

LG Kavinder Gupta calls Financial Institutions catalysts of socio-economic change in Ladakh Says CSR-led Rural Development to boost livelihoods in Changthang & Sham Valley Reaffirms UT Admin's full support for community-centric development projects

Leh, December 9: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta underscored the transformative role of financial institutions in driving holistic and sustainable development, particularly in remote and challenging regions like Ladakh. He said banks act as catalysts of socio-economic progress, enabling aspirations, entrepreneurship, and long-term community empowerment. "Expanding banking services forms the bedrock of true empowerment, enabling economic self-reliance and inclusive growth," he remarked.

The Lt Governor was speaking at the launch/ sensitisation of the Focused Rural Development Project and the Holistic Rural Development Project, supported by HDFC Bank Parivartan and implemented by Himmotthan Society, covering 35 revenue villages across Changthang, Nimoo, and several border areas of Ladakh.

The three-year initiative aims to improve the quality of life for nearly 3,000 families through sustainable and climate-resilient measures. Key interventions include strengthening Village Development Committees, building improved solar greenhouses and artificial glaciers, renovating irrigation canals and water reservoirs, setting up automated weather stations, installing solar photovoltaic power systems and streetlights, developing smart schools, and organising community health camps and medical services.

Commending HDFC Bank's CSR outreach in Changthang and Sham Valley, Shri Kavinder highlighted the project's potential to benefit more than 2,500 households. He said targeted interventions in livelihood enhancement, agriculture, water security, renewable energy, health, and education would particularly support nomadic communities and small farmers. "These initiatives will drive meaningful transformation and strengthen resilience against climate-related challenges," he noted.

The Lt Governor stressed that community participation is vital to Ladakh's development, expressing confidence in a village-driven model involving panchayats, women's SHGs, youth, and grassroots institutions. He emphasised that beyond physical infrastructure, the project prioritises capacity building—developing skills, knowledge, and confidence among local communities to ensure long-term sustainability. "Such efforts lay a strong foundation for future generations of Ladakh," he said.

Shri Kavinder praised HDFC Bank and Himmotthan Society for focusing on Ladakh's most underserved regions, calling the initiative "far more than a CSR effort—an example of corporate responsibility toward strengthening border communities while supporting national development goals."

Reaffirming the UT Administration's full support, the Lt Governor assured policy facilitation, streamlined approvals, field coordination, and administrative assistance to ensure timely and community-centric implementation of the projects. During the event, the Lt Governor visited stalls showcasing products from artisans, SHGs, and FPOs, and felicitated Apricot and Vegetable FPOs—Chamba Dorjey, Tsering Wangyal, and Ishey Palmo—for their contributions.

Chief Secretary, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, highlighted Tata Trusts' extensive social work across India and noted that this new Himalayan initiative under Himmotthan Society will significantly benefit Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. He emphasised that Ladakh, as an ecologically sensitive region, requires all development to be eco-friendly and carbon-neutral. Dr. Kotwal also underscored the pivotal role of NGOs in driving progress in Ladakh.

Dr. Rajendra Singh Koshyari, Coordinator for Agri and Agri Allied at Himmotthan and Area Manager at Tata Trusts, provided an overview of Tata Trusts' initiatives in the Central and Western Himalayas, including Ladakh, Himachal, and Uttarakhand. These efforts address critical issues such as water scarcity, loss of biodiversity, and lack of livelihood opportunities. A small film highlighting various initiatives taken by Himmotthan Society was also screened on the occasion.

Diskit Yangdol, Branch Manager of the HDFC CSR Team, outlined HDFC Bank's CSR partnership and its transformative interventions that have improved lives in Ladakh's border areas.

Among those present during the event were senior officials, representatives from various organisations and NGOs, nambardars, FPOs, community members and officials from HDFC and Tata Trusts.



