

Omar Abdullah's Cabinet Passes Resolution On J&K Statehood, PDP Reminds Him Of Article 370 Promise

The Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has passed a resolution for the restoration of statehood in the Union Territory. News agency IANS quoted official sources as saying that the resolution was passed during the first cabinet meeting on Thursday. The meeting was presided over by the Chief Minister and was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and ministers Sakeena Masood Itoo, Javed Ahmad Rana, Javaid Ahmad Dar and Satish Sharma. "The draft of the resolution has been prepared and the Chief Minister will travel to New Delhi in a couple of days to hand over the draft of the resolution to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir," IANS quoted sources as saying. Meanwhile, Waheed Para of Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party (PDP), in an X post termed the step a "ratification" of the abrogation of Article 370. "Omar Abdullah's first resolution on statehood is nothing less than ratification of the August 5th, 2019 decision. No resolution on Article 370 and scaling down the demand to mere statehood is a huge setback, especially after seeking votes on the promise of restoring Article 370," Para's post read. On August 19 this year, Omar Abdullah, while releasing his party manifesto, had said his party would continue the struggle to restore "Article 370 and 35A." "We will continue to fight politically for Article 370. The manifesto is an assur-



ance that we will not stay silent on these issues. The Supreme Court (SC) has in the past upheld Article 370 three times. Can't we expect a situation where the Supreme Court will change its recent decision? The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did not accept its defeat despite three orders by the Supreme Court in favour of Article 370. Why should we?" Abdullah had said. "We are determined to have Statehood restored. The Government of India has already made this promise to the Supreme Court. If it does not restore statehood willingly, we will pursue justice through the court. With statehood, the government of Jammu and Kashmir will have the powers required to fulfil promises," he had said. The erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on August 5, 2019, when Article 370 was abrogated by the Centre. Meanwhile, the BJP targeted Omar Abdullah over the passage of the resolution and said the Chief Minister was playing a "political stunt". Speaking exclusively

to CNN-News18, BJP's spokesperson in Jammu and Kashmir, Sunil Sethi, said, "After taking a U-turn on Article 370, Omar Abdullah is now playing a political stunt on the issue of statehood." "He (Omar Abdullah) said the Central government led by PM Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah has already stated that statehood will be restored at an appropriate time," Sethi said. In an X post on Friday, Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference chief Sajad Lone said the cabinet of Jammu and Kashmir does not reflect the will of the people of the Union Territory. He also said he "failed to understand" why the resolution should not have been reserved for Assembly. "I very humbly state that will of the people of J and K is reflected in the Assembly and not in the cabinet. Cabinet is a majoritarian institution of governance. It does not reflect all shades and opinions as per the will of the people of J and K. All across the country, to the best of my knowledge, Assembly is the proper institution for addressing major issues like that of statehood or Article 370. When the NC Government passed a resolution on autonomy they passed it in the Assembly not through a cabinet resolution. What has changed now. Fail to understand why this resolution should not have been reserved for Assembly," (sic), Lone's X post read. "Would have loved to see which way BJP and other parties vote on statehood and on Article 370 resolution when it is presented in the Assembly. And I am cutting and past-

ing a few lines out of the NC manifesto for 2024 Assembly elections," he added. On Thursday, National Congress president Farooq Abdullah expressed confidence that the Centre would soon restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. "We have talked about statehood before and even today, the Supreme Court has agreed to hear an application seeking restoration of Statehood within two months. I am sure the Government of India will soon restore it," Abdullah said while talking to reporters. When asked whether the National Conference would raise the issue of Article 370 or pass a resolution against it in the Assembly, Abdullah said that they would need to return to court to present their arguments. The Supreme Court on Thursday said it will consider listing a plea seeking time-bound restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for applicants, urged a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra that the plea needed an urgent hearing. The fresh application was filed by Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, an academician, and Khurshaid Ahmad Malik, a socio-political activist, in Jammu and Kashmir. On December 11, 2023, the Supreme Court had unanimously upheld the revocation of Article 370 of the Constitution and ordered that assembly elections be held there by September 2024. The court had also said that Jammu and Kashmir's statehood should be restored "at the earliest".

Nidhi Malik from Delhi to J&K, Rajshekhar Sent to Arunachal Pradesh, See the List



A significant transfer of IAS officers has taken place in Delhi. Nidhi Malik and Ram Niwas Sharma have been transferred from Delhi to Jammu and Kashmir, while IAS officer Rajshekhar has been sent to Arunachal Pradesh. Additionally, Bipul Pathak has been brought from Jammu and Kashmir to Delhi. M Raju has been transferred from Puducherry to Jammu and Kashmir, and IAS officer Sougat Biswas has been moved from Arunachal Pradesh to Jammu and Kashmir. Rashmi Singh has also been transferred from Jammu and Kashmir to Delhi, and Yasha Mudgal has been sent from Jammu and Kashmir to Puducherry.

