

LG Kavinder underlines Ladakh as a top destination for nature, spirituality, and adventure

Calls for collaboration with Maharashtra travel industry to boost tourism, visitors inflow in Ladakh

STATE TIMES NEWS

PUNE: The Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, interacted with Tour and Travel Operators from Maharashtra, aiming to further strengthen tourism cooperation between Ladakh and Maharashtra.

During the interaction, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted Ladakh's immense tourism potential, noting that the region is globally renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, serene environment, rich cultural heritage, ancient monasteries, high mountain ranges, pristine lakes, and diverse adventure tourism opportunities. He said that every visitor to Ladakh experiences a unique blend of nature, spirituality, and adventure.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta interacting with Tour and Travel Operators from Maharashtra.

Narendra Modi, Ladakh has witnessed significant improvements in infrastructure development, road connectivity, air services, and tourism facilities. He emphasized that the administration's clear focus is on promoting sustainable tourism while safeguarding the fragile environment and creating employment opportunities for local youth.

Sharing his recent experiences, the Lieutenant

Governor informed that since assuming office, he has toured most parts of the Union Territory over the past five months, including Nubra, Zaskar, Hanley, Aryan Valley, Kargil, Drass, Darehik, and several other remote areas. These visits, he said, provided valuable insights into Ladakh's tourism potential at the ground level.

The Lieutenant Governor underlined the crucial role of

Tour and Travel Operators in promoting tourism, stating that they serve as a vital link between tourists and destinations by introducing unexplored areas and unique experiences. He noted that Maharashtra, being a major tourism market, holds significant potential for strengthening tourist inflow to Ladakh.

He urged tour operators to include Ladakh's adventure tourism, cultural tourism,

spiritual tours, and ecotourism in their travel packages and assured that the Ladakh Administration remains fully committed to providing policy support, coordination, and facilitation to promote tourism in the region.

Concluding the interaction, the Lieutenant Governor expressed confidence that such engagements would give new direction and momentum to tourism partnerships between Ladakh and Maharashtra, contributing to sustainable growth and mutual cooperation.



IIM Jammu launches Trekking-Based Leadership Skills MDP for NTPC Managers

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU : The Indian Institute of Management Jammu inaugurated a unique trekking-based Leadership Skills Management Development Programme (MDP) designed to enhance leadership capabilities among NTPC managers. The programme was formally launched at the Vedanta MDP Block on 13th Jan 2026 with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, marking the commencement of an experiential learning journey amidst the scenic backdrop of the Lower Himalayas.

Scheduled from 12 to 14 January 2025, the intensive programme features carefully curated sessions aimed at fostering both personal and professional growth. The initiative seamlessly integrates classroom learning with immersive trekking experiences, enabling participants to develop critical leadership competencies including team building, strategic thinking, conflict resolution, sustainability, effective communication, intrapreneurship, and digital transformation through real-world challenges.

The inaugural ceremony was presided over by Prof. Jabir Ali, Program Director and Dean Faculty and Research, IIM Jammu. The ceremony was graced by Prof. Sanjeev



IIM Jammu faculty with NTPC managers posing for a photograph.

Pathak, Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy, IIM Jammu, and Dr. Ateeque Shaikh, Program Director, IIM Jammu.

Addressing the participants, Prof. Jabir Ali, Program Director and Dean Faculty and Research, IIM Jammuhighlighted the rapid growth trajectory of IIM Jammu, from its initial transit campus to the development of world-class infrastructure and academic ecosystems. He emphasized the Institute's strong faculty pool, focus on quality excellence, international collaborations, and its progress towards achieving Triple Crown international accreditation. He underlined the importance of sacrifice, commitment, and leadership in becoming torchbearers of organizational excellence. He also encouraged participants to

explore executive academic pathways such as EMBA and PhD programmes and invited them to actively collaborate with the Institute. He reaffirmed his availability for academic and professional engagement and stated that the programme aims to bring meaningful transformation in leadership perspective.

Prof. Sanjeev Pathak, Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy, IIM Jammu in his address, emphasized the privilege of working in a prestigious Maharatna organization like NTPC where strong leadership enables sustained performance and growth. He noted that the three-day programme would be highly enriching and focused on value creation, experiential learning, and practical application. He highlighted the importance of

feedback, continuous engagement, peer learning, and gave an overview into the Executive Education and Consultancy initiatives at IIM Jammu. He encouraged participants to remain connected with the Institute and share their professional success stories.

Participants introduced themselves and shared their expectations from the programme, reflecting strong enthusiasm for experiential learning and leadership development. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Ateeque Shaikh, Program Director, IIM Jammu. The trekking-based MDP reflects IIM Jammu's continuous pursuit of innovative pedagogy, leadership excellence, and industry-academia collaboration, creating transformative learning experiences for senior professionals.

Sakhsam Valley part of Maharaja Hari Singh's J&K, says Gaurav; China's presence illegal

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP Spokesperson and Convenor, International Affairs, Gaurav Gupta on Tuesday issued a strong and unequivocal statement asserting that Sakhsam Valley, which formed an integral part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir under Maharaja Hari Singh, is the sovereign territory of India, and that any construction, infrastructure development or activity by China in the area is illegal, illegitimate and unacceptable.

