 Urban Polling stations and 2446 Rural Polling stations.

To enhance voter participation, 157 Special polling stations have been established in second phase including 26 polling booths managed by women as Pink Polling Stations, 26 polling stations manned by specially abled persons, 26 polling stations manned by youths, 31 Border polling stations, 26 green polling stations and 22 Unique Polling stations.

The voting will take place from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm.

Maharaja Hari Singh...

way the rest of the country did.

"Even today the Abdullah family and the Congress family of Nehru have joined hands to set the J&K on fire", he added.

Chugh said the way it has been established that the Abdullah family and the Nehru family is on the same page with Pakistan clearly demonstrates that the devious design against India still continues even after 70 years.

He said Rahul Gandhi and Omar Abdullah are speaking the same language to hoodwink the J&K people the way Pt Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah had done in the past.

"The Abdullahs and the Gandhis are only trying to make the nefarious designs of Pakistan a big success, to fool the people of J&K for their vested political interests," Chugh added.

He said the people of J&K would make the Abdullah family lick the dust this time in the elections for all their anti-national plots and designs.

If Abdullah and Congress are on the same page with Pakistan the people of J&K are on the same page with India as a nation, he added.

Ensuring transparency in...

Meanwhile, 20 employees have been shifted out of the offices where they were posted and attached with other offices to ensure that they do not indulge in such behaviour which raises suspicion of their involvement in campaigning or favouring any particular party/candidate.

The CEO further informed that notices have been issued to 15 employees against whom the complaints of involvement in campaigning have been received and their cases are under investigation. Besides, about 51 complaints have been closed as the detailed inquiry proved that they were not involved in political campaigning.

I fought against...

He assured the residents of Ganderbal that his party remains committed to advancing development initiatives in the area. "We will do more for the development of Ganderbal," he said.

Azad also addressed critical employment issues in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that the current government's policies have marginalised local residents. He pointed out that outside contractors dominate the sand industry, leaving locals without jobs and economic opportunities.

"Our youth are facing dire circumstances, with many turning to drugs due to a lack of employment," Azad stated.

"If elected I will introduce legislation to ensure that only locals can buy land and secure jobs in our region", he said.

Azad also promised free electricity for the poor, and said while some areas still lack power.

"I've only had two and a half years to make a difference. Given another chance, we'll focus on more development. People are upset because their rights have been snatched and we will fight for your rights, including statehood. Our party is democratic and progressive, believing in opportunities for common and young leaders not my own children. We want to empower common people to contest and be the true voice of the people. Our agenda is progress and peace; no false promises, only commitments we can fulfil", he added.

Uncle pitted against nephew in Gujjar bastion

STATE TIMES NEWS

BUDHAL: Known as the heartland of Gujjars, the Budhal assembly seat in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district is witnessing a direct fight between BJP's Choudhary Zulfikar Ali and his nephew and NC candidate Javid Iqbal Choudhary.

Ali is a former two-time MLA and ex-minister, while Choudhary has served as Block Development Council (BDC) member and chairman.

The Budhal seat, reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (ST) community, is one of the 26 constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir set to go to the polls in the second phase on September 25.

"Although it is a four-cornered contest involving the BJP, NC, PDP, and BSP candidates, it is essentially a direct fight between Choudhary Zulfikar Ali of the BJP and his nephew Javed Iqbal Choudhary of the NC. It is a tough contest," political expert Vikas Kumar said.

Ali, a veteran Gujjar politician, has contested elections from the region three times, winning twice in 2008 and 2014 from the erstwhile Darhal seat, and has served as a minister in the BJP-PDP coalition government. He joined the BJP in August this year.

"I have always worked for the people, and my experience speaks for itself. I am confident I will win, and the BJP will form the government," Ali said, praising the saffron party for securing long-sought ST reservation for Gujjars and Bakervals.

Choudhary is determined to challenge his uncle.

Motorcycle theft case solved, 2 thieves arrested, stolen property recovered

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Monday solved a theft case by arresting two thieves and recovered stolen property.

As per details, On September 19, 2024, a written complaint was lodged by Pritam Sharma, son of Suram Chand, resident of Jagir Gordi Udhampur A/P H.no 105 Lane no 07 Bhawani Nagar Talab Tillo Jammu, regarding the theft of his Motorcycle Bullet bearing registration No JK14 E- 7704 by some unknown thieves from Rehari Chungi Jammu.

On receiving the complaint case FIR No. 112/2024 U/S 303 (2) BNS was registered in PS Pacea Danga Jammu and investigation was started. A special team was constituted by SP City North to trace out accused, led by SHO P/S Pacea Danga and assisted by I/C PP Rehari Shah under the close supervision of SDPO City North Jammu did strenuous efforts and with the help of various CCTV footages of the area finally rounded up two suspect namely Dheeraj Singh alias Kaka, son of Deepak Singh, resident of H.no 126 Kanji House upper Gumat Jammu A/P Gadar Galian Dhrav Miran Sahib and Happy kumar alias Pappi, son of Babu Ram, resident of H.no 23 Chatha Satwari upon whom disclosure motorcycle bearing registration no JK14E-7704 has been recovered and seized in the instant case.

