

# Centre rules out changes in AFSPA in JK

**New Delhi, July 14:** The Narendra Modi government is understood to have ruled out changes in the controversial AFSPA in Jammu and Kashmir and favoured its continuation in the present form in the state.

The decision in this regard is understood to have been taken at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the Prime Minister recently, sources said here. The CCS discussed changes suggested by the Administrative Reforms Commission, they said.

The Army had also given its opinion in the matter and had opposed the repealing or dilution of the law in any form and stated that it was required for it to operate in the state, sources said.

Even though Jammu and Kashmir has been relatively peaceful in the recent past except for the cease fire violations along the Line of Control (LoC), the Army feels that it is more of "absence of violence" rather than establishment of peace there.

Several groups and polit-

ical parties in Jammu and Kashmir and north eastern region have been demanding either repeal or amendment to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) which has been in force in some of the disturbed regions in the country.

Defence Minister Arun Jaitley had also visited Jammu and Kashmir to analyse the situation in the state and had visited the forward locations there.

He had stated that any decision on revoking AFSPA will depend on the progress

in the situation in the state over a period of time.

On the need for AFSPA, Army Chief Gen Bikram Singh had stated that it was "an enabling" act as it "gives Army additional powers to operate in an environment which is marked by very high degree of uncertainty and complexity and an asymmetric environment where you cannot differentiate between a friend and a foe as the terrorist merges with the backdrop and hides amongst the locals."

PTI

December 16 gangrape, murder case:

## SC stays execution of 2 convicts

**New Delhi, July 14:** The Supreme Court today stayed till further orders the execution of death penalty of two of the four convicts in the December 16 gangrape and murder case.

A bench of justices Ranjana Prakash Desai and N V Ramana said since the death sentence of other convicts have already been suspended by this court, the same order has to be passed.

It stayed the execution of Vinay Sharma (21) and Akshay Thakur (29), who were convicted along with other two- Mukesh (27) and Pawan Gupta (20)- whose death sentence has already been stayed.

Vinay and Akshay had moved the apex court seeking a stay on their execution and reversal of the Delhi High Court verdict upholding their conviction and the punishment.

The court proceedings

also witnessed some confusion as the bench queried whether it could hear the plea in the light of observation made by Chief Justice R M Lodha that the cases of death convicts be heard by not less than three-judge bench.

The bench called for Supreme Court registrar who said no such notification has been issued so far in this regard. The bench then went ahead with the hearing and passed the stay order.

The Delhi High Court had on March 13 this year upheld their conviction and award of death penalty by terming the offence as "extremely fiendish" and "unparalleled in the history of criminal jurisprudence" and said the "exemplary punishment" was the need of the hour.

It had also said if this case was not "the rarest of rare cases" then "there is

likely to be none".

Besides seeking setting aside of the High Court verdict, Vinay and Akshay, in their appeal, have sought a stay on their execution as an interim relief.

The petition has said the judgement be set aside as there was no "substance or material piece of evidence" and there were contradictions in the depositions of the victim and her friend, who had accompanied her in the bus, about the offence and the offenders.

The petition has said the testimony of the SDM cannot be relied on as she had deposed that the victim was "comfortable, happy and willing to record her statement." "Whether a patient who is on ventilator...Can be happy and comfortable?," it has said.

Disputing the veracity of the dying declaration of the victim, it has said she was

not fit enough to record her statement and hence, the statement made through gestures cannot be relied upon.

"The High Court failed to appreciate before awarding death sentence to appellant Vinay Sharma that he was juvenile at the time of the incident..." it has said.

The 23-year-old paramedic, on the night of December 16, 2012, was brutally assaulted and gangraped by six persons in a moving bus in South Delhi and thrown out of the vehicle with her male friend. She later died in a Singapore hospital on December 29.

Prime accused in the case Ram Singh was found dead in Tihar Jail in March last year and the trial against him was abated.

The sixth accused, the juvenile, was on August 31, 2013 convicted and sentenced to a maximum of three years in a reformation home by the Juvenile Justice Board. PTI

## Journalist meeting Hafiz Saeed triggers row

**New Delhi, July 14:** A row erupted over yoga guru Ramdev's close aide Ved Pratap Vaidik's meeting with Hafiz Saeed with Congress today seeking to corner the government inside and outside Parliament over whether it had given its approval.

The government on its part distanced itself from the meeting and declared it had nothing to do with the journalist "directly, indirectly or even remotely" and asserted there was no sanction from its side.