Overview of IAS Transfers

This is not the first major administrative reshuffle in Delhi this year. In July, Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena initiated several transfers of IAS and DANICS officers. In this round, eight IAS officers were transferred, with six of them being long-standing officers who had been awaiting postings since 1996 to 2008 from the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram central cadre. The department stated that IAS officer Anbarasu from the 1996 batch was appointed as Principal Secretary in the Public Works Department and given the additional charge of CEO at the Delhi Jal Board. Nikhil Kumar was appointed Secretary for Land and Building, while Chanchal Yadav took over as Secretary for the Home Department. Aarti Sharma from the 2010 batch was assigned to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), and Jitendra Yadav, also from the 2010 batch, became the Additional Commissioner at the DDA. Ravi Jha from the 2011 batch was appointed as the new Deputy Commissioner of Delhi. This latest transfer list reflects ongoing efforts to enhance governance efficiency and accountability across various regions.

Why did the railways change the rules for advance ticket booking? Know the reason behind this..

Just before Diwali, the Railways has made a big change in the booking timing of train tickets. Taking an important decision regarding advance ticket booking, the Railways said that now passengers will be able to book tickets for their journey only 60 days in advance instead of 120 days. This new rule will come into effect from November 1, 2024. But, do you know why the Railways has taken this decision and on which trains this rule will not apply? According to the new rule of Railways, from November 1, 2024, passengers will be able to book tickets in advance only up to 60 days before their date of travel. Railways has also clarified that this period of 60 days will be considered excluding the date of train travel. However, till October 31, 2024, the old rules of booking i.e. the

time limit of 120 days will remain applicable. On which trains the new rule will not apply. Railways have informed us that this new rule will not apply to some special trains, like the Taj Express and Gomti Express. No change has been made to the booking rules for these trains. Apart from this, the facility of booking for up to 365 days for foreign tourists will remain as before, that is, this rule will not have any effect on foreign travellers.

Black marketing will be stopped.

Railways also said that currently, only 13 percent of the passengers book tickets 120 days in advance, while most of the passengers book tickets up to 45 days before their journey. Due to such a long time limit in advance booking of tickets, the problems of ticket cancellation and refund



increase. The new rule is expected to effectively stop black marketing of tickets, which will benefit the passengers and make the system more transparent. This decision of the Railways has been taken keeping in mind the increasing demand for tickets during festivals and the problems of black marketing so that the passengers do not face any inconvenience in ticket booking.

Joint probe rules out sabotage, takes intersection into account

New Delhi: The joint inspection note of a passenger-freight train collision near Chennai last week, prepared by seven senior railway officials, suggests the train might have derailed at the intersection point. Another report of a three-member committee of senior railway officials had earlier raised the apprehension of sabotage after finding some loosened or opened parts during site inspection. However, the contents of the joint note, prepared soon after the accident, do not mention any sabotage angle. A railway spokesperson said the joint report cannot conclusively tell the reasons of the accident but it can be one of the inputs for the Commissioner of Railway Safety to prepare the final investigation report. The Mysuru-Darbhanga Bagmati Express rammed into a stationary freight train at the Kavaraipettai railway station in the Chennai rail division at around 8.30 pm on October 11, leaving several passengers injured. "The ex-



perts who have prepared the joint note didn't say that they found any mechanical part opened or loosened at the accident site. Instead, they found nuts, bolts, rails, tongue rail, and other similar items in broken condition," said a safety expert after analysing the inspection report. He added: "The kind of damage these seven officials have recorded in the joint note goes on to show that the train derailed at the intersection point of the main line and the loop line." The safety expert's assertion gets support from the data logger's yard simulation video in which it

appeared that the train was moving on the main line as well as the loop line. "As the train can move in only one direction, the data logger's yard simulation video hints that it might have derailed at the interlocking point. While the engine and some coaches headed towards the loop line and collided with the freight train, the remaining coaches scattered all around, infringing the main line as well," K P Arya, who retired as the chief signal and telecom engineer/information technology in the Northern Railway, said. Arya, who looked into the joint note, raised the apprehension of engineering defect of tracks and interlocking-point mechanisms for the derailment. He said when interlocking is done for the trains to change track, a small gap (but beyond the acceptable limits) remains at many points between the stock rail and the middle or later part of tongue rail due to which stones, small wooden blocks, and other similar items get stuck.

