

J&K Bank Pensioners' Federation reviews welfare issues, inducts new office bearers

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The Central Committee of the All India J&K Bank Pensioners Welfare Federation on Wednesday held a meeting in Srinagar to discuss issues concerning bank pensioners and chart out its future course of action.

The meeting, chaired by Federation President Iqbal Singh, also witnessed the induction and replacement of new office bearers and Central Committee members following the recently concluded elections in the Jammu unit and the formation of a new unit representing Delhi and the rest of India. The newly elected representatives from both units were warmly welcomed.



comed.

Addressing the gathering, the President and General Secretary highlighted various issues affecting J&K Bank pensioners and stressed the importance of collective efforts to safeguard their interests and welfare. They also discussed the challenges currently faced by the pension-

ers' fraternity.

The leadership outlined the Federation's future agenda, which includes pursuing pending demands with the concerned authorities, strengthening organizational unity, expanding membership, and enhancing coordination among regional units. Members were urged to re-

main united and actively participate in the Federation's activities to achieve its objectives.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks and a renewed commitment by the Federation to work for the welfare, dignity, and legitimate rights of J&K Bank pensioners across the country.

DC Anantnag convenes preparatory meeting for Independence Day-2026 celebrations

ANANTNAG, JULY 18: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, today convened the preparatory meeting with the concerned officers to review the arrangements for the celebration of upcoming Independence Day-2026 across the district.

Emphasising the historical importance of Independence Day, the DC described it as a momentous occasion that should be celebrated with zeal and patriotic fervour. He underscored the need for seamless coordination among the concerned departments and exhorted them to make collective efforts for the successful conduct of the National event



in its true spirit.

During the meeting, key aspects and arrangements including the rehearsals, schedule and timing of the event, preparation and consolidation of venue, stage/dice preparation and management, security arrangements, sanitation

and cleanliness, seating arrangements, medical facilities, uninterrupted power and water supply, venue illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, printing and distribution of invitation cards, installation of the public

address system and prize distribution were reviewed in detail.

Dr. Bilal issued directions to all concerned officers to discharge their assigned tasks diligently and put in place the necessary arrangements well in time so a smooth and memorable celebration befitting the national event is held.

It was informed that the main function will be held at the Shaheed Himayun Muzammil, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the National Flag will be hoisted by the Chief Guest, followed by a parade featuring contingents of the J&K Police, other security forces, School Education and NCC.

AIBOC J&K Donates Mattresses to Balgran Ahead of Bank Nationalization Day

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On the eve of Bank Nationalization Day, the All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), Jammu & Kashmir Unit, donated 50 mattresses to Balgran, a charitable home for destitute children at Channi Rama, Jammu, as part of its social responsibility initiative.

The mattresses were contributed through voluntary donations made by officers posted at the SBI Administrative Office, Jammu, reflecting the banking fraternity's commitment to community welfare and humanitarian service.

Speaking on the occasion, AIBOC representatives described Bank Nationalization as a historic milestone that expanded banking access across the country and promoted financial inclusion and equitable develop-



ment.

They said public sector bank officers continue to uphold these values by serving both the banking sector and society at large.

Representatives of Balgran expressed gratitude to

AIBOC and the contributing officers, stating that the donated mattresses would greatly improve the comfort and well-being of the children residing at the institution.

Reaffirming its commit-

ment to social causes, AIBOC J&K said it would continue undertaking humanitarian initiatives and urged all stakeholders to support efforts that bring hope and dignity to the underprivileged.

Director Health Services, Jammu reviews health programmes during visit to Samba

JAMMU, JULY 18: Director Health Services, Jammu Dr Poonam Sethi, accompanied by Assistant Director (Schemes) Dr Ila Gupta, today visited Samba to review implementation and progress of various health programmes and schemes being executed in the district.

During a review meeting at the office of Chief Medical Officer Dr Vidhi Bhatial, Director Health Services, Jammu conducted a comprehensive assessment of the functioning of different health programmes



and centrally sponsored schemes. She reviewed progress achieved under various initiatives, discussed existing challenges and issued necessary direc-

tions for improving implementation and ensuring effective delivery of quality healthcare services at the grassroots level.

Dr Poonam Sethi appre-

ciated the efforts of Chief Medical Officer Samba and her team in strengthening healthcare services and urged officers to maintain a patient-centric approach.

Among those present were the Medical Superintendent, District Hospital, Samba, Block Medical Officers and other officers concerned.

Detailed deliberations were held on enhancing service delivery, improving programme performance and ensuring timely achievement of health targets.