Police rescues 5 bovines

STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Under the overall supervision of SSP Poonch Sh Muntaz Mir, Poonch Police has today foiled bovine smuggling attempt in the jurisdiction of Police Station Surankote, and has arrested one bovine smuggler, rescued 05 bovines and seized vehicle used in the illegal transportation of bovines.

A Police team of Police Post Behrangala during vehicle checking at naka Chandimarh , intercepted a Tata Mobile bearing registration number JK11F 2892 for routine checking. During frisking of the vehicle, 06 bovines were found laden inside the vehicle which were being transported illegally without any valid permission.

During the course of investigation, police party headed by IC PP Behrangala under the close supervision of SHO Surankote has arrested the bovine smuggler(Driver) identified as Shah Baz Ali, son of Talib Hussain, resident of Dhar Sakri Rajouri and the vehicle has also been seized.

A case FIR No. 218/2024 u/s 223 BNS has been registered at Police Station Surankote and investigation started.

Crackdown on illegal mining, 4 vehicles seized

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a drive against illegal mining and to tighten

Modi urges global tech CEOs to be part of India growth story

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged CEOs of US majors to take advantage of India's growth story as the country is making all efforts to become the third largest economy of the world in his third term.

India is currently the fifth largest economy of the world after the US, China, Germany and Japan with a GDP of around USD 3.9 trillion. India has been the fastest growing large economies of the world with GDP growth rate of over 7 per cent for the last three consecutive years.

Addressing CEOs of the large US tech firms on Sunday, Modi said India will make every effort to become the third largest economy in the world in his third term (2024-29).

Companies should take advantage of India's growth story for collaboration and innovation by co-developing, co-designing, and co-producing in India for the world, harnessing the opportunities from the country's economic and technological growth, he said.

Assuring the business leaders of India's deep commitment to the protection of intellectual property and to fostering tech innovation, Modi highlighted the economic transformation happening in the country, particularly in electronics and information technology manufacturing and semiconductors.

Modi asserted that his government was committed to making India a "global hub of semiconductor manufacturing".

The meeting took place at the Lotte New York Palace Hotel on Sunday during the second leg of Modi's three-day US visit. It saw the participation of CEOs of 15 major US-based firms working on cutting-edge technologies such as AI, quantum computing and semiconductors.

"Had a fruitful roundtable with tech CEOs in New York, discussing aspects relating to technology, innovation and more. Also highlighted the strides made by India in this field. I am glad to see immense optimism towards India," Modi said in a post on X.

During the conference, Modi said technology collaboration and efforts such as the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (ICET) lie at the core of the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, according to a Ministry of External Affairs press release.

Organised by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) School of Engineering, the CEOs of top US tech firms, including Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayana, Accenture CEO Julie Sweet and NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang attended the meeting.

Others who participated in the roundtable included AMD CEO Lisa Su, HP Inc. CEO Enrique Lores, IBM CEO Arvind Krishna, Dr Nouraf Afeyan, Chairman of Moderna, and Verizon CEO Hans Vestberg.

Modi also talked about India's BIO E3 (biotechnology for environment, economy and employment) policy to develop the country into a biotech powerhouse and on the

topic of AI, noted that India's policy is to promote AI for all, underpinned by its ethical and responsible use.

The CEOs appreciated India's growing prominence as a global technology hub, driven by its innovation-friendly policies and flourishing market opportunities. They also expressed strong interest in investing and collaborating with India, agreeing that investing in startups would be a synergistic opportunity to innovate and develop newer technologies in the country.

Others who attended the conference included Biogen Inc CEO Chris Viehbach, CEO of Bristol Myers Squibb, Chris Boerner, Eli Lilly and Company CEO David A. Ricks, LAM Research CEO Tim Areher, GlobalFoundries CEO Thomas Caulfield, and the CEO of Kyndryl, Martin Schroeter.

"Further cementing technology and business connect. PM @narendramodi interacted with the top tech leaders and CEOs of USA, in a Roundtable hosted by the

noose against the violators, especially during election period, Jammu Police has initiated strict action against the criminals involved in illegal mining & minting money out of the public resources. In an operation which was carried out at different locations in South Zone of District Jammu, PP Phallain Mandal under PSI Harish Chander detained 03 vehicles loaded with sand seized under illegal mining. It is important to note that some vehicles had no registration number on them. On other hand, PP Nehru Market under PSI Ajesh Jamwal seized 01 truck/dumper. In all, 03 vehicles have been seized in jurisdiction of PS Satwari and 01 vehicle has been seized under jurisdiction of PS Gandhinagar of South Zone by JKP. After detaining of these vehicles District Mining Officer was informed for necessary legal actions.

