

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

SC mulls larger bench reference in Meghalaya honeymoon murder case

NEW DELHI, JULY 9: The Supreme Court on Thursday said it might refer to a larger bench the legal question whether the mere mention of a wrong statutory section in an arrest memo, specifically a typographical error, was sufficient to invalidate an arrest and grant bail to Sonam Raghuvanshi in the murder case of her husband.

A partial working day bench comprising Justices Manoj Misra and Shree Chandrashekar also indicated that it would closely examine whether the Meghalaya High Court was justified in granting bail to Raghuvanshi on the grounds that the arrest memo contained a typographical error.

On July 3, another bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Sheel Nagu had refused to stay the high court order granting bail to Raghuvanshi.

On Thursday, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the state government, raised the question whether the mere mention of a wrong statutory section in an arrest memo, specifically a typographical error, was sufficient



to invalidate an arrest and grant bail in the "shocking" murder case.

The high court had upheld Raghuvanshi's bail on the grounds that the police failed to supply proper written grounds of arrest, noting a "total non-application of judicious mind" because the memo cited Section 403 (which does not exist in the context) instead of Section 103(1) (punishment for murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The solicitor general argued that the error was purely clerical.

"In this matter, this is a very serious case where bail is granted on the grounds that grounds (of arrest) were not supplied... though at the time

of arrest, there is a record that there is a supply of grounds," he said.

The bench, however, said the court must reconcile conflicting judgments regarding the necessity of providing grounds in writing at the time of arrest.

"We will consider this matter at length. We will decide whether this requires to be referred to a larger bench," Justice Misra said.

The top law officer said the gravity of the crime should outweigh a technical typo.

"This is the case where both of them went on honeymoon in Meghalaya. It was a pre-meditated murder. She killed the husband on a hill and threw the body into a gorge...

This is a very, very serious offense," Mehta said.

The bench directed the state police to provide legible photocopies of the original documents supplied to the accused to verify what information was actually communicated at the time of arrest.

"If this ground (the technicality) is not sustainable, then the bail order goes," Justice Misra orally observed.

On July 3, another bench had refused to stay the high court order granting bail to Raghuvanshi.

The accused, a resident of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, was arrested in June last year in connection with the killing of her businessman husband, Raja Raghuvanshi.

The couple had gone missing while vacationing in Meghalaya's Sohra area on May 23 last year. Subsequently, Raja Raghuvanshi's body was found in a deep gorge on June 2, 2025.

Police have alleged that Sonam Raghuvanshi conspired with hired assailants to kill her husband for financial gains.

Legislators call on Javid Dar; discuss development priorities of Pampore, Sopore

SRINAGAR, JULY 9:

MLA Pampore Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi and MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar today called on Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department at the Civil Secretariat here and apprised him of various developmental issues and public welfare concerns pertaining to their respective constituencies.

During the meeting, the legislators projected several constituency-specific demands, with emphasis on strengthening the public infrastructure, improving essential services and expediting developmental works.

They sought the Minister's intervention for timely resolution of issues aimed at enhancing the quality of life of the people.

MLA Pampore, submitted a memorandum seeking the transfer of land from the Rural Development Department to the Health Department for upgradation and expansion of the Sub-District Hospital (SDH), Pampore. He requested the Minister to issue necessary



directions to the concerned authorities to facilitate the transfer at the earliest so that the long-pending health infrastructure project could be taken up for implementation, ensuring improved healthcare facilities for the residents of Pampore.

The legislators also highlighted the issues related to road connectivity, public infrastructure, rural develop-

ment, civic amenities and other constituency-specific developmental works, seeking government's intervention for their early redressal.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the legislators and held detailed deliberations on all the issues projected during the meeting. He assured them that every genuine demand would be examined on merit and that necessary directions would be issued to the

concerned departments for their prompt and time-bound resolution.

Javid Dar emphasized that addressing the public grievances and accelerating developmental initiatives in every constituency remain among the government's foremost priorities, while assuring the legislators of full cooperation in resolving issues concerning public welfare.

Bonnie Tyler, who topped the charts with epic 'Total Eclipse of the Heart', has died at 75

LONDON, JULY 9: Bonnie Tyler, the gravelly voiced, Grammy-nominated Welsh pop star best known for singing the chart-topping power ballad "Total Eclipse of the Heart" in 1983 and seeing new generations succumb to its bombastic charms during solar and lunar eclipses, has died. She was 75.

