

# PM Modi's new India rooted in youth creativity & cultural pride: Ladakh LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, reiterated on Thursday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a New India is rooted in youth creativity, innovation and cultural pride. He said India's future strength lies in the imagination, skills and heritage upheld by its young generation.

Addressing the Valedictory Ceremony of the State Level Kala Utsav 2025, the Lt Governor said the festival celebrates the artistic excellence and cultural expression of students across the Union Territory. He noted that Kala Utsav truly embodies the spirit of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat by bringing together diverse traditions and nurturing cultural unity. Describing the festival as more than a competition, he emphasized that it provides children with a vibrant platform to express creativity, explore identity and remain connected to their cultural roots. "Art connects us,



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta speaking at Valedictory Ceremony of the State Level Kala Utsav 2025.

inspires different thinking and strengthens our understanding of values," he remarked.

Gupta appreciated the Ministry of Education for promoting art and culture in schools through initiatives such as Kala Utsav and Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat, which foster national unity, respect for diversity and cross-cultural learning. Expressing pride in Ladakh's consistent performance at the national level, he congratulated teachers, parents and students for their dedication. "The achievements of our children reflect the collective commitment of

Ladakh's education community," he said.

Highlighting the Prime Minister's transformative vision, the Lt Governor said youth-led innovation, cultural pride and the creative economy form the foundation of a strong and confident India. "Modi ji believes that India's strength lies in its rich heritage and the energy of its youth. When children embrace creativity and stay rooted in culture, India moves closer to realizing its global aspirations," he added.

Kavinder Gupta stated that programmes like Kala Utsav

contribute directly to the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 and the cultural renaissance taking place across the country. The exceptional talent showcased by Ladakhi youth, he said, demonstrates their potential to shape India's future. Congratulating all participants, he said their performances reflect the artistic richness of Ladakh. He urged students to uphold Ladakh's values of simplicity, discipline and hard work while continuing to refine their skills.

Reaffirming full government support, the Lt Governor said the Administration is committed to providing better facilities and opportunities for students' artistic and academic growth. He later felicitated winners in 12 categories with mementos and certificates and interacted with students. Mentors and judges, including renowned Ladakhi singer Shri Dorje Stakmo and Shri Rahul from Kargil, were also honoured.

Earlier, Administrative Secretary, School Education

Department, Bhanu Prabha, welcomed the dignitaries and shared that top performers from the district-level competitions in Leh and Kargil would represent Ladakh at the National Level Kala Utsav 2026. Director, School Education Department, Tashi Dolma, delivered the vote of thanks. Cultural performances by students from Mahabodhi Residential School Leh, Government School Garkon and PM SHRI High School Chumathang marked the event, which was attended by senior officials, faculty members, teachers and students.



## Qatar has exposed Pakistan's lies: Gaurav on Al Jazeera showing full J&K as India

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: "Al Jazeera's updated map showing the whole of Jammu & Kashmir as part of India is not just a correction it is a diplomatic message to Pakistan that the world no longer buys its fabricated narrative."

With these firm words, Gaurav Gupta, BJP J&K Spokesperson and Convenor International Affairs, reacted to the Qatar-based broadcaster's decision to air an India map that includes Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Gupta said the change amounts to a "long overdue recognition of India's sovereignty," calling it a moment that reflects shifting regional equations and Doha's declining willingness to stand behind Pakistan's long-peddled claims.

According to him, the development must be seen against the backdrop of Pakistan's rapidly eroding regional credibility. "Pakistan's foreign policy inconsistencies, its collapsing ties with the Taliban, and its inability to honour key defence commitments have left it isolated. Qatar's map correction shows that the region is no longer captive to Islamabad's outdated rhetoric," Gupta



stated.

He argued that Pakistan's miscalculations from cross-border strikes in Afghanistan to prioritising Saudi Arabia over Doha have weakened its influence in the Gulf, allowing a more truthful, balanced understanding of Kashmir to emerge.

"By displaying the correct map of India, Qatar has delivered a clear signal. It recognises India as a reliable, responsible partner and rejects Pakistan's hollow propaganda. This strengthens India's diplomatic standing at a critical time," he added.

The shift comes as India-Qatar ties

continue to deepen across energy, security, economic and strategic domains. Gupta emphasised that Al Jazeera's new depiction aligns naturally with the trajectory of the India-Qatar partnership.

"This is not merely a map change. It is Qatar telling Pakistan that truth matters, stability matters, and responsible global leadership matters. The world is moving forward, even if Pakistan refuses to," Gupta remarked.

Diplomatic observers say the move sends a clear message to Islamabad, whose influence in the Islamic world has diminished amid internal chaos, economic instability, and foreign policy missteps.

As discussion grows across strategic circles, Gupta concluded by highlighting the leadership behind India's growing international stature "This moment reflects the global respect India commands today under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His decisive foreign policy, strong global engagement and unwavering stand on national sovereignty have ensured that the world recognises India's position with clarity and respect."

