

Democracy invests in higher education so that graduates may govern themselves well, CJI says

CHANDIGARH: A democracy does not invest in higher education so that its graduates may simply prosper, it does so to ensure that they govern themselves well, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant said on Saturday.

"Every institution of public life -- the courts, the civil services, the schools, the hospitals, the local governance bodies all depend for their quality on the calibre of the people who choose to serve within them," the CJI said while addressing the 12th convocation ceremony of the Central University of Haryana in Mahendragarh.

Justice Kant said in barely 17 years, the university has earned national accreditation and recognition for its swift growth.

He told the gathering of students that the degrees conferred on them certify the knowledge they have acquired and they should be proud of it but at the same time, he emphasised that "what your degree does not certify, and no examination can measure -- how your character and judgment hold up once the structure of formal education is no longer around you. In my experience, this ultimately determines the trajectory of life".

The CJI said there are graduates of the most-celebrated institutions who have faltered under pressure, not because they lacked knowledge but because they were never tested by anything other than a school or college examination.

"And then there are professionals from institutions nobody has heard of, who rise with composure and seriousness, earning the confidence of every room they enter," he said.

So what is the distinguishing factor then, he asked the students.

"In my view, it has nothing to do with the talent one may display in the classroom and almost everything to do with upbringing.

"Those who grew up observing their families manage scarcity with dignity, who understood early on that the world does not rearrange itself for your convenience and who entered professional life already knowing that hard work is not just a phase but a permanent state, they carried that something that no curriculum can teach. They carried a seriousness that was not performative but genuine," Justice Kant said.

Many of the students present on the occasion carry exactly this formation, he said.

"You grew up in homes where a university degree was not a given but a goal



at the entire family organised itself around. The investment by your families was not made so that you could merely earn a comfortable living.

"It was made because they believed, even if they could not always articulate it, that an educated daughter or son would use what they learned to build something beyond themselves," the CJI said.

This belief is the bridge between "what your upbringing gave you and what the world is now entitled to expect from you", he told the students.

The CJI said it is often discussed what education provides to an individual.

It opens doors, boosts earning potential and enhances mobility, he said, adding that however, there

is a fundamental question that a congregation at a central university should address.

"What does your education owe to the society that funded it? The resources that build these classrooms, the resources that paid your faculty and the resources that maintained the laboratories where you trained came from the public exchequer. Which means they were derived from citizens' earnings and taxes, many of whom will never set foot in a university themselves," he said.

"This fact creates an obligation. Not a sentimental one, but a structural one. A democracy does not invest in higher education so that its graduates may simply prosper. It invests so that they may govern themselves well..." Justice Kant said.

In the Ramayana, when Bharat was handed the throne of Ayodhya by his father's own decree, he chose to place Ram's "paduka" on the seat of power and govern from Nandigram as a trustee, not as a sovereign, he pointed out.

"This distinction between holding authority for yourself and holding it on behalf of others is what your obligation towards the public means," the CJI said.

He told the students that "wherever your careers take you, carry with you the awareness that our collective life depends on whether educated people choose to engage with the systems around them or simply benefit from them".

Giving the example of a "raider" in a Kabaddi game, the CJI told the students, "Watch the finest raiders carefully.... Their greatness is not in the distance they cover, but in the precision with which they judge the line between ambition and overreach".

India should have taken anti-war stand: Akhilesh Yadav, targets PM Modi and BJP

MUMBAI: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday said India should have taken a stand against the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict which killed several women and children and has started affecting India's economy. In a swipe, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi could have become a "vishwaguru" by sending a message of peace and preventing the war.

"There is an opportunity for the prime minister and the BJP to become a vishwaguru.... We should have taken a stand against the war. Women and children have been killed, and in India, the war is impacting our economy," he told reporters. Yadav arrived in Mumbai to attend Iftaar (the evening meal to break the daily fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan) hosted by the party's Maharashtra unit chief Abu Asim Azmi. He said sending a message of peace and stopping the war, in which many people have lost their lives, was required. "Energy security is connected with foreign policy," Yadav said. Reacting to the reports of people queuing up to buy LPG cylinders amid a "shortage", the SP leader said, "LPG has become 'lapata' (missing) gas which is affecting the lives of common people".

Conspiracy hatched to break Tipra Motha Party: Pradyot Debbarma

AGARTALA: Tipra Motha Party (TMP) supremo Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma on Saturday alleged that a conspiracy has been hatched to break his party before the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) elections. Debbarma's allegations came amidst rumours circulating in the state that a section of TMP legislators, including a minister, will join the BJP before the TTAADC elections.

The Tripra Motha has 13 MLAs in the 60-member Tripura Assembly, and two of its legislators are also ministers in the Manik Saha government.

Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday had said that reports of TMP MLA and Forest Minister Animesh Debbarma joining the BJP were a rumour.

Addressing a party programme at Khumulwng in West Tripura, Debbarma said he has been fighting for the rights of Tripura people for the past two years.

