

LG Kavinder Gupta flags off Ladakh students for Rashtriya Ekatmata Yatra 2026

STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: Reaffirming the commitment to strengthening the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat', the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on Wednesday flagged off a group of 30 students from Lok Niwas, Leh, for the Rashtriya Ekatmata Yatra 2026 - Student Experience in Regional Understanding (SERU) tour.

The initiative is organised by Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in collaboration with Vidyarthi Sewa Trust. The group comprises 11 girls and 19 boys from Eliezer Joldan Memorial College under the University of Ladakh, and the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies.

During the 13-day structured exposure programme,



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta flagging off students from Lok Niwas Leh for Rashtriya Ekatmata Yatra 2026.

students will visit Gurugram, Chandigarh, Manali, and Jammu to promote national integration and regional understanding. The itinerary includes visits to premier institutions and landmark sites such as the Maruti Suzuki India Limited plant in Gurugram and Rashtrapati Bhavan,

among others. A unique aspect of the programme is the students' stay with host families in different regions, offering them firsthand experience of local cultures, traditions, and lifestyles.

Addressing the students, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised that such exposure tours play a vital role in

fostering dialogue, cultural exchange, and experiential learning among youth. He described SERU as a meaningful initiative to realise the vision of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat by nurturing emotional bonds between citizens of diverse regions.

Gupta noted that through

cultural exchanges, visits to historical sites, and community interactions, participants gain valuable insight into India's rich heritage and governance systems. He highlighted that the programme broadens academic and professional horizons by familiarising students with educational institutions, industrial establishments, and administrative frameworks.

Commending ABVP and Vidyarthi Sewa Trust for their sustained efforts, the Lieutenant Governor encouraged students to act as ambassadors of Ladakh and contribute meaningfully to nation-building. He extended his best wishes for a safe, successful, and enriching journey, reiterating the Administration's commitment to youth empowerment in Ladakh.

PM Modi Becomes First World Leader To Cross 100 Million Followers On Instagram



J&K Bank approves project for financing for 'Heights III Extension' in Jalandhar

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Reinforcing its strategic thrust on housing finance across emerging real estate centres, J&K Bank has approved a major residential project titled "Heights III Extension" for financing in its Mohali zone. Located at Jalandhar Punjab, the housing project is being developed by M/s AGI Infra Limited, Jalandhar, Punjab - a leading real estate development company in Northern India.

The project sanction was marked in the presence of the Bank's General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta, Zonal Head (Kathua) Suresh Chaudhary, Cluster Head (Mohali) Vishal Pandhoo and Branch Head Jalandhar Sanjay Kumar, along with representatives of the promoter company including its Managing Director Sukhdev Singh Khinda, General Manager (Finance) Ashwani Kant Aggarwal and Banking



J&K Bank and M/s AGI Infra Limited representatives at project sanctioning ceremony.

Adviser Parmod Kumar Sharma.

Speaking on the occasion, Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta said, "The sanction of Jalandhar Heights III Extension reflects our growing focus on housing finance in emerging business centres across our operational geographies. As urban expansion gathers pace in cities like Jalandhar, we see immense potential in supporting quality residential infrastructure that caters to evolving customer aspirations."

"Reinforcing its role as a

trusted financial partner in the housing sector, J&K Bank remains committed to partnering with credible developers and facilitating seamless, hassle-free and customised home loan solutions for prospective buyers", he added.

Notably, by supporting established developers and well-planned residential projects, the Bank continues to contribute towards planned urban development and improved access to housing finance in fast-growing regions.

Javid Dar inaugurates modern processing cum training centre for fruits, vegetables

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Strengthening efforts to boost value addition and self-employment in the agriculture sector, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Thursday inaugurated a Modern Processing-cum-Training Centre for fruits and vegetables at Udhewala in Jammu.

The centre, established at a cost of Rs 90 lakh, aims to promote skill development, entrepreneurship and income generation among the farmers, rural youth and women, particularly members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).



Agriculture Minister, Javid Ahmad Dar inaugurating a Modern Processing-cum-Training Centre.

While addressing the gathering, the Minister said the government is committed towards empowering the farmers through modern technology, scientific training and value addition initiatives. He stressed the need for departments to identify high-potential sectors and expand skill-based

training programmes to enhance productivity and ensure sustainable livelihoods. "The focus must be on equipping the farmers and women with modern processing techniques and encouraging cultivation of improved and hybrid varieties of fruits and vegetables

to increase returns," he said. The newly inaugurated facility will offer six-month and one-month certificate courses in fruit and vegetable preservation and processing. It will also organise mobile demonstrations and promote community-level processing units to extend technical knowledge to the farmers at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, Soil Health Cards were distributed among the beneficiaries to encourage balanced fertiliser use and scientific soil management practices. The inauguration ceremony was held in the presence of Director Horticulture, Jammu Gul Syed, Director Rural Development Department, Shahnaz

Akhter, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta, Joint Director Horticulture, Jammu, Salil Gupta, Deputy Director (Central), Mukesh Sharma, Chief Horticulture Officer, Jammu, R.K. Kotwal, CCI Sanjeev Kumar, MCC Jammu, Horticulture Information & Publicity officer Randhir Singh Parihar, NRO Satish Kumar, Shrestha Gour, DL-SMSS, HDOS, and other officers and officials of the Horticulture Department.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks and a guided visit of the newly inaugurated facility by the dignitaries facilitated effectively by the Chief Canning Instructor Jammu Sanjeev Kumar Karluia.

