

Attends 9th Convocation of Central University of Himachal Pradesh

# Youth must adopt 'Nation First' approach for India's bright future: Kavinder

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**DHARAMSHALA:** The Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta on Saturday made a call to the youth of the nation to adopt the 'Nation First' approach as their guiding philosophy in life, asserting that it is only through this spirit of selfless dedication that India can realise its vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Addressing the 9th Convocation Ceremony of the Central University of Himachal Pradesh at Dharamshala as the Guest of Honour - with the Vice President of India C.P. Radhakrishnan gracing the occasion as Chief Guest - the Governor said that India's ancient education tradition has always been rooted in the harmonious integration of knowledge, values and character. He emphasised that the true purpose of education is not merely to secure employment but to achieve the holistic development of the individual - a citizen who is not only professionally capable but also morally grounded and socially conscious.

"A degree is not the end of your journey - it is the beginning of your duty towards society and the nation," the



Governor, Kavinder Gupta addressing 9th Convocation Ceremony of CU Himachal Pradesh at Dharamshala.

Governor said, addressing the graduating students. "You must dedicate your knowledge, skills and talent not only to your personal advancement but to the greater welfare of the nation."

Welcoming the Vice President to Devbhoomi Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta said it was a matter of immense pride that C.P. Radhakrishnan had graced the convocation of the Central University, lending further distinction to this prestigious occasion.

Congratulating the gold medalists and degree recipients, the Governor noted with great pride that 32 students were awarded gold medals, of whom 23 were meritorious girl

students. He said this was a shining testament to the successful realisation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's transformative vision of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', adding that girls today are leading from the front in education, research and innovation, thereby scripting a brighter chapter in India's national story. A total of 511 talented students received degrees across various disciplines during the ceremony.

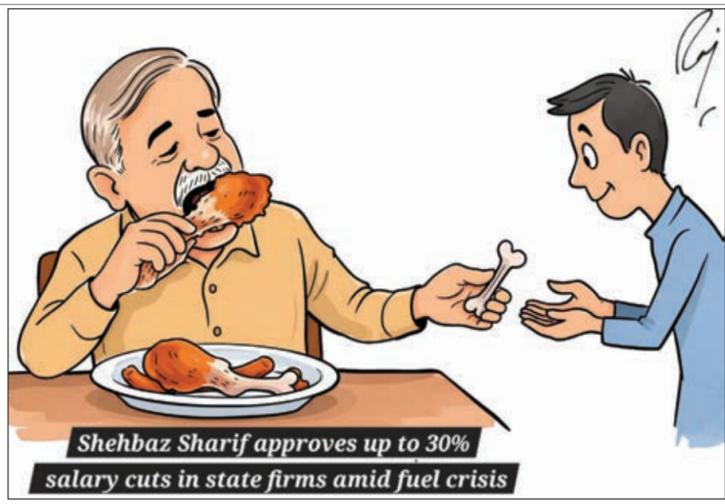
Underlining the pivotal role of universities in India's national transformation, Kavinder Gupta said that higher education institutions must rise to become engines of the Viksit Bharat dream - nurturing not degree holders

alone, but complete human beings equipped with knowledge, innovation and an unwavering sense of national purpose.

Commemending the Central University of Himachal Pradesh for its progressive strides under the National Education Policy 2020, the Governor said that the policy envisions an education system that is inclusive, multidisciplinary and skill-oriented, and the University has admirably aligned itself with these objectives through its emphasis on research, innovation and skill-based learning.

Kavinder Gupta also lauded the University for publishing 34 significant works on the Indian knowledge tradition and for translating texts into languages listed in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution - particularly Punjabi and Dogri - thereby making a meaningful contribution to the preservation and promotion of India's rich linguistic and cultural heritage. He further expressed satisfaction that the University had received

autonomy from the University Grants Commission, calling it a recognition of the institution's academic excellence and quality. The Governor expressed confidence that the Central University of Himachal Pradesh would continue to scale new heights in education, research and innovation and play an increasingly significant role in the nation's journey towards Viksit Bharat.



Shehbaz Sharif approves up to 30% salary cuts in state firms amid fuel crisis

## SCERT Jammu organises Academic Programme on key interventions for effective implementation of NEP 2020

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**JAMMU:** The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) Jammu and Kashmir, Divisional Office Jammu, organised a one-day academic programme on "Key Interventions for Effective Implementation of NEP 2020" under the theme "Shiksha Mein Navachar, NEP 2020 Ka Aadhar" at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, Jammu. The programme brought together faculty members from District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) across the Jammu Division for academic deliberations on innovative approaches envisioned under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary, JKAS, Director School Education Jammu and Director SCERT J&K, as Chief Guest, along with Prof. (Dr.) Sindhu Kapoor, Joint Director, SCERT Jammu Division, in the presence of panel experts, senior faculty members and the coordinator. The inaugural session commenced with the traditional lighting of the lamp.

