

FROM PAGE 1

Starry skies, ...

delivery, and drives socio-economic growth,” he said.

The LG reiterated that the UT Administration is fully committed to equitable development, ensuring that the benefits of growth, welfare schemes, and infrastructure projects reach every section of society, particularly the rural and far-flung areas of Ladakh which often remain neglected due to geographical and climatic challenges. He stressed that no village, however remote or difficult to access, will be left behind in the journey of progress and that the Administration’s priority is to bridge the developmental gap between urban centres and distant hamlets of the Union Territory.”

Venturing further into the high-altitude landscapes, LG Gupta visited the village of Hanley. Beyond holding another interactive session with the local community, his tour took a celestial turn with a visit to the renowned Himalayan Chandra Telescope and the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Telescope.

Immersed in the world-class scientific environment, the LG expressed optimism for leveraging this unique asset.

He highlighted the potential of promoting ‘Astro-tourism,’ a niche sector that capitalizes on Ladakh’s pristine, pollution-free skies, which are among the clearest in the world.

“Ladakh’s skies are not just for scientists. We have a tremendous opportunity to share this wonder with the world. Our observatories can become a major draw for tourists and astronomy enthusiasts, creating new avenues for sustainable tourism and local economy,” LG Gupta said.

In a move set to significantly improve local governance, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated a new Tehsildar Office in Nyoma, completed at a cost of ₹2.95 crore with a dedicated record room to streamline administrative services for the public.

Further strengthening the administrative framework, he laid the foundation stone for the construction of residential quarters worth ₹1.08 crore for the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), a crucial step for ensuring officials can effectively serve in this challenging terrain.

He recalled his recent visits to Kargil and Suru Valley soon after assuming office, stressing that such grassroots-level tours help identify and address region-specific issues. “Our priority is to resolve local concerns through direct communication and responsive action,” he asserted.

The Lt Governor outlined his vision for transforming Ladakh into a model of connectivity and tourism.

Plans include expanding the road and telecom network across the Union Territory, developing tourist infrastructure in remote areas, and setting up cafeterias, washrooms, and souvenir shops every 30 km along major routes to provide comfort to travelers and bikers.

Highlighting the fast-rising popularity of Changthang among visitors, particularly for attractions like Umling La Pass and the Astronomical Observatory, Kavinder Gupta announced that the benefits of the Ladakh Homestay Policy are being extended to locals to ensure community participation in the tourism economy.

Pointing to Changthang’s strategic location near the Indo-China border, the Lt Governor underlined India’s focus on strengthening defence infrastructure, such as the airstrip at Mudh, which also enhances civil connectivity.

He assured that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Changthang will witness unprecedented growth in the coming years.

The Lt Governor also stressed the need to channelize youth energy through sports. With Changthang’s natural potential for ice hockey and winter sports, the administration is working to develop dedicated sports infrastructure and create opportunities for local talent to shine nationally and internationally.

At Hanley, the Lt Governor patiently heard public grievances concerning healthcare facilities, staff shortages, ambulance requirements, and power supply. He assured residents that all genuine demands will be addressed in a time-bound manner.

The tour is witnessed as a clear signal from the Gupta-led administration to accelerate development in Ladakh’s far-flung regions while strategically exploring innovative economic opportunities including Astro-tourism to put the cold desert on the global map.

The Lt Governor also interacted with Astronomy Ambassadors trained in stargazing activities, who expressed gratitude to the UT Administration for providing them with livelihood opportunities.

Meanwhile, on the Teachers Day, the LG extended his greetings to the educators of Ladakh. “I extend my deepest gratitude to all teachers who nurture young minds with knowledge, values, & wisdom. Your dedication lays the foundation of a progressive & enlightened society. May you continue to inspire generations with your commitment & guidance,” the LG said.

Indian Army ...

The request for evacuation was logged at 8:05 pm, and within 15 minutes, helicopters were pressed into service for the high-risk mission. The timely landing at 9:15 pm enabled the crew to airlift the stranded individuals despite the thin air and darkness at that altitude.

Both rescued nationals were later transferred to medical authorities for further care. The Army noted that the operation demonstrated the rapid response capability of its units deployed in the region.

The Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) is a rapid transportation of critically ill or injured individuals from a dangerous or threatening condition to a medical facility for treatment.

The Indian Army has often carried out such high-risk humanitarian missions in Ladakh, where the unforgiving terrain and altitude pose severe risks to adventurers.

Just last week, tragedy struck another mountaineering expedition on Mount Nun, when heavy snowfall claimed the life of Kamal Mondal, an Assistant Vigilance Officer with the South Eastern Railway, on the night of August 26.

These back-to-back incidents highlight both the allure and the dangers of high-altitude expeditions in Ladakh, underscoring the crucial role of the Army in saving lives in the region’s most challenging environments.

LG Gupta, ...