UT-Ladakh conducts Training Conference on House Listing Operations for Census 2027

STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: A one-day UT-level Training Conference on House Listing Operations (HLO) for the upcoming Census of India 2027 was held under the chairmanship of Ashish Kundra and moderated by Amit Sharma.

The event was organized by the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department in collaboration with the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The conference was attended by senior officials including Dr. L. Franklin, Commissioner Secretary PD&MD; Rakesh Kumar, Deputy Commissioner Kargil; Moses Kunzang, Administrative Secretary Y&S&G; Ghulam Mohd, Additional Deputy Commissioner Leh; Imtiyaz Kacho, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kargil; Tsewang Gyalson, CPO Leh; Sunil Kaul, State Informatics Officer, NIC; Punchok Paldan, Director NIC Leh; Konchok Gyalson, Joint Director Planning, and officers from the Census Directorate.

The training aimed to strengthen preparedness, coordination, and technical capacity for HLO across the Union Territory. Amit Sharma outlined the context, methodology, and significance of Census 2027, stressing early sensitization of stakeholders, appointment of Nodal Officers, and

inter-departmental coordination. Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra highlighted the Census as the backbone of policy formulation, welfare planning, and equitable resource allocation, urging translation of schedules and materials into local languages and structured training at district, sub-division, and village levels.

The Conference detailed the two-phase approach of the Census in UT-Ladakh-House Listing Operations (HLO) and Population Enumeration (PE)-and emphasized the use of digital tools, including mobile applications and the Census Management & Monitoring System (CMMS), for registration, monitoring, reporting, and fund management. Discussions also covered self-enumeration provisions, data security measures, the Census Act 1948, and technical assistance for strengthening census offices at UT, district, and charge levels.

Participants reviewed roles and responsibilities of census functionaries, training modules, fund disbursement, and mechanisms to resolve field-level challenges. Effective publicity campaigns and inter-agency coordination were underscored to ensure public participation. The conference concluded with a collective resolve to conduct Census 2027 in UT-Ladakh with full focus, precision, and commitment to quality data collection.

3-day skill development training on Lab Animal Techniques concludes

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu concluded its three-day Skill Development Training Programme on Laboratory Animal Techniques for Preclinical Experiments, designed to enhance practical expertise in ethical animal handling, experimental design and GLP-compliant preclinical research.

The programme, held from 24th to 26th February 2026, attracted participants from a wide range of academic and professional backgrounds, including biological sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, veterinary sciences and allied life science disciplines, reflecting a growing interest among young researchers and professionals in hands-on training for high-quality biomedical research.

The valedictory session, addressed by Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director of CSIR-IIIM Jammu, highlighted the importance of regulatory-compliant animal experimentation and adherence to globally har-



Director CSIR-IIIM Jammu, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed with participants and other dignitaries.

monized research standards. Dr. Ahmed emphasized that ethical practices, standardized protocols and quality-assured procedures are vital for generating credible data that can be accepted at the international level.

The session also featured a welcome address, participant introductions and the release of training materials and souvenirs, setting the stage for an immersive and comprehensive learning experience.

Throughout the three days, participants were engaged in both theoretical and practical components. The first day focused on understanding the

biology of laboratory animals, laws and ethical regulations governing animal experiments and hands-on training in handling and restraining laboratory animals. The sessions were conducted under the guidance of senior faculty members including Dr. Ramajayan Pandian, Dr. Govind Yadav and Dr. Nasir ul Rasheed, ensuring a strong foundation in both scientific principles and ethical practices.

On the second day, the programme delved deeper into biosecurity, biomedical waste management and experimental design, including random-

ization, sample size calculation and power analysis.

Participants were trained in dose calculation, clinical observation and humane endpoints, as well as different routes of drug administration and sample collection procedures. The practical sessions provided participants with invaluable hands-on experience, reinforcing the theoretical concepts introduced earlier and emphasizing the importance of accuracy, precision and ethical responsibility in preclinical research.

The third and final day was dedicated to advanced practical skills such as anaesthesia

and analgesia, clinical pathology and histopathology techniques.

Participants were trained in isolation and culture of alveolar macrophages from mice, as well as euthanasia and necropsy procedures, under strict ethical and biosafety guidelines.

The programme concluded with a valedictory session where students presented their Form-B reports, shared feedback and received certificates in the presence of dignitaries and faculty.

