

Ladakh poised to emerge as India's first model organic UT: LG Kavinder

STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, reiterated Ladakh's potential to become India's first model organic Union Territory, backed by initiatives such as the Mission Organic Development Initiative (MODI).

He emphasized that Ladakh's minimal use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides naturally positions it as a frontrunner in organic farming.

The LG was addressing a large gathering at the one-day Kisan Mela-cum-Vegetable and Flower Exhibition 2025, organized under the ATMA scheme by the Department of Agriculture at Eco-Park, Leh.

He was accompanied by First Lady Bindu Gupta, Executive Councillor Stanzin Chospheh, Administrative Secretary Bhupesh Chaudhary, Joint Director Agriculture Thinles Dawa, and Director DIHAR Dr. O.P. Chaurasia.

Commending Ladakhi farmers for their resilience in challenging climat-



Lt Governor Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta inaugurating Kisan Mela-cum-Vegetable and Flower Exhibition 2025.

ic conditions, the LG highlighted the success of GI-tagged crops such as sea buckthorn and Raktsey Karmo apricots. He stressed the importance of branding and marketing these premium products in national and international markets.

The LG also lauded the Ladakh Greenhouse Project, noting that it is

ensuring year-round vegetable cultivation and addressing critical supply requirements, including for the Indian Army. He added that government subsidies under this project aim to overcome harsh winter shortages and generate local employment.

He called on farmers to fully utilize central schemes like Pradhan Mantri

Krishi Sinchai Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana to improve irrigation, adopt micro-irrigation, and secure crop insurance.

He assured the UT Administration's full support in tackling challenges, including recent damage to alfalfa crops due to heavy rainfall.

Executive Councillor Stanzin Chospheh highlighted MODI's role in transitioning Ladakh to full organic status and advocated for compensation for affected farmers, a dedicated market for niche produce, and the creation of a local seed bank.

Dr. O.P. Chaurasia stressed the export potential of Ladakhi produce and efforts toward year-round cultivation. The LG also visited exhibition stalls, inaugurated organic products, and distributed organic certifications to farmers from several villages.

Earlier, Bhupesh Chaudhary welcomed the guests, while Thinles Dawa delivered the vote of thanks.



MLA Yudhvir Sethi visits flood-affected areas of Bajalta, Pragalta, Tutan Di Khoi, Khana Shargal, Chalni, listens to people grievances

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: MLA Jammu East Constituency Yudhvir Sethi on Monday conducted an extensive tour of various flood and rain-affected areas of his constituency to assess the overall situation and listen to the grievances of the people.

He was accompanied by officials of Agriculture, PDD, PWD, and PHE departments, who were directed to take prompt measures for relief and restoration.

Sethi visited Bajalta, Pragalta, Tutan Di Khoi, Anthan, Badoon, Khana Shargal and Chalni areas of Jammu East Constituency, where heavy rains and flash floods have caused severe damage to roads, agricultural land, and essential infrastructure.

Sethi also distributed ration, blankets and other relief material among flood-affected families to ease their lives in this difficult time.

Interacting with residents, he assured that their concerns regarding damaged roads, disrupted electricity, scarcity of drinking water, and losses to crops would be taken up with the concerned authorities for immediate redressal.

"People should not feel abandoned in these difficult



MLA Jammu East Constituency Yudhvir Sethi during tour of rain-affected area.

times. It is our duty to ensure that relief reaches every household and that damaged infrastructure is restored at the earliest," Sethi said.

He added that special attention would be given to farmers whose fields were washed away due to heavy rains.

"I have instructed agriculture officials to prepare a detailed assessment report of crop losses so that compensation can be provided to affected farmers without delay," he remarked.

Emphasizing the BJP's commitment to stand with people during natural calamities, the MLA said, "Natural disasters test our resilience, but with collective efforts of administration and people's cooperation, we will overcome these hardships."

