

"When a woman becomes her own best friend, life is easier."

—Diane Von Furstenberg

Amit Shah reviews J-K security grid, pushes 'youth outreach' to cement anti-terror gains

Army Chief, top security brass attend high-level meet



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday chaired a security review meeting here with Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi and senior officials from the security establishment in attendance, to assess the pre-

vailing security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Amit Shah appreciated the efforts of the security agencies in dismantling the terror eco-system in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the terror eco-system nurtured by elements inimical to our country in J&K has been almost crippled due to the concerted efforts of the Modi Government.

Amit Shah reiterated unwavering commitment of the Modi government to attain the goal of terror-free Jammu and Kashmir. Innovative measures to further reinforce the watertight security cordon were also discussed in the meeting.

Home Minister said that efforts for de-radicalisation have seen major success in accelerating our vision for a terror-free J&K. He instructed for taking ▶ P11

Gen Dwivedi reviews operational readiness

Army chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi on Friday visited the headquarters of White Knight Corps, also known as XVI Corps, here and assessed the operational preparedness in the region. Gen Dwivedi also pinned Station House Officer of Majalta Sub-inspector Abdul Satar Choudhary ▶ P11

HM visits forward areas along IB in Kathua BSF destroyed 118 Pak posts, 3 terror launch pads along J&K Frontier: Shah

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that Border Security Force (BSF) completely destroyed 118 Pakistani posts and three terrorist launch pads along J&K frontier during recent operations.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah today visited forward areas along the International Border in Kathua, marking the start of his two-day tour of Jammu and Kashmir.

The home minister visited the border outposts of Gurnam and Bobiyian in the



Hiranagar sector and inter-

cials said.

Shah reached Jammu late Thursday night and was received by Lt Governor

Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and senior BJP leaders, including Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Sunil Sharma.

In Kathua, the home minister virtually inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of six welfare schemes for border guards at Bobiyian, the officials said.

Emphasising the need to strengthen border security through modern tools, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that while the constant vigilance of personnel deployed on the frontlines remains crucial, emerging challenges driven ▶ P11

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351 Jan Aushadhi Kendras functional in J&K: Centre

NEW DELHI: The Centre Government on Thursday informed the Parliament that 351 Jan Aushadhi Kendras, under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana, are operational in Jammu and Kashmir, while only three are functional in Ladakh.

In a written reply to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers Jagat Prakash Nadda, said that 351 Jan Aushadhi Kendras are currently functional in Jammu and Kashmir, with 32 centres being closed till December 31, 2025. The Minister said that across the country, 17,990

'No hike in honorarium to numberdars, chowkidars'

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday informed the House that there is no proposal under consideration to increase the monthly honorarium of Numberdars and Chowkidars in the Union Territory.

Numberdars currently receive Rs 1,501 per month, while Chowkidars are paid Rs 1,200. The government also said the honorarium was last revised in 2016 following a Cabinet decision on April 27 of that year.

The revision, it said, had increased the Numberdars' honorarium from Rs

751 to Rs 1,501 and Chowkidars' from Rs 750 to Rs 1,500 per month.

It further said that, at present, there is no proposal to enhance the honorarium for either category. Meanwhile, the government clarified that Numberdars and Chowkidars continue to play a key role at the grassroots level by assisting the administration in revenue-related work, maintenance of records, and local coordination. However, it maintained that any revision in honorarium depends on overall financial position and policy priorities of the Union Territory.

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Another crucial facet of the USBRL Project's socio-economic development efforts has been the construction of over 215 km of approach roads, which include construction of a tunnel and 320 small bridges. This road network has helped the local population in improvement of their connectivity with other areas and also improvement in socio-economic status.

With the ▶ P11

Jammu Metro gains impetus; two rail projects get DPR nod

NEW DELHI: To extend the rail connectivity of existing Srinagar-Baramulla section, a survey for Sopore to Kupwara (34 km) New Line has been sanctioned and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared. However, the project has been dropped because it was found to be infeasible. To further improve rail connectivity, in the Border region, the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of following projects have also been prepared: Qazigund – Srinagar – Budgam doubling (118 km) and Baramulla to Uri new line (40 km).

