

Farooq asks Chidambaram to review Jammu and Kashmir pre-paid ban

Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Farooq Abdullah told Home Minister P. Chidambaram to reconsider the continuation of the ban on pre-paid mobile services in Jammu and Kashmir when Chidambaram concluded his day-long visit to the state Wednesday night, officials said.

According to official sources, Farooq raised the issue during an informal chat with Chidambaram Wednesday evening.

Farooq said the ban on pre-paid services had created anger all across the state.

At a press conference here, the home minister said the ban would stay because of security reasons and that security could not be compromised.

Chidambaram shared with Farooq some of the reasons why the ban had been put into effect in Jammu and Kashmir.

The minister was clear that there were compelling reasons for the home ministry to implement this step, which he called a 'considered decision'.

He said that the 'alarmist picture' by the media was not helping anyone.

On the issue of dialogue with separatists, Chidambaram made it clear that it would be with all sections of people in the state. 'No one will be left out,' he said.

Chidambaram's statement clearly implied that the government would not hold talks with the separatists only but with mainstream parties as well.

He told Congress workers that the mainstream view was important as parties like the Congress, National Conference and Peoples' Democratic Party had fought elections and had got substantial endorsement of their programmes from voters.

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