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SC hits out at states, UTs for not setting up exclusive POCSO courts

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THE Supreme Court on Monday slammed the state governments for not complying with its order to establish exclusive POCSO courts and appoint public prosecutors in each district where the number of cases of sexual abuse of minors was more than 100.

In July this year, the apex court had asked the Centre to appoint trained, sensitised prosecutors and support persons to deal with POCSO cases and also directed the chief secretaries of states and union territories to ensure timely submission of forensic reports in such cases.

It asked the Centre to apprise it about the status of compliance of the order in 30 days and to make the money available for setting up of POCSO courts and appointment of prosecutors and others.

The top court noted that the collection of further nationwide data on child rape cases would delay implementation of

POCSO law.

Today, the court set a deadline of February end for the state governments to set up exclusive POCSO court and also directed that two exclusive POCSO court be set up in districts where the number of pending case of child abuse is more than 300.

The order came on a suo motu public interest litigation (PIL) petition registered by the Supreme Court after being concerned by the alarming rise in child abuse cases across the country and their long pendency in courts.

The data showed that from January 1 to June 30 this year, 24,212 First Information Reports were filed across India. Of these, 11,931 were still being probed by the police and in 12,231 cases; the police had filed the charge sheets.

According to the data trial had commenced in only 6,449 cases and 4,871 cases were yet to commence.

Till now, the trial courts had decided only 911 cases, that is, about 4 per cent of the total cases registered.