Without naming any leader, he said, "There were reports on attempts being made to split the party, but the conspiracy was actually hatched to break Bubagra (king). Those who have made an attempt will get a fitting reply in due course of time."

Underlining the need to be united, Debbarma alleged that attempts will be

made to divide the indigenous people along the lines of Hindu and Christian or Tripuri (community), Reang or Mog to win the elections.

Debbarma said TMP will declare the list of candidates for TTAADC elections within five minutes of the BJP announcing its aspirants, so that it (BJP) cannot pick any TMP leaders.

The TMP supremo also urged the leaders of the tribal party not to fight among indigenous people in the elections.

"In the TTAADC election in 2021, the TMP had to fight against the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), for which the Tiprasa (tribal) community had to suffer. This time, the stage is set for a battle between the BJP and TMP. We all must ensure that there should not be an electoral battle within the Tiprasa community," he said.

Referring to Chief Minister Manik Saha's announcement of the BJP contesting all the 28 seats of the tribal council in some recent rallies, Debbarma said the TMP is ready to fight against the BJP in all the seats.

"We have not broken the electoral understanding with the BJP, but if the chief minister throws a challenge, we will accept it wholeheartedly. I hope the chief minister will not backtrack later," he said.

ASI credits Babu Jagat Singh with discovery of Sarnath, plaque at Buddhist site revised

VARANASI: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has officially acknowledged that the history of Sarnath first came to light following excavations carried out by Babu Jagat Singh, officials said.

ASI Director General Y S Rawat said that the earliest excavation work at Sarnath was undertaken by Jagat Singh, which led to the discovery of the site's historical significance.

Rawat added that the inscription plaque installed at the Sarnath complex has now been revised to include Jagat Singh's name in recognition of his role. The revision is reflected in the updated plaque installed at the Sarnath complex recently.

Rawat told PTI over the phone that Jagat Singh's descendant, Pradeep Narayan Singh, had submitted documentary evidence to the ASI establishing that Jagat Singh had conducted the first excavation at the site.

"After examining the documents, it became clear that Babu Jagat Singh had initiated the first excavation



at Sarnath, which later brought its history to light," Rawat said.

Sarnath, located about 10 km from Varanasi, is one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world. It is believed to be the place where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment, marking the beginning of the spread of Buddhism.

Pradeep Narayan Singh said the area of Sarnath once fell under the zamindari of his family and that historical records show that Babu Jagat Singh had undertaken

excavation work there in 1787-88. "Jagat Singh carried out some excavation work in the area, which eventually led to the discovery of the site," he said.

While the earlier plaque attributed the first discovery of the site's archaeological significance to British officials in 1798, the new plaque states that the importance of the site came to light in the late 18th century when Babu Jagat Singh of Kashi dug the ancient mound for construction material, leading to the discovery of significant artefacts.

The revised inscription thus recognises Jagat Singh's role in the earliest excavation activity at the site, while noting that several archaeologists, including others, carried out subsequent excavations that uncovered monasteries, stupas, temples and sculptures dating from the 3rd century BCE to the 12th century CE.

Pradeep Narayan Singh, representing the Jagatganj royal family of Varanasi and the sixth-generation descendant of Babu Jagat Singh, said that efforts had been underway for a long time to gather research and documentary proof of his ancestor's historical contribution.

"Now, the ASI has formally recognised that the history of Sarnath first came to light after the excavation carried out by Babu Jagat Singh," he said.

Singh said it had long been believed that the discovery of Sarnath and its ancient remains was made by the British, but the ASI's recognition has clarified that Jagat Singh's efforts preceded them.

Delhi CM launches remodelling of drains to prevent waterlogging

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday inaugurated several key development projects in the Shalimar Bagh Assembly constituency of North West Delhi, and carried out surprise inspections of ongoing works in the area, instructing officials to ensure quality and timely completion.

The Chief Minister said these initiatives would help reduce waterlogging during the monsoon while also strengthening roads and the surrounding infrastructure.

Among the projects launched was the remodelling of the stormwater drain on Haiderpur Main Road, stretching from the bus stand to the DA Block in Shalimar Bagh.

The work is being carried out under the New Master Drain Plan, 2025, which involves constructing RCC drains to improve the area's drainage system, aimed at preventing waterlogging and also addressing sanitation matters.

Gupta also reviewed the



progress of several projects related to infrastructure development during the visit, and reviewed drainage systems and public amenities.

She said drainage improvement works have also been initiated on Road No. 319, RUB Shalimar Bagh, Chaudhary Mehr Chand Marg, Road No. 320 and Swami Shradhdhanand Saraswati Marg in the area.

To streamline traffic movement in the area, the Chief Minister also launched the construction of a slip road at Shalimar Chowk and the develop-

ment of a U-turn facility near the Railway Under Bridge.

This is expected to ease traffic pressure in the area and provide a smoother movement for residents and commuters.

Gupta inaugurated an Ayushman Arogya Mandir at the Sahipur village chaulpal. The centre is expected to provide primary healthcare services to residents and improve access to basic medical facilities at the local level.