Tashi Gyalson, on behalf of LAHDC, extended his warmest greetings on the occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi to the Muslim brothers and sisters of Ladakh and around the world.

He stated that the occasion reminds us of the noble teachings of Prophet Muhammad, who showed the path of compassion, peace, and brotherhood for all.

CEC hoped that the celebration will strengthen unity and mutual respect among communities in Ladakh as well as across the world.

On this joyous day, he prayed for blessing everyone with happiness, good health, prosperity, and harmony in their lives.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his best wishes on the occasion of Milad-un-Nabi, which commemorates the birthday of prophet Muhammad, who founded Islam.

PM Modi said on X, "May this sacred day bring with it peace and well-being in our society. May the values of compassion, service and justice always guide us. Eid Mubarak!"

Centre examines ...

in extensive fieldwork. In October last year, NIT Raipur, LNP, and the University of Ladakh undertook a survey in Nang village, employing geophysical methods such as multi-electrode resistivity to identify potential groundwater zones. Students from the University of Ladakh participated under the guidance of hydrogeologists, while LNP provided logistical support through local coordinators. The exercise not only generated vital data but also reinforced the collaborative approach involving academia, civil society, and the local community.

LNP, which has been operational in Ladakh since 1978, has decades of experience in promoting environmental conservation and community empowerment. The organization’s interventions in artificial glacier construction have already delivered tangible relief in water-stressed villages like Nang, where residents credit these ice reservoirs with enabling timely sowing seasons.

The proposal’s thrust goes beyond groundwater mapping. It seeks to institutionalize community participation in water management, drawing upon LNP’s grassroots initiatives that support women’s collectives in horticulture, kitchen gardening, and greenhouse construction. Such measures, officials observed, reinforce resilience in rural economies by reducing dependency on external resources.

Parallel to this, NMHS has supported other projects in Ladakh, including research on hydroponic cultivation using treated wastewater, passive solar-heated buildings, and glacial lake hazard assessment. These initiatives demonstrate the Mission’s integrated strategy for addressing water scarcity, energy efficiency, and disaster risks in the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

Ladakh, often described as the “Land of High Passes,” faces a mounting crisis as reduced glacier formation, induced by climate change, further constrains its already meagre water resources. The outcome of the August 29 presentation remains under consideration, but the proposal is expected to undergo rigorous appraisal under the NMHS review mechanism. If accorded clearance, the study would represent a decisive step in scaling local innovations into a district-wide framework for sustainable water governance.

IAF bolsters ...

spokesperson added that the LG appreciated the crucial role of the IAF in safeguarding borders, assisting civil administration during emergencies, and ensuring connectivity in remote regions. He reiterated the administration’s commitment to working closely with the IAF to strengthen national security and accelerate developmental initiatives in the Union Territory.

Air Vice Marshal Sharma also held a detailed meeting with the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 14 Corps, focusing on joint operations, border infrastructure development, and enhancing connectivity in the strategically sensitive Ladakh sector.

Arriving on September 1, the senior officer held a series of deliberations to ensure the Air Force’s combat and support capabilities remain sharp in one of India’s most sensitive theatres. His visit brought together civil and military leadership for wide-ranging discussions on infrastructure, connectivity, and cooperative measures essential for regional stability.

On September 2, he met the Lieutenant Governor, where talks revolved around advancing civil-military synergy and fostering regional growth. The following day, he conferred with the GOC 14 Corps on strengthening border infrastructure and improving access across Ladakh’s rugged terrain.

Officials noted that the tour underscored the IAF’s resolve to remain mission-ready while promoting joint efforts with sister services and civil authorities. By combining operational assessments with developmental dialogue, the visit sought to balance immediate security imperatives with long-term regional stability.

Air Force authorities at Leh emphasized that the review reaffirmed Ladakh’s critical role in national security planning and demonstrated the IAF’s commitment to bolstering operational capabilities. The visit also highlighted the importance of cultivating strong collaborative relationships with the civil administration and sister services to safeguard the region’s stability.

Air Vice Marshal Sharma’s four-day visit thus reinforced the IAF’s determination to remain fully prepared along the sensitive northern borders while contributing to Ladakh’s development and security.

Jammu-Sgr ...

and vice versa via Poonch, they said. However, HMVs carrying essential commodities, limited to six-tyre trucks only, are being allowed from Poonch towards Shopian, they said.

Besides this, important highways, including the Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch highway, which was closed for three days, have also been reopened for traffic after clearance of landslides, they said.

“The highway is still closed for vehicular movement from Jakheni (Udhampur) towards Srinagar and vice versa due to road blockages between Jakheni and Bali Nallah. No vehicular movement shall be allowed from Nagrota (Jammu) towards Reasi, Chenani, Patnitop, Doda, Ramban, Banihal, Srinagar and vice versa,” a traffic police advisory said.