After preparation of DPR, sanctioning of project

requires consultation with various stake-holders including State Governments and necessary approvals viz. appraisal of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance etc. As sanctioning of projects is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines cannot be fixed.

Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project of total length 272 Km has been recently commissioned. USBRL project covers the districts of Udhampur, Reasi, Ramtan, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla of Jammu and Kashmir.

The USBRL project has

nomic contributions to the region, with employment generation being a significant aspect of its impact. The project has generated more than 5 Cr. man-days of employment.

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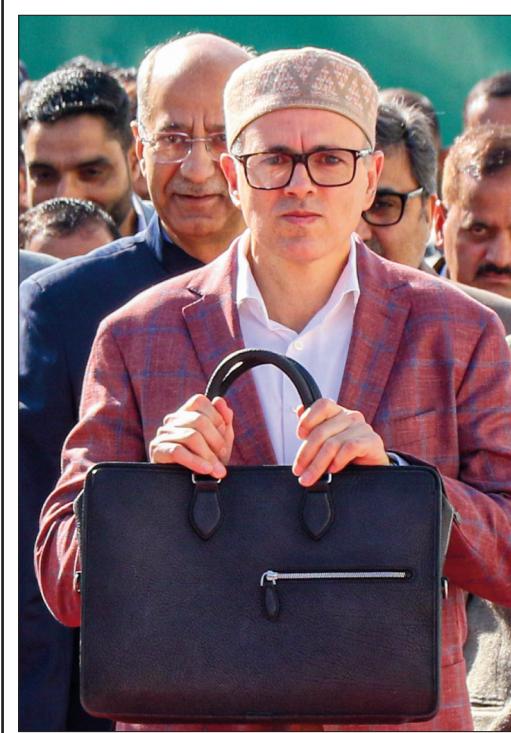
Omar for phased regularisation of Daily Wagers

CM presents Rs 1.27 Lakh Cr J&K Budget, stresses inclusive growth, fiscal prudence

AAY families to get 6 free LPG cylinders; 6K orphans sponsored

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Free LPG cylinders for eligible households
- Monthly sponsorship support for orphan children
- Bullet-proof ambulances for border districts.
- Cath Labs in Rajouri, Baramulla & Doda
- Emergency Hospitals in Uri and Poonch
- Free government transport facility for PwDs
- Modernisation of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra infrastructure
- JK e-Pathshala DTH channels for Classes 1-12
- Indoor games facilities in all government schools
- Anganwadi Centres upgraded into modern Bal Vidyalayas
- Embryo Transfer Technology Labs in every district
- New Mother & Child Hospital at GMC Anantnag
- J&K-wide Cancer Control Strategy
- Support for R&D and scholarships up to PhD
- Incentives to retain staff in remote and difficult regions



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday presented a Rs 1.27 lakh crore Budget for 2026-2027 in the Legislative Assembly, asserting that the financial plan aims to lay a strong foundation for sustainable growth, social harmony and economic prosperity in the Union Territory.

He said his government is committed to transforming the J&K into a modern, progressive and economically vibrant region by promoting investment, innovation and participatory governance.

Presenting the Budget in the Legislative Assembly, Abdullah, who also holds the finance portfolio, estimated total gross receipts and expenditure at Rs 1,27,767 crore.

"The total gross receipts include provision for ways and means advances and overdraft of Rs 14,000 crore. He said the total net Budget estimates for the fiscal stand at Rs 1,13,767 crore, excluding the provision for advances and overdraft.

The Chief Minister said Rs 80,640 crore has been earmarked under revenue expenditure and Rs 33,127 crore under capital expenditure in the Budget estimates for 2026-27.

He added that the expected ▶ P11

'No magic wand for J-K's economic self-reliance'

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said there is no "magic wand" to make the UT economically self-reliant, stressing that sustained multi-sector interventions are required to strengthen its financial position.