Manu Vasudeva, Associate Coordinator of the programme, delivered the welcome address, while Monica Sharma, Coordinator of the programme, presented the concept note outlining the objectives and thematic focus of the programme.

Addressing the participants, Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary



DSE Jammu, Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary with others at a programme.

emphasised that successful implementation of the National Education Policy requires innovation, inclusivity and strong academic leadership, and underscored the role of teacher educators in translating policy initiatives into meaningful classroom practices. Prof. (Dr.) Sindhu Kapoor highlighted the importance of innovative, inclusive and learner-centred pedagogical approaches for effective implementation of NEP 2020.

The academic sessions featured presentations including "Research and Innovative Institutional Practices" by Dr. Neeraj Jandial; "Multilingualism under NEP 2020" by Monica Sharma; "From Policy to Practice: Capacity Building Initiatives in Teacher Education at SCERT J&K Jammu" by Arti Gupta and Manu Vasudeva; "Strengthening Foundational Literacy and Numeracy under NEP 2020" by Dr. Sanjeevani and Anil Sharma; "Innovations in Assessment Reforms and HPC" by Rakesh Chobber; "Ullas Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram - Jan Jan

Sakshar" by Paawan Vivek and Dr. Sandeep Singh, Principal, GHSS Ligri Kishtwar; "Interventions Promoting Inclusivity, Gender Sensitivity and Mental Health" by Dr. Rohini Sharma; and "Transformative Pedagogies and Learner-Centred Approaches" by Puneet Thukral, HOD, DIET Samba. Presentations were also made on "Changing Landscape of Libraries: Learning Hubs as Envisioned by NEP 2020" by Dr. Bhuvni, and "Technology Enabled Teaching and Digital Resources" by Vivek Jandial and Dr. Balgar Singh.

The technical sessions were chaired by distinguished academicians including Prof. (Dr.) J. N. Baliya, Member NRC, NCTE GoI, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu; Dr. Reena Salaria, HOD Linguistics and Literature, School of Humanities and Liberal Arts, Cluster University of Jammu; Prof. (Dr.) Veena Gupta, Retd. HOD Dogri Department, University of Jammu; Dr.

Mohd. Zubair Kales, Dean Faculty of Education, Cluster University Jammu; Dr. Atul Hans, Director-cum-Principal, IDRS Jammu; Dr. Sarika Manhas, HOD and SWAYAM Coordinator, Department of Home Science, University of Jammu; Dr. Deep Bangotra, Assistant Professor, GDC Akhnoor; and Dr. Rakesh Bharti, Assistant Professor, GCOE Jammu, who appreciated the quality and relevance of the presentations.

The technical aspects of the programme were efficiently managed by Rakesh Chobber and Vivek Jandial.

The programme concluded with a valedictory session attended by Manisha, Personnel Officer, Directorate of School Education Jammu, as Guest of Honour, who appreciated the efforts of SCERT J&K in organising such academic initiatives to strengthen the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020. Certificates were also distributed among participating DIET faculty during the session.

### J&K placed on India's export map'

## Dr Jitendra lays foundation of Rs 600 cr MNC pharma unit in Kathua

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**KATHUA:** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Saturday laid the foundation stone of a major Multi National Company pharmaceutical manufacturing facility at Village Gadadhar in district Kathua.

The project, with investment of over Rs 600 to Rs 700 cr, is being set up by Orchid Pharma with facilitation from Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), under the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.

Dr. Jitendra said the investment of around Rs 600 crore, being made under the Government of India's Production Linked Incentive Scheme, reflects growing confidence in the industrial and innovation potential of the Jammu & Kashmir region. He said the facility is expected to generate direct employment for nearly 400 people, while creating an equal number of indirect employment opportunities for suppliers, logistics providers and other allied sectors.

Dr. Jitendra described the project as a major breakthrough for the pharmaceutical sector in the region, noting that the facility will manufacture the critical antibiotic intermediate Amino Cephalosporanic Acid (ACA), a key component in the production of cephalosporin antibiotics. At present, India depends almost entirely on



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh laying Foundation Stone of TACA Plant of Orchid Bio-Pharma at Kathua.

imports of this intermediate from China, which creates vulnerabilities in supply security, pricing stability and healthcare access.