The work is expected to further strengthen the drainage system in the area and reduce problems during the rainy season.

The Chief Minister conducted a surprise check on the ongoing road widening and drainage improvement work at Singalpur Labour Chowk in Shalimar Bagh.

During the inspection, Gupta sought detailed updates from officials present at the site and directed them to ensure quality, transparency and timely execution of the development works.

She emphasised that, along with road widening, a strong drainage system is essential to provide a permanent solution to waterlogging in the area.

Gupta also instructed officials to ensure that the convenience of residents is a top priority during construction and that all works are completed within the stipulated timeframe.

She reiterated that the Delhi government is committed to strengthening roads, drainage systems, traffic management and healthcare facilities across every part of the capital.

316 domestic LPG cylinders used for commercial purposes seized in Karnataka

BENGALURU: The Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Department said on Saturday that authorities have seized 316 domestic LPG cylinders allegedly being used for commercial purposes across the state and registered cases against those involved.

Also, a case has been registered against a gas agency which was illegally refilling gas cylinders.

"Following the minister's (K H Muniyappa) instructions to take appropriate legal action if domestic cylinders are used for commercial purposes, cases have been registered under the Essential Commodities Act and seizures have been made across the state, including 45 in Peenya and 209 in Chikkajala of Bengaluru, 3 in Shivamogga district, 46 in Davanagere and 13 in Yadgir district," the department said in a release.

Similarly, a case has been registered against a gas agency shop in KGF, Kolar district, which was conducting illegal refilling of gas cylinders, it said.

As per the central government guidelines, 20 per cent of the total commercial cylinders will be distributed to hospitals, schools, educational institutions, airports, railway stations, bus stands, canteens, important temples for distribution of prasad, government offices, old age homes, and important private sector offices on priority, the department said.

Further, it said that a total of 3,86,363 domestic cylinders (14.2 kg) and 6,371 commercial cylinders have been distributed across the state today. Steps have been taken to ensure that there is no problem with the supply of domestic cylinders, it added.

AAP accuses Goa govt of stalling bills on land, environment

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday accused the BJP-led government of blocking the introduction of key private members' bills in the legislative assembly in Goa to prevent discussion on issues related to land protection, environment and livelihoods.

Addressing a press conference, the AAP leaders alleged that the democratic process in the assembly was being deliberately undermined to stop debate on matters affecting the people of the state.

The opposition had protested inside the House on Friday during the ongoing budget session after Speaker Ganesh Gaonkar refused to table the private members' bills submitted by them.

A private member's bill is a legislative proposal initiated by a member who is not a minister. These bills enable legislators to draw

attention to issues they consider to be of public importance.

AAP said its MLAs Venzy Viegas and Cruz Silva had consistently raised in the assembly issues concerning Goa's identity, environment and traditional livelihoods. The party has two lawmakers in the 40-member Goa assembly.

The party's Goa senior vice president Sandesh Teleikar-Dessai said the developments in the assembly reflected the government's "true intentions".

"These bills were meant to safeguard Goa's agricultural fields, ecology and traditional livelihoods, but the government chose to silence the discussion itself," he said.

Teleikar-Dessai also alleged that unchecked land conversions, expansion of casino gambling and commercial control over rivers and coastlines were benefit-



ing a "powerful nexus that funds the BJP's political machinery".

AAP organisation secretary Prashant Naik said the proposed Goa Protection of Agricultural Lands Bill, 2026, was brought forward jointly by opposition MLAs in response to public sentiment against large-scale land conversions and protests against Section 39A.

The section of the Goa Town and Country Planning Act empowers the au-

thorities to reclassify land zoning, allowing conversion of green or no-development zones into settlement zones.

The bill sought to ensure protection of agricultural lands and eco-sensitive zones, he said, adding that the government blocked its introduction to avoid public scrutiny.

"Private Members' Day was hijacked to stop discussion on issues that expose the BJP government's anti-people policies," Naik

alleged. AAP leader Roque Mascarenhas said Viegas had also sought to introduce the Goa Public Gambling (Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Goa and Diu Irrigation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Goa Maritime Board Act Bill, 2026, which addressed concerns over the expansion of casino gambling, pollution in creeks and the expansion of port jurisdiction affecting traditional fishing communities.

Man found dead in UP's Etah following theft allegation; police probe underway

ETAH: A 50-year-old man was found hanging from a tree in an orchard near his home in the Nai Basti locality here on Saturday morning, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Sarvan.

His body was found hanging from a tree with a gamcha (cotton towel) tied around his neck, according to his family members. The incident drew a large crowd of villagers to the spot.

Ashok Kumar, the brother of the deceased, said he was informed about the incident via a phone call from a local resident named Bhurelal.

The family claimed that Sarvan had been under mental stress for some time. They alleged that a local youth had accused him of stealing money a day earlier.

Following the accusation, Sarva was taken to a spiritual healer in Aligarh who supported the youth's claim.