

RUCKUS ERUPTS IN HOUSE DURING OMAR'S REPLY ON BUDGET

CM refuses apology to BJP, defends his remarks; Speaker adjourns proceedings

BJP MLAs term Abdullah's remarks 'unparliamentary'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday ruled out apologising to BJP members for his certain remarks in the Assembly, saying while he was willing to withdraw his words, he was not allowed to speak in the House amid repeated disruptions.

"There is no question of an apology now as the remarks are already on record," he said. A pandemonium broke out in the House during Abdullah's speech when BJP members objected to some of his remarks and demanded an apology, shortly before Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather adjourned the proceedings for the day.

Abdullah was addressing the House, winding up a discussion on the Union territory's Budget present-



ed on February 6. The BJP members were on their feet during most part of his nearly 40-minute speech.

Speaker Rather, who repeatedly tried to persuade the members to take their seats, later informed the BJP MLAs that their protest will not be recorded.

Referring to the recent India-US interim trade deal, the chief min-

ister claimed it was detrimental to the interests of Jammu and Kashmir. He also made some remarks against the BJP members, who repeatedly disrupted his speech.

The BJP legislators then stood up and assembled in the front row, terming Abdullah's remarks "unparliamentary".

Talking to reporters



outside the Assembly, Abdullah said, "Had they (BJP members) allowed me to speak, I would have withdrawn my words myself. I was ready to withdraw them and say the same thing in a different manner. But they did not let me speak.

"There is no question of offering an apology now. What has been said is al-

ready on record. Had they allowed me even a second to speak, I was standing there to say 'fine, I would withdraw those words' and put the same point differently. But since they did not allow me to speak, there is no question of apologising," Abdullah said.

He also asked whom he was expected to apolo-

gise to, alleging that those "lecturing" in the Assembly about the nation and the Constitution could not even sit through the entire Republic Day function on January 26.

"The Leader of Opposition (Sunil Sharma), who teaches us lessons on patriotism, I was sitting right next to him. He could not

■ P11

Freezing Rs 8,189 Cr in 'cyber fraud' a big achievement: HM

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Tuesday said the recovery and protection of ₹8,189 crore out of an estimated ₹20,000 crore lost to cyber fraud stands as a major operational outcome



MHA cancels 12 lakh SIM cards

of the country's cybercrime response framework, even as the Ministry of Home Affairs has cancelled over 12 lakh SIM cards, blocked IMEI numbers of more than three lakh mobile phones and arrested 20,853 accused persons till December 2025.

Delivering the opening address at the National Conference on Tackling Cyber-Enabled Frauds and Dismantling the Ecosystem in New Delhi, Shah said returning frozen funds to victims remains central to restoring public trust in the digital economy.

He formally inaugurated the new cybercrime branch of the Central Bureau of In-

vestigation and launched the State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (S4C) dashboard of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre.

The Home Minister said cybercrime has shifted from isolated, individual offences to organised and technology-driven operations, requiring institutions to respond with the same scale and coordination as conventional organised crime.

Shah said multiple agencies of the Union government — including State police forces, the CBI, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement

■ P11

'Regularisation of daily wagers will commence this year'

JAMMU: Stating that the budget is meant to heal wounds and provide relief to the poorest of the poor, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the government will begin the process of regularising daily wagers this year. Winding up the discussion on the budget in the J&K

■ P11

LG clears SMVD ropeway project, not Cabinet: CM

JAMMU: Amid a row over the proposed Vaishno Devi ropeway project, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday informed the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly that the approval for the project was granted by the Lt Governor and not by his cabinet. As the House assembled, National Conference MLA Nazir Ahmad Gurezi joined by deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary demanded resignation of BJP MLA Baldev Raj Sharma for "misleading" the House on the issue. Intervening in the matter, Abdullah informed the House that he had checked the records after Sharma's claim that the ropeway had got clearance from his cabinet. "I attempted to verify the facts by seeking relevant documents. I checked whether there was any approval by the Council of Ministers, and there was

■ P11

Legislators' PAs likely to get hike in honorarium

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government is examining a proposal to increase the monthly honorarium of personal assistants engaged with legislators in the Union Territory. This was revealed by Chief

■ P11

IWT abeyance to boost Jammu's water security

JAMMU: Emphasising the need for a long-term water security plan for Jammu, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the government intends to fully utilise the current abeyance of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) to implement major water infrastructure projects for the region. After several BJP legislators including Sham Lal Sharma raised the issue during Question Hour in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, Abdullah said while efforts are on to revive defunct tubewells and other water sources, such steps are only short-term remedies and cannot meet Jammu's future water requirements. "Sharma is right in saying that this is like covering a wound with a bandage," the chief minister said, stressing that planning must in view of

■ P11

LS Speaker steps aside amid no-trust motion

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday decided to step aside from his role as the presiding officer of the House, hours after the opposition submitted a notice for his removal from office alleging that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner.