The Minister said, the Kathua facility would significantly strengthen India's strategic capabilities in pharmaceutical manufacturing and reduce import dependence on critical intermediates.

The Minister noted that India is rapidly emerging as a major player in the global biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector, currently ranking third in biomanufacturing in the Asia-Pacific region and 30th globally. "The establishment of such advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing units has the potential to place Kathua on India's pharmaceutical export map," he said.

Dr. Jitendra emphasized that the Kathua project reflects India's intent to move up the pharmaceutical value chain thereby reinforcing the country's role as a reliable global supplier of essential medicines, particularly for countries that

depend on India during health emergencies. He added that establishing advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing in Jammu & Kashmir signals a new development approach focused on capability building, skill development and long-term value creation.

"This is not merely about reducing imports; it is about

building strategic capability where it matters most," he said, adding that such projects integrate regions like Jammu & Kashmir into the national growth story through knowledge-driven industries.

Secretary of the Department of Biotechnology, Dr. Rajesh Gokhale said that the bioeconomy is crucial for strengthening the country's scientific and economic capabilities, adding that science-led biomanufacturing initiatives. Managing Director, BIRAC, Dr. Jitendra Kumar; Chairman, Dhamka Group, Ram Gopal Agarwal; Managing Director, Orchid Biopharma, Manish Dhanuka; and Deputy Commissioner, Kathua, Rajesh Sharma, were also present on the occasion.

## AIIMS Jammu observes World Glaucoma Week 2026 with screening and awareness activities

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**JAMMU:** The Department of Ophthalmology at AIIMS Vijaypur, Jammu, observed World Glaucoma Week from 8th to 14th March, 2026. During this period, patients were screened for glaucoma using equipment like Non-Contact Tonometer, Applanation Tonometer, Automated Perimetry and Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT). Glaucoma awareness lectures were organized in the OPD area for patients and their attendants.



AIIMS Jammu faculty posing for a photograph at a programme.

All the activities were conducted under the guidance and supervision of ED & CEO, AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr.) D. N. Sharma. Logistic support for the activities was provided by Dean

(Academics) and MS, AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr.) Meeta Gupta.

Speaking on the occasion, ED & CEO AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr.) D. N. Sharma said that glaucoma is a lead-

ing cause of irreversible vision loss, and by the time a patient becomes aware of the disease, his or her vision is severely compromised. Prof. (Dr.) D. N. Sharma further added that timely detection

and proper management are the only two weapons that can prevent vision loss due to glaucoma.

Dr. Bhavani Raina, Additional Professor and Head, Department of Ophthalmology, AIIMS Jammu, said that the Department of Ophthalmology at AIIMS Jammu has all the latest technology and machines for the evaluation of glaucoma patients and the necessary expertise to treat glaucoma.

The faculty of the Department

Ophthalmology, including Dr. Nitin Kumar (Associate Professor), Dr. Nazia Anjum (Assistant Professor), and Dr. Ridham Nanda (Assistant Professor), played a key role in organizing the event, with active support of Senior Residents Dr. Asna Jabeen, Dr. Sadaf Chaudhary and Dr. Shefali Verma.

The theme for this year's Glaucoma Week was "Early Detection is the Key," emphasizing the role of education and awareness in tackling this "silent killer of vision."

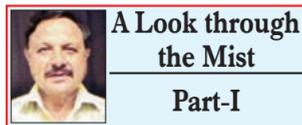
# Maximum Retail Prices of Jan Aushadhi medicines are about 50 pc to 80 pc cheaper than those of leading 'Branded' medicines

Why there are not even 20000 Jan Aushadhi Shops in India, a country of over 650000 villages when the JA medicines are costing so less? What is difference between Generic Medicines and Branded Generic Medicines?

■ DAYA SAGAR

As per a PIB press release of 13th FEB 2026 5:28 PM based on reply given by Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Anupriya Patel, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on 13-02-2026 under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), a total of 17,990 Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) have been opened across the country as on 31.12.2025 and the Government has set a target to open 25,000 JAKs by March 2027. The product basket consists of 2,110 medicines and 315 medical devices and consumables and it covers major therapeutic groups including cardiovascular disease, oncology, anti-diabetic, anti-infectives, anti-allergic and gastro-intestinal medicines. The reply has also said that The maximum retail prices (MRP) of Jan Aushadhi medicines are about 50% to 80% cheaper than those of leading 'branded' medicines. For medicines included in the National list of essential medicines (NLEM) list, the prices are fixed at a rate which is at least 50% lesser than the ceiling price & for medicines not listed under NLEM, the prices are fixed at a rate which is at least 50% lesser than average MRP of the top 3 leading brands of the equivalent