Gupta said Sakhsam Valley falls within Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), a region that Pakistan continues to occupy illegally. "Pakistan is itself an illegal occupant and therefore has absolutely no authority, locus standi or moral right to 'gift', transfer or permit any third-party activity on Indian land," he said, rejecting Pakistan's attempts to legitimise Chinese presence in the area.

Strongly condemning China's ongoing construction and infrastructure activities, Gupta stated, "China is operating on land that does not belong to it. This is a blatant violation of India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such



actions are in complete disregard of international law and are outrightly rejected by the people of India."

Reiterating India's longstanding and consistent position, Gupta said that India has never recognised the so-called China-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963, under which Pakistan illegally attempted to cede Indian territory in Sakhsam Valley to China. "That agreement is null and void, as Pakistan had no legal authority to negotiate or transfer territory that does not belong to it," he asserted.

The BJP leader further reiterated New Delhi's categorical non-recognition of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), stating that the project passes through Indian territory that is forcibly and illegally occu-

pied by Pakistan. "No amount of investment, construction or propaganda can legalise an illegal occupation. CPEC remains unacceptable to India in its entirety," Gupta said.

Recalling history, Gupta emphasized that the entire Jammu and Kashmir legally acceded to India in 1947 through the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh. "Historical facts, legal documents and international norms are clear. No collusion between China and Pakistan can alter this reality. Sakhsam Valley is, and will remain an inseparable part of India," he asserted.

Gupta further said that genuine peace and friendship in the region are impossible unless China vacates all illegally occupied Indian territories, including Aksai Chin, which was occupied by China in 1962. "Friendship cannot be built on enmity and aggression. If China truly seeks stable and respectful relations with India, it must first undo its historical wrongs," he said.

Drawing a broader geopolitical parallel, Gupta said China's illegal occupation of Tibet exposes its expansionist mindset. "The world knows how Tibet was force-

fully annexed. The same pattern of coercion, occupation and disregard for sovereignty is now evident in China's actions in PoJK," he remarked.

Calling out the China-Pakistan nexus, Gupta said, "Chor-chor mauser Bhai - China and Pakistan are partners in illegal occupation. Neither of them has any legitimate claim over even an inch of Indian territory under their control."

He emphasized that India will continue to raise its objections firmly at all diplomatic and international platforms and will not tolerate attempts to alter facts on the ground through illegal construction, strategic manoeuvring or cartographic aggression.

"The BJP stands united and uncompromising in the defence of India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Any compromise on national territory is non-negotiable," Gupta concluded.

"Once a soldier, always a soldier": Satish at Veterans Rally

STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma, on Tuesday paid rich tributes to veterans, war widows and serving soldiers during the 10th Veterans' Day and Ex-Servicemen Day mega rally held at Rajouri, organised by the Northern Command of the Indian Army.

The event witnessed presence of senior Army officers including Lieutenant General Prateek Sharma, GOC-in-C Northern Command; Lieutenant General P. K. Mishra, GOC White Knight Corps and Major General Kaushik Mukherjee, GOC 25 Infantry Division besides a large gathering of ex-servicemen, Veer Naris and their families.

Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma said that Veterans' Day is not merely a ceremonial occasion but a solemn reminder of the unparalleled sacrifices made by the Armed Forces to safeguard the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the nation. He said the bravery, discipline and professionalism of Indian soldiers have earned



Sports Minister Satish Sharma interacting with veterans, war widows and serving soldiers during 10th Veterans' Day celebration.

global respect for India. Describing veterans as lifelong torchbearers of patriotism, the Minister said, "Once a soldier, always a soldier. A fauji never truly retires. His sense of duty, courage and discipline continue to guide the society even after retirement."

Sharing his personal note while getting emotional, Satish Sharma said that his father was an ex-serviceman and he grew up imbuing the values of the Army. He said that even after retirement, his father continued to serve the people through public life, reflecting the spirit of lifelong service that defines a soldier.

The Minister highlighted the crucial role of veterans in Jammu and Kashmir, stating that retired soldiers continue to contribute to peace-building, social harmony and youth mentorship through initiatives such as Operation Sadbhavana. He said Jammu and Kashmir is today witnessing a new era of peace, stability and development due to the sacrifices and dedication of the Armed Forces.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to ex-servicemen and their families, Satish Sharma said their welfare remains a top priority. He informed that mechanisms such as the Army Welfare Placement

Organisation (AWPO), State Soldiers' Welfare Board, Soldier Assistance Centres and Veer Sainik Assistance Centres are being strengthened to provide employment, legal, medical and rehabilitation support to veterans and their dependents.

Paying heartfelt tribute to Veer Naris and families of martyrs, the Minister said their courage and sacrifice are a source of inspiration for the entire nation. He assured them of continued support from the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and the Armed Forces.

On the occasion, specially designed scooters were distributed among the disabled soldiers to enhance their mobility and independence. Satish Sharma personally handed over the scooters and interacted with the beneficiaries.