## Waqf Board is synonymous with development & transformation: Darakhshan

Inaugurates modern multipurpose Sheesh Khana at Dargah Hazratbal

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR : A state of the art Sheesh Khana was inaugurated by Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, the Chairperson of Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board (JKWB) at Dargah Hazratbal in Srinagar on Thursday.

Waqf Chairperson was accompanied by the Board member Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem, Executive Magistrate of the Board Ishtiyaz Mohiuddin, Imam of Hazratbal Molvi Riyazul Haq, Sajjada Nisheen of Dargah Ghulam Mohiuddin Bandy, Administrator Khurshid Wani, Imam Khateeb Maulana Syed Mushtaq Khosपुरi, Civil Society representative Shakeel Ahmad Khan, Mohammad Shafi Qureshi, Abdul Hamid Nayeemi & others.

Dr Andrabi payed obeisance at the shrine and participated in the Majlis-e-Dua and prayed for peace and prosperity for all.

Later Waqf Chairperson addressed an impressive gathering in the campus where she reiterated her commitment



Chairperson JKWB, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi inaugurating Sheesh Khana at Dargah Hazratbal in Srinagar on Thursday.

of continuing the development story of the Board without any halt.

"Waqf Board is synonymous with development & transformation. We don't believe in hollow statements. We believe in work. We work without breaks, without holidays and which is why we see huge transformation everywhere," said Darakhshan.

Dr Andrabi said that we could work because we never politicized our work

and our places of worship. The Prime Minister trusted us and gave us the opportunity to serve in the first ever Waqf Board of J&K formed as per the Central Act. "We respected our constitutional mandate and put in our full strength as a potent team for our mission. The changes at the ground zero throughout J&K speak louder than our words. Public appreciation is our earning", said Dr Andrabi.

## CS advocates robust lifelong skilling ecosystem for J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Thursday convened a high-level meeting of concerned officers and academicians to deliberate upon the proposed action plan of the Skill Development Department (SDD) for initiating a comprehensive mega skilling programme for the population of Jammu & Kashmir in the productive age group of 18-39 years.

The meeting, held to chart out a structured roadmap for transforming J&K into a skilled and employment-ready workforce hub, was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education Department; Principal Secretary, Finance; Managing Director, J&K Bank; Vice Chancellor, BGSSB; Secretary, Skill Development; Secretary, School Education; Managing Director, Skill Development Mission; Director, SDD; senior faculty members and Deans from universities, IIT Jammu, and other eminent academic and technical institutions, besides senior officers of the administration.

Speaking in the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the critical importance of creating a robust and sustainable platform for skilling the youth of J&K, describing skilling as a continuous and evolving process that cannot be achieved in a short span of time.

He maintained that establishing a strong foundational ecosystem would provide the necessary momentum and allow gradual expansion and strengthening of skilling initiatives in future.

He emphasized the urgent need for a well-defined and targeted action plan to skill lakhs of individuals in the 18-39 age group, enabling them to enhance their employability and secure sustainable livelihoods.

Drawing parallels with sectors such as medicine and engineering, he highlighted how the creation of dedicated regulatory



Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing a high-level meeting on Thursday.

frameworks like NMC and AICTE, along with premier institutions such as AIIMS, IITs and NITs, led to the systematic development of trained manpower and attracted private sector participation.

The Chief Secretary called for emulating a similar model in the skill development sector, stressing its alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. He underlined the necessity of defining clear roles for schools, colleges, universities, institutions of excellence like IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, and technical institutions such as ITIs and Polytechnics.

He further stressed that the success of this model should be measured through tangible outcomes, with strong linkage to employment whether through self-employment or private sector placements.

Participants from academic institutions and stakeholder departments shared valuable insights and assured their full cooperation by contributing resources, expertise and manpower to ensure the effective implementation and success of the proposed action plan in accordance with its core objectives.

Secretary, Skill Development Department, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, elaborated on the roadmap, stating that the proposed framework envisions skilling as a lifelong process beginning right from school education. He outlined a structured approach whereby students from Classes 6th to 9th would be imparted foundational vocational skills,

followed by elective courses in Artificial Intelligence and Entrepreneurship from Classes 9th to 12th. This initiative aims to equip every learner with essential competencies required to thrive in the rapidly evolving global economy.

He further explained that at the collegiate level, a 'Career Launchpad' model would be introduced, offering minor skilling courses in digital and technology skills, business, finance, entrepreneurship, green energy, creative and design fields, complemented by soft skills, workplace readiness and structured placement support.

Director, Skill Development, Shahzad Alam, informed that technical institutions would be transformed into industry-ready skilling hubs in collaboration with MSMEs. This would involve curriculum revision, capacity building of trainers and infrastructure upgradation, with Polytechnics being strengthened and eventually developed into a dedicated Skill University for J&K.

