

EXPRESS VIEW ON GOVERNOR ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN: STOOPING LOW

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan's remarks, in response to criticism by (retired) Supreme Court judge Justice Rohinton Nariman for holding up bills in the state, are low blows. They ill behove the high constitutional office that Governor Khan holds. Speaking at a public event on Wednesday, the governor pointed to Justice Nariman's father, the eminent advocate and jurist, Fali Nariman, being employed by the Pinarayi Vijayan government for legal advice and alleged a conflict of interest. Justice Nariman's comments over the governor's "wholesale reference of bills to the President after sitting on 23 bills without a decision", he suggested, had to do with the fee paid to his father for legal opinions given to the government.

It is not as if Justice Rohinton's criticism was his alone. For some time now, Governor Khan has been engaged in a very visible and very unseemly tussle with the Pinarayi government. And while both sides have failed to abide by norms of civility in their frequent run-ins, the growing belligerence between the government and Raj Bhawan has hurt the governor's office particularly. It has also drawn a sharp rebuke from the Supreme Court. After the Kerala government moved the top court, a bench headed by CJI DY Chandrachud asked: "What was the governor doing for two years sitting on the bills?"

But this is not just a story of a governor with a thin skin. His drawing of Fali Nariman into the disagreement with his son is outrageous, also, for the disrespect it shows to one of the country's most distinguished constitutional experts, seen by many, because of his formidable body of work, as the conscience-keeper of the court. And because Governor Khan, especially, should know a thing or two about heeding the call of conscience. He is, after all, the politician who famously went against the current, took a stand and resigned from his position as minister of state, protesting against the Rajiv Gandhi government's dismal somersault on the Shah Bano case in 1986.

For Governor Khan to stoop to make a point, therefore, is a terrible let-down. He needs to urgently mend relations with the government so that he can better fulfil his role as the custodian of constitutionalism in the state. Lashing out at critics and criticism, and making bad faith arguments while doing so, is an unnecessary and unflattering diversion from the onerous task at hand.

Sunny Deol, known for his professionalism on film sets, shared a funny incident where he got agitated when co-star Sridevi tried to pull a prank on him during the shoot of their 1989 film *Chaalbaaz*. He also talked about actors' insecurities and how it can ruin a film. Sunny will be seen in Aamir Khan's production *Lahore 1947*, directed by Rajkumar Santoshi.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com