LOK SABHA SPEAKER CALLS FOR MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND AI TO STRENGTHEN DEFENCE LAND MANAGEMENT

SAFEGUARDING OVER 1.7 MILLION ACRES OF DEFENCE LAND AND PRESERVING CANTONMENT HERITAGE ARE KEY PRIORITIES: SHRI OM BIRLA

BALANCING OPERATIONAL NEEDS, ANTI-ENCROACHMENT EFFORTS, AND CANTONMENT HERITAGE HIGHLIGHTED BY LOK SABHA SPEAKER

LOK SABHA SPEAKER DELIVERS DEFENCE ESTATES CENTENARY LECTURE 2026

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New Delhi, 20 November 2026: Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla today called upon the Defence Estates Organisation to strengthen the management and protection of defence land through modern technology, digitisation, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Addressing the centenary celebrations of the Defence Estates Organisation in New Delhi, he emphasised that securing defence assets, curbing encroachments, and ensuring timely land availability for the operational needs of the Armed Forces must remain top priorities.

Highlighting the scale of the organisation's mandate in managing and safeguarding more than 1.7 million acres of defence land, Shri Birla underlined that accurate, secure, and accessible land records are vital for effective governance. He commended the digital upgrades already underway and noted that AI and emerging technologies will help address both present operational demands and long-term administrative challenges.

Pointing to encroachment on defence land as a key concern, Shri Birla appreciated the organization's efforts to protect properties and carry out accurate surveys and measurements, while taking care to avoid unnecessary disputes or hardship for civilians. He also stressed that timely access to land and conducive conditions for defence establishments and personnel are essential to national security.

Speaking on the historical and ecological value of cantonments, Shri Birla noted that their original character, green cover, forests, and heritage must be protected as they adapt to modern needs. Development, he cautioned, should be planned thoughtfully so that the distinct identity of military cantonments is preserved amid rapid urban growth.

He lauded the organization's civic initiatives for cantonment residents—including schools, healthcare facilities, computer education, skill training, water conservation and recycling, and environmental protection—and called for sustained engagement with civil society to respond to evolving community needs.

Emphasizing institutional continuity, Shri Birla encouraged officers and staff to study the laws, rules, and administrative frameworks built over the past century, and to learn from former officers. Pairing this institutional wisdom with the technical agility of younger personnel, he said, will build stronger systems for the future.

Shri Birla observed that as the Defence Estates Organisation enters its second century, the focus must be on building an institution that combines its rich legacy with a forward-looking vision. Shri Birla expressed confidence that, through innovation, transparency, technological advancement and a renewed commitment to public service, the Organisation will continue to safeguard the nation's valuable defence land, strengthen the operational preparedness of the Armed Forces and preserve the unique heritage of its cantonments. He called upon all officers and employees to carry this responsibility forward with dedication, foresight and a shared sense of national purpose.

> नई दिल्ली में आयोजित Defence Estates Centenary Lecture 2026 में सम्मिलित हुआ। Defence Estates Organisation के सौ वर्ष पूर्ण होने के अवसर पर रक्षा मंत्रालय के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों, सैन्य अधिकारियों एवं रक्षा संपदा प्रबंधन से जुड़े विशेषज्ञों के साथ संवाद का अवसर मिला। रक्षा भूमि के संरक्षण एवं सुव्यवस्थित प्रबंधन, राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और छावनियों में नागरिक सुविधाओं के विस्तार के साथ सैन्य आवश्यकताओं एवं जनहित के बीच संतुलन बनाए रखने के विभिन्न पहलुओं पर चर्चा हुई। बदलते समय में रक्षा भूमि प्रबंधन को अधिक प्रभावी, पारदर्शी और तकनीक आधारित बनाने के लिए AI, GIS, Drone Technology और Digital Records का उपयोग महत्वपूर्ण है। साथ ही, e-Chhawani, Smart, Green and Sustainable Cantonments, पर्यावरण संरक्षण तथा ऐतिहासिक अभिलेखों के संरक्षण जैसे प्रयासों को आगे बढ़ाना आवश्यक है। मेरा विश्वास है कि अपनी समृद्ध विरासत, अनुभव और पेशेवर दक्षता के आधार पर Defence Estates Organisation आने वाले समय में राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा, सुशासन और जनकल्याण में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देता रहेगा। इस ऐतिहासिक उपलब्धि पर संगठन के सभी वर्तमान एवं पूर्व अधिकारियों, कर्मचारियों और उनके परिवारों को हार्दिक बधाई एवं शुभकामनाएँ।
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> — Om Birla (@ombirlakota) November 20, 2026

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