

LG Kavinder unfurls Tricolour at Polo Ground, leads R-Day celebrations in Leh *Ladakh aims to become Model of Inclusive, Sustainable Development under PM Modi leadership: LG Ladakh Urges people to uphold Constitutional Values, Work Collectively for Viksit Bharat 2047 Nation Has Grown Stronger Through Unity in Diversity Sustainable Tourism Key to Ladakh's Economic Growth Lauds transformative initiatives of PM Modi for national development Centre's special focus on border regions improving infrastructure, livelihoods*

Leh, January 26: The 77th Republic Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour at the historic Polo Ground here, where the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, unfurled the National Tricolour, inspected the parade and took the salute at an against the backdrop of snow-clad mountains.

Extending Republic Day greetings to the people of Ladakh, the Lt Governor said the Tricolour today flies proudly over Ladakh's peaks and the Siachen Glacier, symbolising the ideals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution. He said Republic Day carries two enduring messages — "The Mantra of Freedom – Vande Mataram," marking its 150th year, and "The Mantra of Prosperity – Aatmanirbhar Bharat," reflecting India's journey towards self-reliance, cultural diversity and national strength.

Shri Kavinder Gupta said Republic Day is not merely a celebration of past achievements but a reaffirmation of citizens' constitutional duties. Recalling that India became the world's largest democracy on January 26, 1950, he said the nation has overcome challenges through unity in diversity and collective responsibility. He noted that India's achievements in economic growth, science, education, healthcare, democratic institutions, culture and social development have earned global admiration.

Highlighting the transformative initiatives undertaken under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Lt Governor referred to milestones such as India emerging as the fifth-largest economy, the digital revolution through UPI and JAM trinity, GST reforms, integration following abrogation of Article 370, flagship schemes including Swachh Bharat, Ayushman Bharat, PM Awas Yojana, Ujjwala, Jal Jeevan Mission, and achievements in space missions such as Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1. He also cited infrastructure expansion, successful COVID-19 vaccination, Production Linked Incentive schemes, NEP-2020, women empowerment legislation, International Solar Alliance leadership and the successful hosting of the G20. He reiterated the Government of India's special focus on border regions through the Vibrant Villages Programme to improve infrastructure, livelihoods and quality of life with community participation.

Describing Ladakh's strategic and cultural importance, Shri Kavinder Gupta praised the patriotism of its people. Since assuming office on July 18, 2025, he said he has travelled over 8,000 km by road to remote areas including Dras, Zaskar, Nubra, Changthang, Aryan Valley and border villages to directly engage with citizens. He said this outreach has helped identify local needs, resolve issues, strengthen trust and ensure equitable development, with Administrative Secretaries directed to take governance to the grassroots. He added that youth employment aspirations rooted in Ladakh's tribal identity are being addressed in a sensitive and balanced manner.

The Lt Governor said the UT Administration has accorded high priority to public health, allocating 8.76 per cent of the budget — higher than the national average. He highlighted upgrades at Kargil District Hospital and SNM Hospital Leh, including a 3-Tesla MRI, expansion of emergency services, blood banks, staff housing and sanitation facilities. He said 322 Health and Wellness Centres, mobile medical units and e-Sanjeevani have strengthened healthcare delivery, achieving 100 per cent vaccination, near-universal institutional deliveries and single-digit infant mortality. Preservation of traditional Sowa-Rigpa medicine through the National Institute and progress towards operationalising Leh Medical College were also highlighted.

On education and youth development, Shri Kavinder Gupta spoke about the expansion of Sindhu Central University at Khalsi and introduction of skill-based courses under NEP-2020. He said schools have been strengthened with Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, ICT labs, smart classrooms, tablets for students, Atal Tinkering Labs and astronomy facilities. Initiatives like REWA 2.0, NCC camps and sports programmes are nurturing talent and competitive spirit.

Calling tourism the backbone of Ladakh's economy, the Lt Governor emphasised sustainable tourism focused on cultural preservation and local livelihoods. He noted the growth of eco-tourism, employment through festivals, youth-designed branding initiatives, and Hanle's recognition as India's first Dark Sky Sanctuary. He highlighted major infrastructure projects including the Zoji La and Shinkun La tunnels, road and bridge construction, helipads, 4G connectivity and digital governance enabling telemedicine and public services.

He also referred to progress in sanitation, renewable energy, winter sports promotion, agriculture, horticulture, dairy, fisheries and entrepreneurship. Digital governance initiatives, women self-help groups, rural employment generation and the launch of the Land Records Web GIS Portal were cited as key reforms.

Outlining his vision for Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta said the UT aims to become a model of inclusive and sustainable development, balancing tradition with modernity and ensuring opportunities for youth, women and border communities.

In his concluding remarks, the Lt Governor paid tribute to the Armed Forces, CAPFs, Ladakh Scouts, police personnel, healthcare workers, teachers and citizens for their service. He urged all to uphold constitutional values and work collectively towards a self-reliant Ladakh contributing to Viksit Bharat 2047.

Shri Kavinder also felicitated the winners of the marching contingents, in which Jaffaria Academy of Modern Education, Kargil stood first, followed by Government Girls Higher Secondary School Leh and Sindh Public School Leh at second and third places, respectively. Similarly, Mahabodhi Residential School Choglamsar stood first in cultural performance while Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School Leh and Ladakh Public School Leh came second and third, respectively.

The names of the winners of LG Gold Medal, State Award and District Award winners, who have contributed for the development of Ladakh in various fields, were also announced on the occasion.

Earlier, the Lt Governor took salute of the marching contingents, namely Ladakh Police (Men and Women), Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Ex-Servicemen, National Cadet Corps boys and girls from Leh and NCC boys from Kargil, Imamia Model High School Leh, Sindh Public School Leh, Islamia Public School Leh, Government Girls Higher Secondary School Leh, Jaffaria Academy of Modern Education Kargil, Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre band, Ladakh Police pipe band and Government High School Bodh Kharbu band.

Students from various schools and artists from Ladakh Academy of Art Culture and Languages Leh and Kargil also performed on the occasion.

Among those present during the event were Member of parliament from Ladakh Mohmad Haneefa Jan, Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra, DGP Ladakh Shri Mukesh Singh, Administrative Secretaries, senior officials from Army, ITBP, Air Force, Ladakh Police; head of religious and political organisations, heads of Civil Society Organisations, prominent citizens, award winners, Head of Departments/Directors and senior officials from Ladakh along with a large number of crowd.