Tyler died "unexpectedly" in a hospital in Portugal where she was being treated for an illness, her family said Thursday in a statement on her website. She was hospitalised in May in Faro, where she had a home, for emergency intestinal surgery and was later placed in an induced coma.

"Bonnie's family and team are heartbroken to announce that Bonnie unexpectedly passed away last night in hospital in Portugal as a result of the illness that she was being treated for," her family said.

Tyler earned three Grammy nods, represented Britain at the Eurovision Song Contest 2013 - where she came in 19th - and was awarded an MBE for her services to music by Queen Elizabeth II in 2023, all largely thanks to "Total Eclipse of the Heart", which has had more than 1 billion streams, boosted by real eclipses in 2017 and 2024.

The song spent four weeks at No. 1, the video has surpassed 1 billion views and when Stereogum reevaluated it in 2020, the music outlet declared it an "extinction-level event rendered in musical form."

"It's pop music as heart-pounding, chest-thumping, blood-gargling, heavens-falling passion explosion. It's sheer spectacle. It's fireworks and lasers and lightning and thunder. It soars and swoops and barrel-rolls," the site said.

The song has never really gone away, covered by the English singer Nicki French in 1995 and the band Westlife in 2006.

Cate Blanchett sang it while hitting Billy Bob Thornton with her car in 2001's "Bandits", it appeared at a wedding scene in 2003's "Old School" and One Direction sang it in 2010 on a UK version of "The X Factor".

Tyler was born - as Gaynor Hopkins - a coal miner's daughter in public housing with an outside toilet in Skewen, Wales, about seven miles outside Swansea. She



grew up with three sisters and two brothers.

She adored the Beatles and her first album was "A Hard Day's Night". The first song she bought was "Hippy Hippy Shake" by the Swinging Blue Jeans at 13 and watched "Top of the Pops" religiously, according to her memoir, "Straight From the Heart".

She would record "Top of the Pops" on a reel-to-reel two-track recorder and write down the lyrics of songs she loved. Her favourites were songs by Janis Joplin, Nina Simone, Tina Turner, Wilson Pickett and Otis Redding.

"I used to sing them into my hairbrush for hours and hours, and that's how it all started for me. I fell in love with singing just from doing that. Looking back, even then my voice had a husky tone to it, but I didn't think much of it. I thought everyone's voices were different from each other's," she wrote.

Steinman introduced her to his song "Total Eclipse of the Heart", which would become the debut single for her fifth studio album, "Faster Than the Speed of Night".

He borrowed one of the song's lyrics - "Turn around, bright eyes" - from his 1969 musical "The Dream Engine" written as a student at Massachusetts' Amherst College.

He told her the song was from a prospective musical version of "Nosferatu".

Under her new RCA-sanctioned name Bonnie Tyler, her debut album "The World Starts Tonight" in 1977 contained her first chart hit, "Lost in France," and she was nominated for a breakthrough artists award at the Brits Awards.

She then had a No. 3 hit in 1978 with "It's a Heartache", but soon drifted. She then signed with Sony and saw Meat Loaf perform "Bat Out of Hell" on the BBC. Impressed, she requested to work with Meat Loaf songwriter and producer Jim Steinman.

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The first phase of Census 2027, namely the House Listing Operations (HLO), has been successfully completed across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, marking a significant milestone.

The meeting besides the Director, Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Commissioner Secretary, Education; DG, Planning and other senior officers from the Department of Census Operations.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the dedicated efforts of the Directorate of Census Operations, district administrations and thousands of field functionaries for successfully completing the first phase of Census 2027 within the stipulated timeframe. He emphasized the importance of maintaining the same momentum during the forthcoming Census activities and called upon all stakeholder departments to continue extending full cooperation for the timely and successful completion of the remaining phases of Census 2027.

The achievement was highlighted during the 5th Meeting of the Union Territory Level Census Coordination Committee (UTL-

CCC), chaired by the Chief Secretary wherein the Chief Principal Census Officer and Director, Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma presented a comprehensive review of the field operations and outlined the roadmap for the upcoming phases of Census 2027.

During the presentation, Amit Sharma informed that the month-long House Listing Operations were conducted successfully from 1st June to 30th June, 2026, with 100 per cent digital data collection, making the entire exercise paperless and technology-driven. The field operations were completed smoothly across all districts of the Union Territory without any major technical impediments, reflecting the robustness of the digital Census ecosystem and the preparedness of the field machinery.