Lok Sabha officials said the no-confidence motion moved by the opposition against the speaker was likely to be taken up on March 9, when the House re-assembles after the recess to examine budgetary proposals.

"Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has taken a big decision, upholding the highest standards of morality. He will not sit in the speaker's chair until the no-confi-



dence motion brought by the opposition is settled," an official said.

Article 96 of the Constitution bars a speaker or a deputy speaker from presiding over the House sitting while a resolution for his removal from office is under consideration. The speaker has a

■ P11

Man held for disrespecting national flag

JAMMU: Police on Tuesday registered an FIR and detained a man for allegedly dishonouring the national flag in Doda district after a video of the incident surfaced on the internet, officials said.

The video purportedly shows Farooq Ahmed, son of Mohammad Ramzan Bandy and a resident of Nagri area of Doda, using the national flag to clean the window glass of his house, they said.

Police officials said that the act prima facie amounts to an offence under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, which prohibits acts that disre-

■ P11

Police file FIR over immigration violation at Spa Centre in Narwal

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Police on Tuesday filed a First Information Report against persons running a spa here and detained several individuals after a raid linked to immigration law violations and alleged "illegal" activities, officials said.

The action comes after a raid at the Shine Spa Centre in the Narwal area, they said.

According to the police, the crackdown was launched after receiving reliable inputs that foreign nationals were residing at the premises without valid travel documents.

"An FIR under sections 21 and 24 of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 has been filed.

Further investigation is underway to ascertain the involvement of any wider network," a police officer said.

During the search, police scrutinised the establishment's registers and documents. They seized Digital Video Recorders along with other incriminating materials from locations site for further examination.

The officer added that several individuals have also been detained for questioning as part of the ongoing investigation.

During the search, police scrutinised the establishment's registers and documents. They seized Digital Video Recorders and other materials from

■ P11

LoP Sunil slams Budget, accuses NC-Govt of evading responsibility

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Kumar Sharma on Tuesday slammed the National Conference (NC)-led government, saying it was evading its responsibility by questioning the Union Government whenever confronted about its own performance.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, Sharma, said that whenever the opposition seeks accountability from the treasury benches, they start asking questions about the Union Government.

"In a democratic set-up, there is a ruling party and an opposition. The govern-



ment is accountable, and it is the responsibility of the opposition to raise genuine demands of the people and seek answers from the government. It is a tragedy for the House when the opposition questions the government, and the

government, instead of responding, starts questioning the Union Government to evade its responsibility," he said.

"Why have you come here? Were you elected by the people of J&K to tell the Assembly that Delhi doesn't allow you to work? Have you come only for salaries and to enjoy in the House?" Sharma asked.

He termed the budget a repetition of decades-old lies to the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

"There is nothing solid or truthful in the budget. The government has dashed the hopes and expectations of the people of

■ P11

J&K Bank sponsors two EVs for University of Jammu under CSR

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: In a fresh push towards cleaner and more responsible transport within the campus, the University of Jammu on Tuesday inducted two 12-seater electric vehicles, sponsored by the Jammu and Kashmir Bank under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme.

The vehicles were inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Prof. Umesh Rai in the presence of senior university functionaries, including Deans, Rectors, Directors, Heads of Departments, Registrar Dr. Neeraj Sharma, representatives of uni-



versity associations and senior officials of the bank, including General Manager Ashok Gupta and Cluster Head Nidhi Jamwal.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Rai said the uni-

versity remains committed to its Green Campus initiative, under which the movement of conventional four-wheelers on the campus circular road has al-

■ P11

INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED
LEADERSHIP, Personality Development
& Motivational Programme
by Globally Renowned Spiritualist
Shri Swami Paul Ji

We Believe Every 'Child' is Born to 'Succeed'
LEARN LIKE ROYALS

ADMISSIONS
OPEN FROM
NURSERY TO
CLASS 10TH

Tawi Vihar,
Sidhra

CLASS 10TH RESULT 2024-25:
A1 Grade: 116 | 95% & Abv: 50 | 90% & Abv: 121 | 75% & Abv: 311

www.spsmartschools.com

KINGSTAR
SPORTS WORLD

JMD
SP
SMART
SCHOOLING SYSTEM

Ed-Tech Products & Services by: ESPA Learn Pvt Ltd.

House Corp. Cooperative
Public School

SPH
BRID
SMART COMPETITIVE SCHOOLING
(NO NEED FOR TUITION & COACHING)