The most affected areas include Shalgadi, Nachilana, Panthyal, Maroog and Peerah in Ramban–Banihal, where retaining walls and stretches of road have been washed away, and a heavy landslide has even entered one tube of the Peerah tunnel.

In the Udhampur sector, around 10 km of road between Jakhani, Thara D, Bali Nallah and Dewal has been affected, they said.

Gyalson discusses ...

registration process and appealed for a simplified procedure to make Ladakh more accessible to international travellers.

Recognising the importance of Ladakh’s global identity, the delegation requested that all Indian embassies, especially those in the United Kingdom, United States, and Canada update their web information to reflect Ladakh’s status as a separate Union Territory.

This is essential to ensure accurate international representation and avoid confusion abroad.

Border dispute ...

and implementation of Operation Sindoor in terms of providing guidance to the military that included target selection, deployment of troops, framework for de-escalation and use of diplomacy.

However, the highlight of his address was his elaboration of India’s national security challenges.

"I consider the unresolved border dispute with China as the biggest challenge. The second major challenge is the proxy war being run by Pakistan against India," Gen Chauhan said.

"Pakistan’s strategy has been to 'bleed India by a thousand cuts. It means keep hurting India slowly at a regular interval and keep the flow of blood continuing in the country."

The military official said the third biggest security challenge is emanating from the regional instability, especially the way India’s neighbouring countries are facing social, political, and economic unrest.

Such a situation impacts India as well, he said. "The fourth challenge would be what kind of warfare we will have in future. Wars are changing rapidly. Future wars will not be confined to land, air and water. It will include space, cyber and electromagnetic domains. It will be a challenge for us to make adjustments and keep ourselves ready for such a scenario," he said.

On the fifth challenge, the CDS said "both our adversaries are equipped with nuclear arsenals and It will remain a challenge for us what kind of conventional war we will fight and what kind of operation we choose to deal with them."

Gen Chauhan said the sixth challenge is about "technology and its impact" on future warfare.

Sharing some details of Operation Sindoor, he said the military had full operational freedom, including planning and selection of the targets.

"The aim was not only to avenge the (Pahalgam) terrorist attack, but also to draw a red line of our patience," he said.

The CDS said the National Security Advisor (NSA) has a significant role to play in dealing with national security challenges and it was evident during Operation Sindoor.

"That was seen in the operation. The NSA provided guidance that included help in target selection, deployment of troops in terms of size and timing -- how to do it in a non-escalatory manner, framework for de-escalation and use of diplomacy," he said.

Gen Chauhan said the tri-services synergy was also on full display during the May 7 to 10 operation.

In that context, he elaborated on efforts of the last few years to ensure jointmanship among the three services.

"We tried to synergise communication systems among the Army, Navy and the Air Force, we tried to synergise our air defence systems and counter drone apparatus," he said.

Gen Chauhan described Operation Sindoor as a "multi-domain operation that included coordination among various wings of the military".

The joint mobilisation was a crucial aspect of it, he said.

In the context of geopolitical turmoils in various geographies, he delved into various emerging threats and challenges and observed that war is an extension of politics.

Champion Make ...

products. Such activities will create an atmosphere and encourage the citizens to use Made in India and be vocal for local products," he said.

Modi also encouraged the use of indigenous materials in art and craft classes and school celebrations to nurture a lasting sense of pride in Indian-made goods.

He emphasised discussions on the origin, makers, and national importance of swadeshi products to foster deeper awareness.

"There should be interaction between students and local artisans, highlighting the value of indigenous crafts and manufacturing passed down through generations. Made in India gifts can be encouraged for occasions like birthdays to instil pride in local products. Such efforts will nurture patriotism, self-confidence, and respect for labour among youth, linking their personal success to national progress," he said.

The Prime Minister said that there should be boards outside every house and shop of 'har ghar swadeshi'.

"Series of reforms to make India self-reliant will not stop. There should be boards outside every house and shops of 'har ghar swadeshi'," he said.

Referring to Mahatma Gandhi’s legacy of promoting swadeshi, Modi said it is now this generation’s duty to complete that mission.

"Every student should ask themselves, 'What can I do to fulfil any of the needs of my country?' It is very important to connect oneself with the needs of the nation. It is this country that takes us forward in life, that gives us so much, and that is why every student must always carry this thought in their heart: What can I give to my country, and which of the nation’s needs can I help fulfil?" he said.

Modi called upon all teachers across the country to sow the seeds of self-reliance in every student and communicate its importance in simple language and local dialects.

He urged teachers to inspire students to understand that a nation dependent on others can never progress as rapidly as its true potential allows.

He cited the example of India spending over Rs 1 lakh crore annually on edible oil imports.

"Even today, we have to import edible oil worth Rs 1 lakh crore. We are an agrarian economy ... If this 1 lakh crore had remained inside the country, how many school buildings would have been built, and lives would have been made, and that is why self-reliant India needs to be made a life mantra, and we need to encourage the new generations," he said.