BSF destroys rusted mine in controlled explosion in Samba

STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA/JAMMU: The Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday destroyed a rusted anti-tank mine found on the banks of a river in Samba district, officials said. The mine was detected by a BSF patrolling party on the banks of the Basantar river between Ballhar and Kamour border outposts around 11 am, they said. The area was cordoned off and experts from the bomb disposal squad destroyed the mine in a controlled explosion without causing any damage, according to the officials.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology School of Engineering, in New York today. PM emphasised India's growth prospects and discussed initiatives to foster collaborations and innovation across diverse sectors," the official account of the MEA said in a post on X.

The prime minister had a separate meeting with Krishna P Singh, CEO of Holtec International, which is into nuclear and solar power generation.

They discussed Holtec's plan for expanding manufacturing in India and advancing energy cooperation, PMO India said in a post on X.

Earlier on Sunday, Modi addressed the Indian diaspora at the packed Nassau Veterans Coliseum on Long Island in New York. He also held bilateral meetings with world leaders at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session here.

Modi reached New York on Saturday after attending the Quad Leaders' Summit hosted by President Joe Biden in Wilmington, Delaware.

Mere possession of child pornographic materials constitutes offences under POCSO, IT laws: SC

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: In a path-breaking judgment, the Supreme Court on Monday held mere possession of any child pornographic material will constitute offences under the POCSO and the IT laws even if they are not disseminated further.

Observing that "sexual exploitation of children is a pervasive and deeply rooted issue that has plagued societies worldwide and has been a matter of serious concern in India", the top court termed as "egregious" the verdict of the Madras High Court on the issue and set it aside.

On January 11, the high court had quashed the criminal proceedings against a 28-year-old man charged with downloading pornographic content involving children on his mobile phone, saying mere possession and downloading of such pornographic materials did not constitute offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Information Technology (IT) Act.

"We have reached the conclusion that the High Court committed an egregious error in passing the impugned judgment. We are left with no other option but to set aside the impugned judgment... and restore the criminal proceedings... to the court of Sessions Judge, Mahila Neethi Mandram (Fast Track Court), Tiruvallur District," the top court said.

While passing a slew of directions and suggestions on the sensitive issue, a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala asked Parliament to seriously consider bringing an amendment to the POCSO Act for substituting the term 'child pornography' with 'child sexual exploitative and abuse material' with a view to reflect more accurately the reality of such offences.

In the meanwhile, the verdict put all the courts "to notice that the term 'child pornography' shall not be used in any judicial order or judgment, and instead the term 'child sexual exploitative and abuse material' (CSEAM) should be endorsed".

"Section 15 of the POCSO Act provides for three distinct offences that penalize either the storage or the possession of any child pornographic material when done with any particular intention specified under subsection(s) (1), (2) or (3) respectively.

"It is in the nature and form of an inchoate offence which penalizes the mere storage or possession of any pornographic material involving a child when done with a specific

Highlights of SC judgment in child pornography case

NEW DELHI: Following are the highlights of the Supreme Court's verdict on Monday which held mere possession of any child pornographic material will constitute offences under the POCSO and the IT laws even if they are not disseminated further:

* SC sets aside Madras HC order that had said mere downloading and watching child pornography was not an offence under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Information Technology (IT) Act.

* SC suggests Parliament should seriously consider bringing an amendment to the POCSO Act for substituting the term 'child pornography' with 'child sexual exploitative and abuse material' with a view to reflect more accurately the reality of such offences.

* SC says the Centre, in the meantime, may consider to bring about the suggested amendment to the POCSO Act by way of an ordinance.

* SC puts all the courts to notice that the term 'child pornography' shall not be used in any judicial order or judgment, and instead the term 'child sexual exploitative and abuse material' (CSEAM) should be endorsed.

* SC says implementing comprehensive sex education programmes that include information about the legal and ethical ramifications of child pornography can help deter potential offenders.

* SC says raising awareness about realities of child sexual exploitative material and its consequences through public campaigns can help reduce its prevalence.

* SC says schools can play a crucial role in early identification and intervention and implementing school-based programmes that educate students about healthy relationships, consent and appropriate behaviour can help prevent problematic sexual behaviours (PSB).

* SC says child sexual exploitative material is deeply degrading to the dignity of children and it reduces them to objects of sexual gratification, stripping them of their humanity and violating their fundamental rights.

* Stressing the need to address misconceptions around sexual health, the SC says promoting a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of sex education is essential for reducing the incidence of sexual crimes in the country.

* SC says sexual exploitation of children is a pervasive and deeply rooted issue that has plagued the societies worldwide and has been a matter of serious concern in India.

intent prescribed thereunder; without requiring any actual transmission, dissemination etc," it said.