product available in the market. Before that also a press release of Press Information Bureau of 06 JAN 2026 05:02 had said that PM Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) Implemented through Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBDI) had opened 17,610 Jan Aushadhi Kendras ( registering sales of Rs.1409.32 Cr ) holding a product basket of 2110 medicines, 315 medical devices & consumables covering 29 therapeutic groups such as Anti-infectives, Anti-diabetics, Cardiovascular, Anti-cancers, Gastro-intestinal medicines, etc. where Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Sanitary Napkins at 71/- per pad are also made available through JAKs (over 96.30 crore Suvidha Sanitary Pads had been sold by then and out of this, over 17.90 crore were sold in 2025). The same press release had also said that as on 31-03-2025 there were 15403 JAKs and the turn over on MRP base was Rs. 2022.47 Cr (the figure given needed rechecking) which led to savings of approximately Rs 8000 crore to the citizens and in 2025-26, till 30.11.2025, PMBI had made sales of Rs 1409.32 crore, which had led to savings of approximately Rs 5637 crore to the citizens. The report



also said that distributor network had increased from 36 distributors to 39 distributors. The element of the press release that would have attracted the immediate attention of common man would surely have been where it said "< in 2025-26, till 30.11.2025, PMBI had made sales of Rs 1409.32 crore, which had led to savings of approximately Rs 5637 crore to the citizens." The maximum retail prices (MRP) of Jan Aushadhi medicines are about 50% to 80% cheaper than those of leading 'branded' medicines.">. A direct saving in pocket expenses to common masses of India in just 8 months worth Rs.5637/= in terms of buying medicines from Jan Aushadhi Kendra for just Rs1409.32 which otherwise would have cost around Rs.7046.32 Cr, surely worth taking note. Before taking the subject further let have a brief on the "Jan Aushadhi" Kendras , branded generic medicines/ generic medicines, why not are there even 20000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras in

a country of over 650000 villages when the JA medicines are costing so less in comparison to private pharma companies, how savings have been possible, could the savings be more & like.

What are branded generic medicines? Who can manufacture these medicines? : Branded generics are off-patent (generic) drugs marketed under a brand name by the manufacturer, rather than just the chemical (generic) name. They are copies of original patented drugs after patent expiry, with the same active ingredients, but sold with branding, marketing, and sometimes perceived added value (e.g., trust or packaging). This differs from "unbranded" or "pure" generics sold only by chemical name. Any pharmaceutical company can manufacture them once the original patent expires, provided they meet regulatory standards (e.g., bioequivalence, quality via FDA or equivalent). In India, many domestic firms specialize in this.

(Source: Various pharma resources, e.g., definitions from FDA-aligned explanations and industry analyses.) India is largest manufacturer of branded generic Allopathic medicines.

What percentage of the manufactured medicines in India is of branded generic medicines on the basis of quan-

tity and value? :

India dominates branded generics, especially in its domestic market (Indian Pharmaceutical Market). Branded generics account for about 85-87% (2023 data), with pure generics ~10% and patented/innovator drugs ~3% ( these figures have been collected from private sources by averaging for idea sake and may not be much different (any one has some official data may kindly provide so as to make reference more direct). Most of India pharma industry on the overall ( 95 -97 % ) focuses on generics market ( patent free ) but specific volume split for branded vs. unbranded could not be found but branded generics dominate the Indian domestic retail market (India produces ~60,000 generic brands across categories, with branded generics central to domestic sales). India is largest exporter of medicines and most of the medicines that are exported are generic & are exported without brand name ( off-patent) like the US ( may be app 35% of exports) where over 95% may be generics (mostly unbranded for US, but India's exports also include branded generics for some other markets). Most of the pharma companies for private trade manufacture brand-

ed generic , and very less pharma companies patent free medicines without brand name excluding some companies who have also started manufacturing medicines by generic name but that too mostly for PMDBI ( Jan Aushadhi Kendras ) and many more private pharma companies would have gone for doing that if not for marketing under their own name labelled with genuinely fair MRP tags atleast for supplying to the PMDBI for sales through Jan Aushadhi Kendras had those responsible for promoting & marketing Jan Aushadhi medicines and enforcing prescription writing by generic name ( atleast by government doctors , both serving & retired ) worked truthfully since 2008 November when the Jan Aushadhi scheme was conceived by the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers Government of India . Even whatever 'small part of market so far has been captured by JA medicines ( launched in 2008 ) too has been only after 2015 and that too only with the efforts of Sh. Narendra Modi PM of India.

To be continued (The writer is Sr Journalist, social activist and analyst J&K affairs)