

India's strength lies in integration of border regions: LG Ladakh *Ladakh, Border areas witnessed historic transformation under PM Modi's leadership Honours eminent personalities with Kargil Gaurav Awards – 2025 Acknowledges Sarhad's contribution in nation-building, national unity Urges people to contribute selflessly in realising PM Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047*

Pune, Jan 11: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh Shri Kavinder Gupta on Saturday said that India's true strength lies not only in its formidable military capability but also in the emotional integration of its border regions with the national mainstream.

During the programme, the Lt Governor along with First Lady Smt Bindu Gupta and Shri Sanjay Nahar, Founder and President 'Sarhad' conferred Kargil Gaurav National Awards–2025 among Adv Pralhad Kokre Chairman Cosmos Co-operative Bank Ltd.; AVM Nitin Vaidya (Retd.); Maj. Gen, Shashikant Pitre (Retd.); Rajeev Sabade Senior Journalist; Zelum Chaubal Director Kesari Tours Pvt. Ltd.; Tarun Uppal Nirbhay Bharat Foundation; Raj Deshmukh, Social Worker and Dilip Kale, Architect.

Addressing the Ladakh Festival and Kargil Gaurav National Awards–2025 in Pune, the Lt Governor underlined that national security cannot be viewed only through the prism of military strength. While India's armed forces remain steadfast in guarding the country's physical borders, he said institutions, civil society and citizens playing a vital role in safeguarding the nation's emotional and psychological frontiers. He observed that lasting peace and national unity are possible only when people living in border areas feel deeply connected with the country's mainstream.

Recalling his visit to the Kargil War Memorial at Drass soon after assuming office, the Lt Governor said the visit was a solemn homage to the supreme sacrifice of India's brave soldiers who laid down their lives for the sovereignty and integrity of the nation. He stated that the courage and professionalism displayed by the Indian Army during the Kargil War remain a source of inspiration for generations.

The Lt Governor acknowledged the support extended by local residents of Kargil during the 1999 Kargil War, noting that villagers, shepherds, porters and other civilians assisted the armed forces, often at personal risk. He clarified that such support reflected the deep bond of trust between the Army and the people of border areas, and underscored the collective resolve of the nation during times of crisis.

Highlighting the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Lt Governor said India has witnessed a historic transformation in its approach towards national security and the development of border areas. He noted that under the Prime Minister's leadership, the operational preparedness, modernisation and morale of the armed forces have been significantly strengthened through clear political will and the guiding principle of "Nation First."

The Lt Governor further said that focused development of border regions, expansion of infrastructure, enhanced connectivity and improved facilities for soldiers reflect India's comprehensive vision of securing its borders with strength, dignity and respect. He added that this approach has had a visible and positive impact in frontier regions, including Ladakh.

The Lt Governor also highlighted the role of civil society organisations such as 'Sarhad' in supporting national efforts through education and cultural outreach, particularly by fostering understanding and emotional integration between border communities and the rest of the country, in harmony with the larger national security framework.

Shri Kavinder Gupta appealed to citizens across the nation to contribute in whatever manner they can to these collective endeavours, emphasising that national unity and security are shared responsibilities. He further stated that the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, as envisaged by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, can be realised only when every citizen actively participates in nation-building and contributes selflessly towards the country's progress.

Referring to the Kargil Gaurav National Awards, the Lt Governor said the honours recognise individuals and institutions who have strengthened the nation through their work in fields such as journalism, defence, social service, education, tourism and cooperation. He congratulated all the award recipients.

The Lt Governor also congratulated Sarhad Founder, Shri Sanjay Nahar, and his dedicated team for organising the inspiring event, noting that the message emanating from Pune would resonate across the country. He acknowledged the organisation's significant contribution to nation-building and promoting national unity, particularly through its work in border regions irrespective of caste, colour and creed. He further emphasised that initiatives like those of Sarhad play a vital role in nurturing a sense of belonging, civic responsibility, and patriotism among citizens, thereby complementing India's broader goals of security, harmony, and inclusive development.

Earlier, Shri Sanjay Nahar, Founder and President of Sarhad, threw light on the organisation's journey, its functioning and the many challenges faced over the years while working in remote and sensitive border regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. He said Sarhad has consistently worked to bridge the emotional and cultural distance between border communities and the national mainstream through education, cultural exchange, youth engagement and people-centric initiatives.

The students also showcased cultural performances during the event.

Prominent among those who were present included Sanjeev Shah, Vasant Gokhale, Dr. Shailesh Pagaria, Sumant Waikar, Sanjay Nahar, Yuvaraj Shah, Shailesh Wadekar, Leshpal Javalage, Anuj Nahar and Zahid Bhat.