Local leaders and residents

including Shiv Sharma Bajalta Mandal President; Ajay Sharma BJP Senior Leader; Sunny Sharma General Secretary Bajalta Mandal, Ashok Kumar, Mahan Lal, Ex-Sarpanch; Rimpay, Ashok Singh; Jamaat Ali; Anuradha; Rama Devi; and Ajeet Kumar accompanied the MLA during the visit.

Yudhvir Sethi assured the gathering that he would personally monitor the progress of restoration works and remain in touch with officials until normalcy is restored. He appealed to the people to stay vigilant and cooperate with authorities in relief measures. "Together we will ensure that every affected family receives timely help and all basic facilities are restored soon," Sethi concluded.

SCERT Jammu organises one-day consultative meet

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Jammu, under the leadership of Shantmanu, Financial Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary, Director SCERT Jammu and Kashmir, and under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Sindhu Kapoor, Joint Director, SCERT Jammu Division, organised a one-day consultative meet on Tuesday to review and vet significant research studies undertaken by its Research Cell under UT budget.

The programme commenced with a welcome and an introduction by the Coordinator, Dr. Rohini Sharma, followed by the felicitation of guests.

The academic deliberations featured insightful research presentations by the principal investigators, Dr. Bhuvni on "Status of the Functionality of School Libraries in HS and HSS of Jammu Division and Inclusion of Library Period



SCERT Jammu officials and others after the meet.

in School Curriculum, Yogesh Sharma presented on two topics - "A Research Survey on the Implementation of Bagless Days in Schools as per NEP 2020 in Jammu Division and "A Study on the Impact of Integrating Sports in the School Curriculum on the Vocationalisation of Education: A Special Reference to Jammu Division", Yugal Kishore on "A Study of Psychological Well-Being and Occupational Stress among Teacher

Educators of Jammu Division, and Neeraj Jamwal on "Role of Parents in Early Childhood Care." The research work was reviewed and enriched through the presence of distinguished academicians and scholars including Prof. Dr. Asit Mantry, Head, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu; Prof. Shashi Manhas, P.G. Department of Home Science, University of Jammu (JU); Dr. Samita Wadhwa, Department of

Botany, JU; Dr. Vikesh Kumar, Physical Director, (PTI), Govt. College of Engineering & Technology, Jammu; Dr. Ambika Kumari, Assistant Professor, Govt. College of Education, Jammu; Dr. Ravinder Kour, Associate Professor, GDC Basohli; Dr. Shalini Rana, Associate Professor, Govt. College of Education, Jammu; Dr. Rakesh Bharti, Assistant Professor, Govt. College of Education, Jammu; Ashwini Kumar, Administrative Officer,

Samagra Shiksha; Rakhi Atri, Senior Lecturer, GHSS Surinsar; Jaswinder Kour, Senior Lecturer and Dr. Sarita, Teacher, from SRML Higher Secondary School, Jammu,

The scholarly sessions were convened by Dr. Neeraj Jandiyal, Convener, Research Cell, Jammu Division, while the proceedings were efficiently moderated by Manu Vasudeva and Dr. Sunita Sharma. A dedicated organising team comprising Dr. Sandarav, Rupshe Kapoor, Rukhsana Gulbadan, Dr. Balraj Singh, and Shamim Nazki contributed substantially to the success of the programme.

The consultative meet stood out as a productive forum for academic interaction, critical insights, and validation of research studies, ultimately encouraging innovation and fortifying the pedagogical environment. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Dr. Sunita Sharma, Academic Officer.

CGPWA organises health talk on 'Mental Issues' among Sr. Citizens

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: At a well-attended function organised by the Central Govt Pensioners' Welfare Association, Jammu (CGPWA) on Tuesday to celebrate the 35th Senior Citizen's Day, Dr. Manu Arora, Head of the Psychiatry, Govt Medical College Jammu unfolded a strategy to prevent mental health issues among elders.