For the successful conduct of the exercise, it was divulged that 24,071 House Listing Blocks (HLBs) were created covering 295 Census Charges across Jammu & Kashmir. A massive capacity-building programme preceded the field operations, wherein 30 Master Trainers, 614 Field Trainers and 29,269 Enumerators and Supervisors, including reserve staff, were trained

through 813 structured training batches.

To facilitate seamless field work, more than 27,000 digital Census kits were distributed across the Union Territory, while adequate reserve equipment was also maintained to address any contingency. Special emphasis was laid on ensuring comprehensive coverage of migratory and other difficult-to-reach populations so that every household was brought within the ambit of the Census.

The meeting also laid emphasis on timely disbursement of honorarium to Enumerators, Supervisors and other field functionaries, with directions to the district administrations to ensure that payments are released expeditiously within this month in accordance with the approved government norms.

Looking ahead, the Directorate outlined the next major Census activities. The meeting was informed that preparations would now commence for the creation of District Census Handbooks (DCHB), an important publication containing village and town-level demographic, socio-economic and infrastructural information.

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J&K Accomplishes First Phase of Census 2027 House Listing Operations

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nated by October 2026, immediately after the completion of Population Enumeration in snow-bound areas, as approved by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.

The meeting also reviewed the preparations for Population Enumeration (Phase-II) of Census 2027 in snow-bound and inaccessible areas, which is scheduled to be conducted in September 2026. Training programmes for Administrative Officers, Charge Officers, Field Trainers, Enumerators and Supervisors will be completed by the end of August, while appointment of field functionaries and allotment of Enumeration Blocks will be finalized well in advance to ensure timely commencement of field operations.

It was further informed that, based on detailed field assessment, the number of notified snow-bound areas has increased substantially for Census 2027. A total of 1,103 villages and three municipal areas across sixteen districts have been identified for advance Population Enumeration, compared to 546 villages during Census 2011, ensuring better coverage of remote and inaccessible habitations before the onset of winters here.

Emphasising the need for continuous monitoring and timely corrective action, the Chief Secretary directed all the line departments to constitute dedicated audit teams to undertake regular inspections of facilities and infrastructure along both the Yatra routes.

He instructed these teams to identify any deficiencies or implementation gaps and ensure their immediate rectification.

Stressing the importance of seamless coordination among all stakeholder departments and agencies, the Chief Secretary called for prompt resolution of issues through effective inter-agency coordination. He asserted that there should be no scope for delays, complacency or lackadaisical approach in the discharge of responsibilities, reiterating that the safety, security and convenience of every pilgrim remain the highest priority of the administration.

The Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, along with the Deputy Commissioners of Anantnag and Ganderbal, apprised the meeting of the overall conduct of the Yatra and the arrangements made on the ground.

Chief Secretary assesses status of arrangements for ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra

SRINAGAR, JULY 09:

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the arrangements put in place for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 and issued directions for further strengthening the facilities and services being provided to the pilgrims to ensure the safe, smooth and hassle-free conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

The meeting held detailed deliberations on the recommendations presented by the Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari based on the reports of various committees constituted to assess the status of arrangements on the ground. The discussions focused on identifying additional measures required to make the arrangements more robust, reliable and responsive to the needs of the pilgrims.

The meeting reviewed the status of infrastructure and facilities at Yatra camps, langars and along both the Baltal and Pahalgam routes. It was highlighted that the recommendations include com-



plete tiling of the pilgrimage track up to the Holy Cave Shrine to enhance the safety of pilgrims, widening of narrow stretches of the track and bridges at vulnerable locations to prevent overcrowding, construction of retaining walls in landslide-prone areas,

augmentation of rain shelters and waiting sheds, installation of iron barricades for effective queue management, and ensuring adequate availability of palkis and stretchers for prompt evacuation during medical emergencies.

The meeting also comprehensively reviewed the availability of essential public amenities across the Yatra camps and holding areas. These included adequate toilet and bathing facilities, uninterrupted drinking water supply, regular sanitation and cleanliness of camps, scientific waste man-



agement, and efficient functioning of first-aid and medical facilities.

Moreover the need for installation of additional digital display boards for dissemination of advisories, strengthening fire fighting infrastructure, and enhancing disaster preparedness through adequate mitigation equipment and emergency response mechanisms was also discussed.

During the meeting concerned heads of the departments presented updates regarding the facilities created by their respective departments and informed the meeting about the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations made by the committees.

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