It referred to three facets of the crime under section 15 of the POCSO Act.

It said sub-section (1) of section 15 penalises "the failure to delete, destroy or report any child pornographic material that has been found to be stored or in possession of any person with an intention to share or transmit the same".

Referring to mens-rea (criminal motive), an essential ingredient of any ordinary crime, it said the intention required under the POCSO provision is to be gathered from actus reus (actual act) itself.

"That is it must be determined from the manner in which such material is stored or possessed and the circumstances in which the same was not deleted, destroyed or reported. To constitute an offence under this provision the circumstances must sufficiently indicate the intention on the part of the accused to share or transmit such material," it elaborated.

Dealing further, it said the other relevant provision penalises both the actual transmission, propagation, display or distribution of any child pornography as well as the facilitation of any of such acts.

"To constitute an offence under Section 15 sub-section (2) apart from the storage or possession of such pornographic material, there must be something more to show i.e., either (I) the actual transmis-

sion, propagation, display or distribution of such material OR (II) the facilitation of any transmission, propagation, display or distribution of such material, such as any form of preparation or setup done that would enable that person to transmit it or to display it", it said.

The criminal intention is to be gathered from the manner in which the pornographic material was found to be stored or in possession, it said.

Referring to sub-section 3 of section 15, it said it "penalizes the storage or possession of any child pornographic material when done for any commercial purpose. To establish an offence under Section 15 sub-section (3), besides the storage or possession of the pornographic material involving a child, there must be some additional material or attendant circumstances that may sufficiently indicate that the said storage or possession was done with the intent to derive any gain or benefit".

The section 15 of the POCSO Act provides different punishments of varying jail terms or fine or both. Section 15 (1), which deals with possession of child pornographic material, provides for a minimum fine of Rs 5,000 which may extend to Rs 10,000.

Section 15 (2), which deals with possession of child pornographic material for dissemination, entails punishment upto three years jail term or fine or both.

Section 15 (3), which deals with use of such materials for commer-

cial gains, provides for three years to five years jail term for first time offenders or with fine or with both. Repeat offenders can be awarded jail term ranging from five years to seven years along with fine.

The three offences cannot coexist simultaneously in the same set of facts, it said, adding they are distinct from each other and are not intertwined.

"The police as well as the courts while examining any matter involving the storage or possession of any child pornography, finds that a particular subsection of Section 15 is not attracted, then it must not jump to the conclusion that no offence at all is made out under Section 15 of the POCSO. If the offence does not fall within one particular subsection of Section 15, then it must try to ascertain whether the same falls within the other subsections or not," it said.

It said any act of viewing, distributing or displaying of child pornographic material on internet without any actual possession or storage in any device or in any form would also amount to "possession" in terms of Section 15 of the POCSO Act if the accused exercised an "invariable degree of control" over it by virtue of the doctrine of "constructive possession".

"Any visual depiction of a sexually explicit act which any ordinary person of a prudent mind would reasonably believe to prima facie depict a child or appear to involve a child, would be deemed as 'child porno-

graphy' and the courts are only required to form a prima facie opinion to arrive at the subjective satisfaction..." it said.

The verdict said courts can seek the opinion of a forensic science laboratory to reach a conclusion.

Dealing with the IT law provisions, it said section 67B is a comprehensive one designed to address and penalise various electronic forms of exploitation and abuse of children online.

"It not only punishes the electronic dissemination of child pornographic material, but also the creation, possession, propagation and consumption of such material as well as the different types of direct and indirect acts of online sexual denigration and exploitation of the vulnerable age of children," it said.

It referred to the concept of statutory presumption of culpable mental state on the part of accused under Section 30 of the POCSO Act and said it can be used if the prosecution is able to establish "foundational facts" necessary to constitute a particular offence under the POCSO.

The judgment then referred to what would constitute foundational facts for invoking the statutory presumption of culpable mental state for an offence under Section 15 of POCSO.

"For the purpose of sub-section (1), the necessary foundational facts that the prosecution may have to first establish is the storage or possession of any child pornographic material and that the person accused had failed to delete, destroy or report the same," it said.

"We direct the Registry to send one copy each of this judgment to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Law & Justice, Union of India and to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Union of India, for undertaking appropriate course of action," Justice Pardiwala, who penned 200-page judgment, said.

Senior advocate H S Phoolka, who appeared for appellant organisations, hailed the verdict.

"India has once again paved the way globally by laying down the framework for prevention and protection of children from this transnational and organised crime. This judgment will have a long lasting and global impact on society, crime and child rights and will be etched in history..." said Bhuvan Ribhu, petitioner and founder of Just Rights for Children Alliance.

The high court had quashed the criminal case against S Harish under the POCSO Act, 2012 and IT Act, 2000.