1 year of constitutional responsibility: Kavinder's journey in public service

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One year ago, on 14 July 2025, Kavinder Gupta entered constitutional office when the Hon'ble President of India appointed him as the third Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh. Less than eight months later, he was entrusted with another constitutional responsibility as the Governor of Himachal Pradesh. Completing one year in constitutional office, his journey reflects decades of discipline, organisational commitment and public service that culminated in leading two strategically significant Himalayan regions. The Prime Minister's Call

The journey into constitutional office began with an unexpected telephone call on the evening of 11 July 2025. At around 8 pm, while spending time with his family in Jammu, Gupta received a call from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During the brief conversation, the PM informed him that the party had decided to entrust him with a constitutional responsibility beyond Jammu, telling him that it was time to take him to a "new assignment" in national service. Gupta accepted the responsibility with characteristic humility. Three days later, on 14 July 2025, President of India appointed him as the third Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, marking the beginning of a new chapter in his long and distinguished public life.

Yet, the story of Gupta began much earlier—long before public office, elections or constitutional responsibilities.

Born on 2 December 1959 in Jammu, grew up in a family that valued discipline, honesty and patriotism. His father, Late Bindraban Gupta, who served in the Postal Department under the Government of India, remained his greatest inspiration. At the age of just five, his father usually took him to witness a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) route march. The sight of disciplined swayamsevaks marching with patriotic fervour left an indelible impression on the young boy. What appeared to be a simple outing became the defining moment that shaped his values of nationalism, discipline and selfless service.

In 1963, following his father's

transfer, the family shifted to Sangrur in Punjab, where he began his schooling before continuing his education in Ferozepur and Gurdaspur. He graduated from Government Degree College, Gurdaspur, in 1979.

A Childhood Dedicated to the Nation

Inspired by the ideals he had imbibed during childhood, Gupta formally associated himself with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh at the age of just ten. While most children of his age were occupied with studies, games and the carefree joys of adolescence, he chose the path of nation-building. During the Emergency (1975–77), despite being a young student, he actively participated in the movement to defend democracy and was imprisoned in Gurdaspur and Patiala Jails along with senior RSS leaders for nearly 13 months at the age of 13. Those formative months of sacrifice instilled in him an unwavering commitment to democratic values and public service—principles that would continue to guide his political and constitutional journey.

His organisational responsibilities expanded steadily thereafter. Between 1978 and 1979, he served as Secretary of the Punjab unit of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). In 1988, he became District President of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) in Jammu & Kashmir and later served as its State President from 1993 to 1998, earning recognition as a dedicated organisational leader.

Beginning of Electoral Leadership

Gupta's entry into elected governance came through local self-government when he became the first Mayor of the Jammu Municipal Corporation, serving three consecutive terms between 2005 and 2010. His tenure focused on improving sanitation, strengthening civic infrastructure and modernising urban administration, establishing his reputation as an effective grassroots administrator.

In 2014, he was elected as MLA from the Gandhi Nagar Assembly Constituency. On 18 March 2015, he created history by becoming the first BJP leader to be elected Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, a constitutional office demanding neutrality, parliamentary

discipline and consensus-building. He later served as Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir following his appointment on 30 April 2018, further enriching his administrative and legislative experience.

Ladakh: Laying the Foundations of Responsive Governance

On 18 July 2025, Gupta took oath as the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, becoming the third constitutional head of the Union Territory.

Although his tenure in Ladakh was relatively brief, it was marked by a clear emphasis on responsive administration, institutional strengthening and sustainable development. Soon after assuming office, he directed the preparation of a 100-Day Action Plan to accelerate governance and improve service delivery across departments.

During his brief tenure, Ladakh witnessed the rollout of several significant initiatives, including the 100-Day Action Plan, Charcha Se Samadhan, the Integrated Grievance Resolution Portal, the Online Ladakh Domicile Certificate Portal, the Ladakh Land Records Web-GIS Portal, declaration of LSSSSB matriculation-level recruitment results within 48 hours setting a national benchmark for transparent and efficient governance, digitisation of revenue services, establishment of the UT Census Office, inauguration of the 500 KW Solar Pilot Project at Pang, promotion of the proposed 13 GW Renewable Energy Park, commissioning of the Geothermal Space Heating Project at Thiksey, expansion of B-3 Helicopter Services to remote villages, inauguration of the 3 Tesla MRI Facility at District Hospital Kargil, dedication of major infrastructure projects in Kargil, implementation of the Ladakh Sports Policy, successful hosting of the 6th Khelo India Winter Games, launch of the REWA-II Scheme for UPSC aspirants, establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Sea Buckthorn at Nimoo, unveiling of the Destination Ladakh tourism brand and substantial progress under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Throughout his tenure, Shri Kavinder Gupta consistently focused on digital governance, renewable energy, infrastructure development, youth empowerment, tourism promotion and environmentally sustainable growth while preserving Ladakh's

unique ecological and cultural heritage.

