

Union Home Minister's 2-day visit to Jammu & Kashmir

Ensure poorest of the poor get the benefits of welfare schemes: Union Home Minister

Union Home Minister reviews overall security Scenario Directs that security arrangements for Shri Amarnathji Yatra be tightened further

Lauds the sacrifices of brave J&K policemen : Asks administration to ensure that memorials be built for the brave martyrs in their hometowns/villages.

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During his first visit to the state of Jammu & Kashmir, the Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah, held a number of meetings with officials to assess the Security Scenario in the state, review preparations for Amarnath Yatra and provide good governance in the state. The Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah also visited the home of the martyred Inspector of J&K Police, Arshad Khan and consoled his bereaved family today. He handed over an appointment letter to his wife for a job in the State Government. It was for the first time in three decades of terrorism in Kashmir, separatist groups in Jammu and Kashmir refrained from giving calls for a shutdown on the maiden visit of the Union Home Minister to the Valley.

The Union Home Minister also interacted with a representative group of Sarpanches from the state to gain an insight into the current state of functioning of Panchayats in the state during his visit.

The meetings in Srinagar were attended by the Governor, Union Home Secretary, all four Advisors, the Chief Secretary and Senior officials of the State and Central Governments, of Security Agencies and the Armed Forces.

The review of development programmes focused on improving the lives of the common man. The review covered a wide range of issues connected with improving the economic condition of the people of Jammu & Kashmir, providing them with employment and livelihood opportunities, providing them the benefit of social security schemes, and raising their incomes. The review included, among others, good governance, accelerating development, strengthening the Panchayat and Municipal system, fast tracking the implementation of the Prime Minister's Development Package, building first rate infrastructure, inclusive growth for all communities, balanced regional development with special emphasis on employment generation, and reaching out to the youth.

The Union Home Minister's focus was primarily on ensuring that the benefits of growth and development reach the poorest of the poor. He asked the State Government to focus on better and more efficient implementation of development schemes so that corruption and leakages are plugged and the citizens to get the intended benefits.

While reviewing the preparations for Amarnath Yatra, the Union Home Minister's focus was on a safe and smooth conduct of the Yatra. The review focused on the preparations made so far by security forces in this regard, the improvements made in the arrangements as compared to the previous years and any further requirements of security forces. The review also examined the administrative and other arrangements made for ensuring smooth conduct of the Yatra.

In the Security Review, the security agencies gave a detailed briefing on the security scenario in the state, the results of the last one year's efforts in containing militancy and their future plans. While the improvements in the security scenario were noted and appreciated, there was a detailed discussion on what further improvements could be made for restoring peace normalcy in the state.

The Home Minister gave directions on a number of issues:

1. The State Government should ensure that **old age, disability and widow pensions** reach all those entitled to these, in a timely manner. There should be a quick scrutiny of all eligible people who are left out and ensuring that they are included. The Central Government will ensure additional funds.
2. **The dairy and animal husbandry sector** has great potential in this state. The State should work towards signing an MOU with Amul or Mother Dairy and create a programme for ensuring that it becomes surplus in this sector. This is a sector whose benefits would flow to even small households.
3. The **Poultry sector** too has great potential with the state importing large volumes of poultry products. The State should create schemes for improving the poultry sector as this sector improves the livelihoods of the poorest. The Central Government would support efforts in this direction.
4. The **Handloom and Handicraft Sector** is one of the brightest spots on J&K's economic landscape. The potential in this has not been fully captured. The state should take the help of the Khadi & Village Industries, MSME and Textiles departments of the Central Government to improve nearly 40 various spheres in this sector. The growth of this sector would increase employment and livelihoods of poor households.
5. The state should ensure that the **newly established Panchayati Raj and Urban Local Body system** takes deep roots and establishes itself as the third tier of government. There should be a drive to ensure that Panchayats and ULBs spend the funds given to them. These funds run into thousands of crores of rupees and ensuring their proper utilization would benefit the people.
6. There are many socially disadvantaged groups in the state such as Paharis, Gujars, Bakarwals and other Economically Weaker Sections. The reservation benefits extended to them should be implemented vigorously and no posts in these classes should go vacant.
7. The State Government should take steps to ensure that the newly created Anti-Corruption Bureau focuses on cases of rampant corruption by the High and Mighty.
8. **Women** being the key to any development process need **to be at the centre** of all programmes. The state should work in this direction so that women can get better employment opportunities and livelihoods.
9. Similarly, the state should prepare a **programme for reaching out to the youth** who are highly skilled such as MBBS, Engineers, MBAs etc. and do not have gainful employment or livelihood.
10. State Officers should be fully be sensitive towards **balanced development** of all the three regions, - Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

During the review of the preparations for the Shri Amarnathji Yatra, the Union Home Minister directed all security agencies to be fully alert and take all preventive steps to ensure violence free Yatra. He directed that:

1. There should be **no laxity** in the **enforcement of the SOPs**. Senior officers should personally supervise the arrangements at all levels.
2. Forces should ensure best possible **optimum use of latest technologies** and the gadgets not only for the security of the Yatra but also to facilitate the movement of the devotees and the tourists. He specifically drew attention of the Forces towards anti-sabotage as well as anti-subversion drills and the access control procedures.

Appreciating the whole-hearted cooperation of the people of the State in successful conduct of the Yatra, the Union Home Minister reassured his commitment towards best possible arrangements.

After a detailed briefing on the prevailing Security Scenario in the state, the Union Home Minister, while appreciating the significant improvement in all the parameters relating to the security situation, directed that:

1. There should be **zero tolerance** towards terrorism and terrorists.
2. There should be continued strict **action against terror funding**.
3. **The Rule of Law should be enforced**.

The Union Home Minister praised the work of JK Police in countering terrorism and militancy and directed that the State Government should **commemorate the martyrdom of its policemen in their hometowns/ villages** in an appropriate manner each year. Prominent public places should also be named after martyred policemen.

The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah further added that he would review periodically the performance of the state on multiple fronts.