The meeting also highlighted the importance of integrating short-term skilling programmes, mid-career upgradation courses and competitive examination packages to institutionalize lifelong learning as a social and economic norm. This would encourage individuals to continuously invest in enhancing their professional competencies throughout their careers.

Among the key ecosystem

enablers discussed were effective placement coordination mechanisms, skill financing solutions, introduction of 'Skill Passports' reflecting individual skill scores, and establishment of a comprehensive institutional framework for continuous monitoring and evaluation of skilling initiatives across J&K.

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JAMMU: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), Shailendra Kumar, on Thursday chaired a Pre-Budget meeting to review and discuss the Revised Estimates (RE) 2025-26 and Budget Estimates (BE) 2026-27 for the Agriculture and Horticulture sectors of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting focused on a detailed review of expenditure and proposed allocations under CAPEX, HADP, SASCI, CSS and NABARD.

Present in the meeting were Secretary in APD, Director Finance APD,, Director (Planning) APD, Managing Director JKAGROS; Secretary Kisan Advisory Board; Director Agriculture, Director Horticulture, Director CAD Jammu; Director Directorate; representatives of SKUAST-J & SKUAST-K; Joint Directors of Agriculture and allied sectors; Deputy Director Agriculture (Planning); Chief Agriculture and Horticulture Officers of Jammu Division, scientists and senior officers of the



ACS, APD Shailendra Kumar chairing a Pre-Budget meeting.

department while officers from the Kashmir Division participated virtually.

During the meeting, the ACS emphasized that special attention is being given to ensure expenditure under HADP, CSS and CAPEX aligns with long-term infrastructure development goals of the agriculture and horticulture sectors. He conducted an extensive review of CSS components under Krishonnati Yojana, highlighting flagship schemes including PMKSY, PDMC, SMAM, RAD, RKVY, PKVY, ATMA, NFSM, and

others aimed at promoting rural prosperity and farm sustainability.

He issued clear instructions to all the departments under the APD to integrate awareness on stray animal management during every extension activity, noting that this is also in compliance with directions of the Supreme Court. He stressed that stray animals must not be seen within office premises and directed that Nodal Officers be appointed in each department to monitor and manage stray animal-related responsibilities.

Reviewing the PDMC component,

Arora, who delivered an insightful session on GST Litigations, discussing notices, audit proceedings, documentation standards and recent developments in GST dispute resolution. The programme was moderated and steered by CA Jatin Malhotra, Secretary, who ensured smooth coordination of the sessions and facilitated active engagement between the speakers and participants.

A formal vote of thanks was delivered by CA Amit Gupta, Vice Chairman, expressing gratitude to the

Chief Guest, speakers and participating members for contributing to the success of the seminar.

Members of the Branch Management Committee, including CA Ayush Sawhney and CA Ayush Mahajan, also assisted in the overall coordination of the event.

The seminar concluded with appreciation from participants for the rich technical content and the continued efforts of ICAI J&K Branch in organising impactful knowledge-driven programmes.

## ICAI- J&K Branch organises seminar on 'GSTR-9, GSTR-9C & GST Litigations'

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu & Kashmir Branch of NIRC of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) organised a seminar on "GSTR-9, GSTR-9C & GST Litigations" at ICAI Bhawan, Canal Road, here on Thursday. The programme was conducted under the banner of the GST & Indirect Taxes Committee of ICAI and witnessed enthusiastic participation from members.

P. K. Bhat, Commissioner (State Taxes), Jammu & Kashmir, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He appreciated the proactive role of ICAI in strengthening GST awareness and highlighted the importance of accurate and timely annual return filing to ensure smooth tax administration.

In his welcome address, CA Sourav Pargal, Chairman, ICAI J&K Branch, highlighted the



ICAI- J&K Branch members felicitating P. K. Bhat, Commissioner (State Taxes), J&K.

Branch's commitment to facilitating continuous professional development and noted that the seminar was aimed at addressing the practical challenges faced by members in annual compliances and litigation matters under GST.

The technical deliberations were led by eminent speakers. CA Navya Malhotra, who spoke on GSTR-9 and GSTR-9C, covering key reporting aspects, reconciliation issues and practical challenges encountered by professionals. CA Tarun

he stressed strengthening of the micro-irrigation initiatives. He directed the officers to enhance farmer awareness regarding micro-irrigation facilities and associated subsidies. He added that the greatest benefits must reach the farmers who have adequate water availability for irrigation expansion.

He further instructed that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) be circulated to all departments, ensuring that no work is executed outside approved project guidelines. He directed all the departments to submit Utilization Certificates (UCs) and ensure financial achievements are reported within one month.

ACS also reviewed the progress on JKCIIP, discussed existing bottlenecks and directed that year-wise targets be communicated to all Chief Officers for effective and timely implementation.

The meeting concluded with a call for coordinated efforts across all wings of the Agriculture Production Department to ensure efficient budgeting, timely project execution and strengthened farmer-centric service delivery.