Governor of Himachal Pradesh: Empowering Youth, Promoting Heritage

Recognising his administrative experience and constitutional acumen, the Hon'ble President of India appointed Shri Kavinder Gupta as the Governor of Himachal Pradesh on 5 March 2026. He took oath of office on 10 March 2026, becoming the constitutional head of another strategically important Himalayan State.

In just four months, Governor Gupta travelled extensively across almost every district of Himachal Pradesh. These visits were not merely ceremonial; they reflected his desire to understand the State's immense developmental potential firsthand. By paying obeisance at revered shrines such as Shri Naina Devi Ji, Mata Chintpurni, Maa Jwala Ji, Shri Brajeshwari Devi Temple, Maa Chamunda Devi Temple, Baba Balak Nath Temple (Deotsidh), Maa Bhimakali Temple (Sarahan), Jakhu Temple, Tara Devi Temple, Hidimba Devi Temple, and several other places of faith, Governor Gupta sought to assess the vast scope of religious tourism as a catalyst for economic growth and employment.

He has repeatedly observed that Himachal Pradesh possesses a rare combination of spirituality, scenic beauty, cultural heritage and peaceful surroundings, making it one of India's most promising destinations for pilgrimage, eco-tourism and wellness tourism. According to him, if these strengths are effectively harnessed through planned infrastructure, better connectivity and public participation, tourism can become one of the strongest pillars of the State's economy while creating thousands of employment opportunities for local youth.

As Chancellor of the State Universities, Governor Gupta has maintained regular interaction with Vice-Chancellors, faculty members and students across Himachal Pradesh. In almost every convocation, academic programme and university interaction, one message consistently resonates in his addresses—India is a nation of youth.

He frequently reminds students that nearly 65 per cent of India's pop-

ulation is young, making the country's greatest strength not its natural resources but its human capital. "The future of India," he believes, "will be shaped by the aspirations, innovation and character of its youth."

Governor Gupta shares a special rapport with young people. Those who have attended his interactions often notice that he speaks to students not merely as the constitutional head of the State but as a mentor. He consistently encourages them to dream big, acquire skills, embrace innovation and contribute towards nation-building. He believes that every young person deserves not only education but also a vision, a direction and the confidence to build a meaningful future.

He has repeatedly emphasised that the youth of Himachal Pradesh need not migrate outside the State in search of opportunities. According to him, Himachal is endowed with enormous untapped potential in religious tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, medicinal and aromatic plants, natural farming, horticulture, floriculture, food processing, wellness tourism and digital entrepreneurship. With proper skills, innovation and entrepreneurship, these sectors can generate sustainable livelihoods within the State itself.

Drawing inspiration from the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for an Atmanirbhar Bharat, Governor Gupta has consistently urged young people to take full advantage of flagship initiatives such as Startup India, Stand-Up India, PM Mudra Yojana, Skill India Mission, Digital India, Atal Innovation Mission, National Education Policy 2020, PM Vishwakarma, and the growing network of innovation and incubation centres established across educational institutions.

He believes universities should no longer remain centres confined to conventional classroom learning. Instead, they must evolve into hubs of research, innovation, entrepreneurship and skill development that prepare students to become job creators rather than job seekers.

During his interactions with Vice-Chancellors, he has repeatedly stressed closer collaboration between academia, industry and government to ensure that higher education con-

tributes directly to economic growth and employment generation.

Governor Gupta has also consistently highlighted the remarkable potential of Himachal Pradesh's medicinal and aromatic plants. Referring to high-value medicinal species, he has encouraged universities, researchers, farmers and entrepreneurs to work together in creating value-added products capable of reaching national and international markets. He believes that scientific cultivation, research and entrepreneurship in this sector can transform rural livelihoods while strengthening the State's economy.

A Continuous Thread of Constitutional Responsibility

Taken together, Shri Kavinder Gupta's two constitutional assignments reflect not separate chapters but one continuous year of constitutional responsibility. Whether serving as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh or Governor of Himachal Pradesh, his approach has remained remarkably consistent—strengthening institutions, improving governance, encouraging transparency, promoting sustainable development and remaining accessible to the people.

For a public servant whose journey began as a young Swayamsevak inspired by his father at the age of five, who embraced organisational life at thirteen, endured imprisonment during the Emergency, served as three-time Mayor, Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and Deputy Chief Minister before entering constitutional office, this first year marks another significant milestone in a life dedicated to public service. From the high-altitude landscapes of Ladakh to the verdant hills of Himachal Pradesh, Gupta's constitutional journey has been guided by the same enduring principles—discipline, integrity, nationalism and an unwavering commitment to the Constitution of India.

As he completes one uninterrupted year in constitutional office, his journey stands as an example of how decades of grassroots experience, organisational commitment and public service can culminate in constitutional leadership devoted to strengthening institutions, empowering people and contributing to the nation's progress.