The programme also featured cultural performances by personnel of the Madras Regiment and Punjab Regiment, adding patriotic fervour to the event.

The rally concluded with interactions between the Minister, senior Army officers, veterans, NCC cadets and members of the public.

Sr DCM Jammu Div, Northern Railway calls on LG



Uchit Singhal, Sr DCM Jammu Division, Northern Railway calling on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU : Uchit Singhal, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu Division, Northern Railway called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj

Sinha, on Tuesday. The Lieutenant Governor congratulated Uchit Singhal on being conferred with the Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar 2025. The presti-

gious award recognizes Shri Singhal's exceptional leadership and meticulous planning in managing train operations during Operation Sindoor and aftermath of floods.

Singhal briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the significant milestones achieved by the newly established Jammu Railway Division during the 2025 calendar year. He also discussed the upcoming railway projects slated for 2026 with respect to infrastructural development, non-fare revenue generation, business development and enhancing passenger convenience.

Opportunity for J&K to focus on areas outside Valley for a 'one state, one global standard tourist destination'

PM Modi has been first to give idea of promoting a 'one state, one global standard tourist destination'

Omar Abdullah must take on call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Substantial unexploited potential around Shivaliks/Chenab /Pir Panchal for commercial summer / winter/Pilgrim tourism

DAYA SAGAR

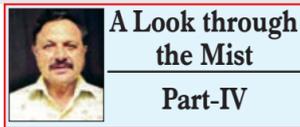
Access to potential areas /places like Bhaderwah / Paddar/ Machail Mata for the tourist could be given also via Basohli as well as from Chamba (HP).

The job can be started even now for taking the tourists to the vast deodar forests, the meadows, the springs and snows of Jammu Province on the tracks passing through the shrines and places of worship in Kathua/Udhampur/ since the region also has large potential for Pilgrim Tourism.

The sector other than conventional tourist resorts/recreation parks/ pleasant weather /snows that makes local people to still visit an area even under poor means of communication and com-

forts is that which comprises of places of pilgrimage/ ancient temples / shrines/sacred rivers - lakes- mountains and hence the pilgrim tourism could be used as seed input for promoting commercial tourism in potential areas Mansar, Saruinsar, Paed Devta , Sudh Mahadev (Shiva temple, Gauri Kund) , Sukrala Mata, Machail Mata and like .

From Udhampur tourist could be conducted to Bhaderwah via Duddoo too. Udhampur through to Sudh Mahadev Tourist could be conducted via Maan Talai to areas of pleasant weather, beautiful meadow, hills and forests. There the tourist can stay/ relax after negotiating through hot and dry zones of Jammu province in and around Laati that is 15 to 20 km from Mantalai .



A Look through the Mist Part-IV

Nearly eight Km from Laati is Jakhed where there is an ancient Naag temple & a small Masjid with very cool weather/ deodar trees / beautiful meadows around with River Tawi passing through and places for 2 to 3 day stay around with about 20 km is Basantgarh(80 Km Udhampur) with lot many Deodar trees around/ with frequent rains.

Basant Garh (Basaar)has holy shrine of Purdaar Devta/ Nag Devta (economically weaker population around)

with beautiful Khaned 8 to 10 Km ahead with beautiful meadows and a local river/ nallah to welcome the tourist with people on one bank of Dogra race and the other bank speaking Kashmiri.15 Km from Basant Garh is fascinating scenario of Duddo with about 4 Km on the north is Shiv Gali (Sehogali) inheriting Chamanda Mandir and about 10km from Seogali in the north east is Kakddi Dhar mountain range (named so since its of the shape of a melon/ Kakaddi) with on top of it a very large meadow/ plains with very cool & pleasant weather. And nearly 10 km Ahead of Seogali is Gandh Top with a Nag Temple a local fair is also held. Dareoo, Potato, maize, Guehchi are found in abundance in this area. Local

Gaddies rear sheep / goat. Blankets/ kambal and loyees are available. A very cool village Majohi is 7 km ahead of Gandh Top taking one to Kalaunta(some call it Kalbanta).

From Rannagar (districtUdhampur) one could go to Kalonta (14 Km), then to Majauri (40 Km), then to Gandh Top (nearly 7 Km) and Duddo (25 Km) with Ram Nagar Fort .Sudhmahadev could also be approached from Ram Nagar via Basant Garh and enroute Majauri& Gandh Top can provide end to the visitors to relish and stay. Duddooloads to Suez Dhar (15 km from Bhaderwah). on the way to Kailash Kund.

From Padri Top/Dhaar/ Sone Bawali a tourist can also go to Chamba Himachal

Pradesh via Bhaderwah Ghot . Bal Padri Bhaderwah touches Tehsil Gandoh. Between J&K and HP Bhaderwah Ghot is boundary point. Bhaderwah Sarthal Chamba (Sarthal to Chamba and Sarthal to Bani) road links could be improved so that people visit from HP for religious purposes also. Tourist from Dalhauji, Khajjar and Chamba side could enter Doda District from Bhaderwah side bypassing the warm areas during the summer. Access to potential areas /places for the tourist could be given via Basoli as well as from Chamba (HP).

To be continued
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