Addressing a post-budget press conference here, Abdullah said the government is working to improve Jammu and Kashmir's economic standing through targeted measures across sectors.

"If you are asking whether I have a magic wand to make Jammu and Kashmir self-reliant, the honest answer is no. These budgets have been directed towards improving our economic standing across sectors," he said. ▶ P11

Extended closure of tourist spots hits livelihoods: Omar

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said closure of tourist destinations, including Doodpathri, Tosamaidan and Yousmarg, for about nine months due to security concerns has affected local livelihoods, and the government is considering a relief package.

Abdullah also said that he will take up reopening of the spots with the Union home minister.

Replying to questions by MLAs Saif-ud-Din Bhat and Nazir Ahmed Khan in the assembly, the CM said closure has hit ATVs operators, ponywallas, guides and other stakeholders, ▶ P11

Its NC-centric Budget: Sunil



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Leader of Opposition and senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Friday sharply criticised the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory budget, calling it "National Conference-centric" and alleging that it offers nothing to daily wagers, unemployed youth, BPL and EWS families.

Addressing a press conference, Sharma claimed the budget was crafted to benefit National Conference MLAs, alleging that funds allocated by the Centre were diverted to NC-held constituencies. "This is a budget for NC MLAs. There is nothing in it for the common people of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He accused the government of betraying daily wagers by failing to announce a clear, time-bound ▶ P11

Diesel to be dearer by Rs 2 from Apr 1

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The diesel will go costlier in Jammu & Kashmir from April 01, 2026 by Rs two as Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday announced reduction in rebate on high speed diesel by Rs two per litre.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, the CM proposed reduction in rebate on high-speed diesel by Rs two per liter. "We must also improve the impact of public expenditure by leveraging scale, competition and private initiative. Hence it is proposed to reduce rebate on HSD by Rs 2 per liter. This will rationalise the price of HSD and encourage shift to-

wards cleaner technologies," the CM said.

He said the HSD price in Jammu & Kashmir will be still lower than that in neighbouring States, like Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi.

He said the Government needs to explore every avenue for upscaling revenue generation while enhancing social protection for the poor.

He said his government is dedicated to expanding social security for the most vulnerable sections of society while enhancing J&K's competitiveness in the national economy through grassroots-level reforms.

"This Budget not only strengthens welfare ▶ P11

Mehbooba seeks railway fruit corridor

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Friday called for a dedicated fruit corridor through a rail link to ensure movement of horticulture produce from Kashmir to rest of the valley.

In a letter to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, Mufti sought a dedicated railway line for movement of fruit from rest of the country.

She also thanked him for stopping the rail projects passing through orchards.

"Farmers are not opposed to railway connectivity. On the contrary, a dedicated fruit corridor ▶ P11

NIA conducts raid in GMC Anantnag

SRINAGAR: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday carried out searches at the Government Medical College in the Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the "white collar" terror module busted in November last year.

Officials said a team of NIA sleuths arrived at the GMC Anantnag and carried out searches. They said the searches were in connection with the recovery of a rifle from the locker of a doctor in November last year.

Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather was among the nine persons arrested as part of the terror module investigation that led to the recovery of massive quantities of explosives from Faridabad in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Meanwhile, search operations by security forces were going on in the Koil Karewa area of the Pulwama district, the officials said. They said the search operation was launched following an intelligence input about the presence of terrorists in the area. No arrests or recoveries have been made so far, the officials added.

Nine houses, bakery unit gutted in fire

SRINAGAR: At least nine houses and a bakery unit were damaged in separate incidents of fire in Srinagar city, Friday, officials said.

They said a fire broke out in a house at Shampora in Nowhatta area of the city and the blaze quickly spread to adjoining houses in the densely populated area.

Fire and emergency services rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control, the officials said, adding at least nine houses suffered heavy damages in the incident.

In another incident, a fire broke out in a bakery unit at Budshah Nagar locality in Natipora area of the city.

The officials said the bakery unit was destroyed in the blaze.

Fire and emergency ▶ P11