"There is no Track-2 or Track-3 diplomacy involved," it added.

Vaidik had met the chief of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, said to be the parent organisation of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), in Lahore on July 2 while touring Pakistan along with a group of journalists and politicians invited by a peace research institute. As the Congress demanded his arrest, Vaidik defended his parleys with Saeed, saying he has been meeting all kinds of people and that it was a "simple thing" for him.

He also rejected suggestions by Congress that he might have acted as government's envoy, saying he was "nobody's envoy but my own".

The meeting generated heat in Parliament with Rajya Sabha witnessing two adjournments during Question Hour.

Congress members in both



Houses sought a detailed statement from the government on the "purpose and motive behind the meeting with India's most wanted terrorist".

They created uproar in Rajya Sabha forcing two adjournments during Question Hour, as they and their colleagues in Lok Sabha, as well as those from their allies, sought to know whether the journalist had sought government's permission before meeting Saeed and who facilitated it.

They demanded a statement by either the External Affairs Minister or Home Minister saying this was "a serious matter concerning national security".

In Rajya Sabha, Leader of the House and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said for India, Saeed was a terrorist and indeed involved in terrorism against India.

Government has nothing to do with "directly, indirect-

ly or even remotely" with any journalist meeting Saeed, he said, adding "government has not sanctioned permission to anyone for meeting him (Saeed)."

Congress members also demanded the arrest of the journalist, with their leader Digvijay Singh seeking to know from Jaitley if the meeting had government's sanction.

"I want to clarify that we don't approve any such activity (meeting with Saeed)," Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, as he accused the Congress of being desperate. "For the government, there is no change of stand as far Hafiz is concerned. For India, Hafiz is an accused in the terror attack. He is a terrorist who conspired to attack India," Javadekar told reporters outside Parliament.

The Minister also said there is no "Track-2 or Track-3 diplomacy" involved. PTI

## Army Chief felicitates photographic officer

**Jammu, July 14:** Army Chief Gen Bikram Singh, who is on a farewell visit to Jammu and Kashmir ahead of his retirement, today felicitated a photographic officer besides appreciating the contribution of various other personnel.

Gen Singh decorated Shib Narayan Acharya, Photographic Officer of Public Relations Office, Ministry of Defence, Jammu with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Commendation Card and Badge on the spot for the selfless dedication to the country and his professional work rendered to the organisation, a defence spokesman said here. Gen Singh also appreciated the services of the staff of PRO (Defence), Jammu. The Army Chief is visiting various Army formations before he retires on July 31. PTI

## RASM-E-CHAHARUM



Ali Mohammad Bhat of Bemina Housing Colony, 25 1/A near Masjid-e-Ibrahim passed away on Sunday July 13 evening. His Fateh Khwani will be held at the Masjid-i-Ibrahim graveyard on Wednesday July 16 morning at 9:30 AM. Women coming for condolences are requested not bring any fruits or anything else.

**Bereaved | 9419001873/ 9086111020**

Govt. Regd No. 6613/14

Kashmir



# ATHROUT

غربت و افلاس کے ہر زخم پر مرہم

**ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14**

**Below mentioned performances have been done by the organisation from the last holy Ramadan to till date:**

**01.** By the grace of Almighty Allah our organisation has taken on **350** families in concealable way, which is being served in terms of monthly **HOUSE HOLD** commodities, monthly required **MEDICINE** and to carry out the expenses of **EDUCATION** for the poor and needy students.

**02.** During the current year nearly **6000 patients** which mostly included elderly people, children and women have been given **free consultation** and **free medicines** by the medical centre department and free medicines which costed nearly **Rs.9,72,125/-** have been distributed among the patients. Besides this, the said department has provided **unanimous agreed amount** to the poor and needy patients who have been involved in fatal diseases like **cancer, kidney problems, cardiac problems, hepatitis (C)** for the treatment.

**03.** Organisation has also forwarded a generous helping hand in performing **Simple Nikah** of some downtrodden sisters, and some high respected families have been **EMPOWERED** to such extent that they have become self reliant and self supportive.

**04.** The deptt. of natural disaster and natural calamity has provided **BASIC AID** to **32 fire victim families** in quick and responsible way during the current year.

(For complete details of the above, you may visit the office of our organisation at any time.)

Now you will be pleased to know that the **ATHROUT TRUST** has got the trust registered with the State Govt