The initiative reflects CSIR-IIIM Jammu's ongoing commitment to equip the young scientists and professionals with the technical skills required for cutting-edge biomedical and translational research, while upholding the highest standards of animal welfare, ethics and safety.

The proceedings of the valedictory session were conducted by Research Fellow, Sundas Choudhary while Principal Scientist, Dr. Nasir ul Rasheed presented the formal vote of thanks.

Jammu Police strengthens community bond in Rajeev Nagar; drug awareness drive intensified



SP City South Jammu Dr. Ajay Sharma at PCPG meeting.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu Police South Zone held a PCPG (Police Community Partnership Group) meeting at Rajeev Nagar today as part of its ongoing community outreach initiative. The meeting was led by the SP City South Jammu Dr. Ajay Sharma and attended by SHO Police Station Bahu Fort and Incharge PP Narwal.

During the interactive session, residents of Rajeev Nagar raised concerns about drug-related activities in the area, including

the presence of peddlers, which has caused fear among the local community. The police representatives acknowledged the improvement in controlling such activities and highlighted the need for sustained vigilance. A detailed awareness session on the dangers of drug abuse, including its health, social, and legal consequences, was conducted, urging residents to actively report suspicious activities.

Community members also voiced concerns regarding idle youth causing distur-

bances late at night, creating safety issues for families. The police assured residents that patrolling would be intensified, and prompt action would be taken against individuals involved in anti-social behavior.

The meeting emphasized the importance of strengthening community-police relations, encouraging open communication and active cooperation to maintain law and order. Residents expressed satisfaction over the engagement and guidance provided by the police and appreciated their commitment to ensuring safety, security, and well-being in Rajeev Nagar.

The Jammu Police South Zone reaffirmed its dedication to proactive measures to prevent the entry of miscreants and unauthorized elements into residential areas and to maintain a safe and secure environment for all citizens.

Preparations for HPV vaccination drive in Jammu reviewed

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Additional Deputy Commissioner, Vidhu Shekhar on Thursday chaired a meeting of the District Task Force here to review the state of preparedness for the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination drive scheduled to commence on February 28. The meeting was convened to ensure seamless implementation of the drive and effective delivery of its benefits to the targeted beneficiaries. Chief Medical Officer, Dr Harbaksh Singh; District Immunisation Officer (DIO), Dr Rashmi; Deputy CMO, Dr Arti Nayyar; Regional Transport Officer, Chief Education Officer and representatives of Jammu Municipal Corporation, Police, Information Department and School Education Department, among others, were present on the occasion. The DIO delivered a detailed presentation on the public health significance of the drive, the target group and the logistical preparations undertaken for its smooth rollout. The ADC reviewed the preparedness in depth and was briefed on logistics, vaccine supply arrangements and the awareness initiatives to be carried out at the ground level.

The vaccination drive will be conducted at 28 designated government health facilities across Jammu district with effect from February 28, 2026. These include Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Akhnour, Community Health Centre (CHC) Jourian, AAM-PHC Sungal, AAM-PHC Mera Mandrian, AH Chowki Chonra, PHC Kathar, AAM-PHC Dansal, SDH Kotbhalwal, PHC Amb Garota, CHC Marh, CHC R S Pura, CHC Sohanjana, PHC Bhour Camp, SDH Bishnah, PHC Arnia, PHC Pargval, CHC Khour, PHC Pallanwala, UPHC Sainik Colony, UPHC Subash Nagar, UPHC Janipur, UPHC Shastri Nagar, UPHC Digiana, Rajiv Gandhi Hospital, SMGS Hospital, Govt Hospital Sarwal, Govt Hospital Gandhinagar and SDH Jagti. Parents and guardians of eligible girls are encouraged to visit the nearest designated facility for vaccination.

Seasonal Tulip Garden opens for public at Krishan Chander Park-Poonch



ADC Poonch inaugurating Seasonal Tulip Garden at Krishan Chander Park.

STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Poonch today inaugurated the Seasonal Tulip Garden at Krishan Chander Park, where around 15,000 blooming tulips of six different varieties - Antarctica, Black Jack, Golden, Parade, Blushing Lady, Largo and Fabio - are currently on display, adding vibrant colours and charm to the park landscape.

On the occasion, the ADC inspected the floral arrangements and appreciated the dedicated efforts of the Floriculture Department in maintaining the park in an attractive and well-kept condition. The Assistant Floriculture Officer Atul Sharma and other staff members were also present.

The ADC urged local residents and tourists to visit the park and enjoy the

beauty of the blooming tulips, stating that the garden has significantly enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the area and continues to attract visitors.

The officer also inspected the nursery section of the garden, where plant propagation activities are underway. He lauded the committed work of the Department of Floriculture, Parks & Gardens in maintaining public parks and promoting commercial floriculture across the district.

Emphasizing the importance of agricultural diversification, the ADC encouraged farmers to explore opportunities in floriculture, agriculture and horticulture.

He highlighted that diversification into high-value crops like flowers can substantially increase farmers' income and contribute to the overall economic growth and prosperity of the district.