The function was presided over by the President CGPWA and former DGP & CVC, Kuldeep Khoda while the former DGP, Dr. Ashok Bhan was the Guest of Honour.

Among others, B R Sharma and Ashok Angurana were present on the occasion. The gathering included pensioners, morning walkers and members of civil society.

Dr. Manu Arora who delivered an illuminating Health Talk on Mental Health Issues among Senior Citizens said that the senior citizens must remain emotionally healthy by staying socially engaged, attend to cognitive health conditions by undertaking brain



President CGPWA and former DGP & CVC, Kuldeep Khoda and other members at a health talk.

exercises reading, lifelong learning and technology adoption. He also emphasized the need for elders to undertake regular exercises, take a balanced diet and regular medical checkup. Ignoring changes, physical or emotional, must not be ignored if persisted for some time. Resilience, meditation, mindfulness, and a positive aging mindset are equally important to ward off these mental health issues by elders.

Dwelling on various mental health issues commonly encountered by elders and the growing magnitude of the problem, Dr. Manu said that the elders get changes which he bracketed as physical, cogni-

tive, emotional, behavioural. The common psychological issues are depression, loneliness, anxiety, sleep disturbances. Dr. Manu said that India is witnessing a demographic shift with the population of elders crossing nearly 140 million which is likely to touch 300 million by 2050. Increasing isolation and elder abuse is causing major problems in India which will be a big challenge as India lacks infrastructure Dementia Homes which exist in western countries in plenty. He observed that "relationship doesn't shine by shaking hands at the best of times but they blossom firmly in critical situations." His lec-

ture was followed by a question answer session in which senior citizens enquired about their concern with the Doctor.

The most impressive and rock-star session was of Dr. Ashok Bhan who presented "The Magic of Music" which underlined the impact of music on the mental health and managing these issues of Senior Citizens. In his 20 minutes unique musical bonanza, nine most popular oldies of 1951 to 1965 and programmed in a package with one meaningful 'antra' of each one of these nine songs which he, along with his three companions- Nisar Ahmad, J L Sharma & Vijay Sambyal, made entire audi-

ence to collective sing with "karaoke" (recorded background music of the songs). This created a fantastic atmosphere in the auditorium, erasing from the minds of senior citizens the concerns of mental health issues which they were seeking solutions from Dr. Manu Arora, minutes earlier. The old songs picked up from films which included Albel (of 1951) Baiju Bawara (1952), Jis Desh mein Ganga Behti hai (1960), Mughle Azam (1960), Jab Pyar Kisi se hota hai (1961), Sasural (1961), Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam (1962), Taxi Driver (1964) and Waqt (1965).

The patriotic song selected by

Dr. Bhan for the grand finale was "Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo" sung by late Lata Mangeshkar in 1963 to commemorate Indian soldiers killed in the Sino-Indian War in 1962.

Kuldeep Khoda in his presidential address, advised senior citizens to avoid isolation and remain active in whatever manner they can easily do and that will change their emotional and psychological thinking. Talking about the soothing effect of old songs, he asked the elders to prefer listening to these songs rather than acrimonious evening TV debates for comfortable sleep which is essential for elders. The President honoured Dr. Manu Arora by presenting a planter.

Earlier, the General Secretary K B Jandial welcomed the guests and apprised them about the history of celebrating Senior Citizen Day since 1991. The vice President Dr. Sudarshan Kumar presented the formal vote of thanks. V K Magotra conducted the proceedings.

MFM Services begin at AIIMS Jammu; first amniocentesis successfully performed



STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant step forward for maternal and child healthcare, AIIMS Jammu has launched Maternal and Fetal Medicine (MFM) services, enabling pregnant women from the region to access advanced care and monitoring for their unborn babies without traveling outside the city.

Recently, doctors at AIIMS Jammu performed their first amniocentesis, a prenatal test to detect potential genetic or chromosomal conditions in the fetus.

