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J&K administration will decide on leaders' release: Amit Shah

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There will be no interference from our side, says Union Home Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday told the Lok Sabha that it was for the local administration of Jammu and Kashmir to make an assessment on just when detained political leaders in the Valley were to be released, and that the Centre was not going to interfere in the process.

"The government has no intention to keep any leader under custody even for one more day," he said in response to a question by leader of the Congress Legislature Party in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhary on normalcy in the State and detention of political leaders.

"It is for local administration to decide when political



Making a point: Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaking in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. •PTI

leaders will be released. We don't want to keep anyone [leaders] in jail even for a day more than that is required. As and when the local administration feels the time is appropriate, they will be released. There will be no interference from our side," Mr. Shah said.

Taking a potshot at the Congress, Mr. Shah said that Farooq Abdullah, former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, had been in custody for six months, whereas his father, the late Sheikh Abdullah, had been kept confined for 11 years by the Congress governments of

the past. "Farooq Abdullah's father was kept in jail for 11 years by the Congress. We don't want to follow them and as soon as the administration decides, they will be released."

All leaders should be concerned about political leaders in the Valley. But if leaders were more worried about the people of Kashmir, it would send a better message, he said. Mr. Shah said the situation was normal. "99.5% of students of 11th class sat for exams there, but for Adhir Ranjanji, this is not normalcy; seven-lakh people availed OPD services in Srinagar; Section 144 removed from everywhere. But for Adhirji, only parameter for normalcy is political activity," he said.