

**LG Ladakh interacts with Durbuk–Lalok group after National Excursion Tour Says National Excursion Tour strongly reflect the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Senior Citizens key to preserving culture, inspiring youth for Nation-Building Lauds role of Army's in strengthening people-to-people connect in remote & border areas Encourages Senior Citizens to Share Experiences, Reiterates Commitment to Ladakh's Development**

Leh, February 4: A 20-member group from Durbuk–Lalok, comprising residents above 50 years of age (11 women and 9 men), met the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, at the LG Secretariat after completing the National Excursion Tour organised by the Indian Army.

The tour aimed to provide first-hand exposure to India's cultural heritage, national institutions and development initiatives, while strengthening national integration.

During the interaction, the participants shared their experiences from the tour, describing it as informative and inspiring. They expressed gratitude to the Indian Army for the opportunity and the support extended throughout the journey, noting that some members travelled by air for the first time and found their visit to the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya deeply meaningful. They also appreciated the arrangements made by the accompanying Army personnel.

Col Subodh Samudre informed the Lt Governor that the tour was conducted under Operation Sadbhavana from January 20 to February 1, 2026. The itinerary included visits to Shanti Stupa and Hall of Fame in Leh, followed by Delhi, where the group visited the Rai Pithora Cultural Complex to view the sacred Piprahwa relics of Bhagwan Buddha, along with Humayun's Tomb and Swaminarayan Akshardham Mandir. The group later visited Bodh Gaya and paid obeisance at the Mahabodhi Temple.

The Lt Governor appreciated the Indian Army's efforts to strengthen people-to-people connect in remote and border areas, stating that such initiatives reinforce national unity and inclusiveness. He also informed about the UT Administration's plan to bring the sacred Piprahwa Buddha relics to Ladakh, enabling devotees to seek blessings locally.

The Lt Governor said that initiatives such as the National Excursion Tour strongly reflect the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, as they promote mutual understanding, cultural exchange, and emotional integration among people from different regions of the country. He observed that exposure to India's diverse heritage, traditions, and development journey helps strengthen national unity and fosters a deeper sense of belonging, particularly among citizens from remote and border areas. He added that such people-centric programmes play a vital role in reinforcing the idea of one nation enriched by many cultures.

Highlighting the role of senior citizens in preserving cultural values and community harmony, Shri Kavinder Gupta encouraged the participants to share their experiences with others in their villages and inspire younger generations to contribute actively to nation-building. He reaffirmed the Central Government's commitment to Ladakh's development, with focus on connectivity, infrastructure, healthcare, livelihoods, and preservation of the region's cultural and ecological heritage.