The procedure was performed by Dr. Vishakha Gupta, a Maternal and Fetal Medicine specialist, with support from Dr. Natasha Gupta and Dr. Shivani Sharma, in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. This advanced test was previously not freely available in the Jammu region.

Amniocentesis is an ultrasound-guided procedure used to collect amniotic fluid from the sac surrounding the fetus. The fluid is then analyzed to detect conditions such as Down Syndrome and other genetic disorders. In the recent case at AIIMS Jammu, amniocentesis was done as the mother's screening showed a "screen positive" for Down Syndrome (Trisomy 21). The follow-up genetic test (CMA) confirmed normal results, providing reassurance to the family.

In addition, the department now offers comprehensive Maternal and Fetal Medicine services, including specialized ultrasound scans such as NT-NB and Congenital Anomaly (TIFFA) scans, ensuring complete pregnancy care locally without the need to travel outside the city.

Speaking on this achievement, Prof. (Dr.) Shakti Kumar Gupta, Executive Director & CEO of AIIMS Jammu, said, "The start of Maternal and Fetal Medicine services at AIIMS Jammu marks a major milestone in healthcare for this region. Our goal has always been to provide world-class medical facilities to the people of Jammu & Kashmir and nearby areas, and this is another step in that direction. We are proud of our doctors, who are bringing hope and quality care to expecting mothers."

With these new services, AIIMS Jammu is emerging as a key center for advanced pregnancy and fetal care in the region, providing hope, reassurance, and quality care to expecting mothers and their families across Jammu & Kashmir and neighboring areas.

IIM Jammu hosts PARIPEKSH with AWWA Northern Command, blending leadership, service, and happiness

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu, under the aegis of Anandam: The Center for Happiness, hosted an enlightening session of PARIPEKSH. An Alternate Perspective in collaboration with the Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA), Northern Command.

Held at the Mandapam Auditorium, the event featured a keynote address by Shinei Sharma, Regional President, AWWA Northern Command-renowned painter, muralist, sculptor, and entrepreneur. The session was graced by Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu. Designed to foster holistic development, PARIPEKSH promotes dialogue on leadership, happiness, and service, inspiring students to look beyond material success and adopt a "Nation First" mindset.

Shinei Sharma highlighted AWWA's 59-year legacy as India's largest NGO dedicated to empowering army wives and widows. She outlined various



AWWA initiatives such as skill centres, Saksharta literacy programs, Sadbhavna hostels, and Project Milap, which connects soldiers' families with their roots. Drawing from her personal journey of resilience, Sharma shared insights into the life of an army wife marked by frequent relocations, emotional strength, and finding peace through art and ancient wisdom. Reciting a Sanskrit Shaloka, she emphasized inner strength, unity, and lifelong learning as keys to happiness

and leadership. She noted that reading connects one with countless lives, enriching perspective and empathy.

Prof. B.S. Sahay welcomed the AWWA delegation, recalling the leadership of Lt. Gen. Pratik Sharma, GOC-in-C, Northern Command, and his contribution to Operation Sindoor.

He praised the courage of army personnel and the fortitude of their families, referring to army wives as the true "Shaktis." Prof. Sahay stressed the transformative impact of armed forces

values-discipline, integrity, and purpose on civilian life and leadership. He invited AWWA's support in mentoring students through Anandam to foster emotional well-being and ethical leadership. Brig. Neeraj Soni, Co-Chairperson, Anandam, noted that PARIPEKSH bridges the ethos of the military and academia, combining discipline with intellectual exploration. He highlighted the session's role in reshaping the students' understanding of leadership as service-oriented and

value-driven. An interactive Q&A session followed, allowing students to engage directly with Sharma and her team. Prof. Shyam Narayan Lal delivered the vote of thanks, reaffirming IIM Jammu's commitment to leadership development beyond the classroom. The event concluded with a felicitation ceremony and a visit to IIM Jammu's state-of-the-art Nalanda library and smart classrooms, followed by informal discussions fostering mutual respect and camaraderie.