

# REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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## Brief News

### DISCLAIMER

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### Leh celebrates birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima

CHUCHOT: The birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima, daughter of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was celebrated on February 26 at Imam Bargah, Chuchot Gongma.

The programme was organised under the presidentship of Sheikh Nazir Ahmed Sharifi, President, Majlis e- ullama.

Sheikh Ghulam Hadi, Phyang, Sheikh Nazir Ali, Agha Syed Zahid Ali, Sheikh Mohd. Raza, Tausif Hussain, President, Anjuman Imamia Youth wing and Ramzan Din spoke on the occasion.

### Matho Nagrang festival concludes

MATHO: The two- day long Matho Nagrang festival was celebrated with religious fervor on February 19 and 20 at Matho monastery.

His Eminence Thartse Khen Rinpoche imparted long life empowerment to the devotees. People from different parts of Ladakh seek blessing from the two oracles 'Rongtsan' and mask dance.

Matho monastery belongs to the Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhism and was founded in 15th century by Lama Drungba Dorje during King Drakpa Bumde. Mangtro Gonpa (Matho) which mean in Tibetan 'mang' means 'many' and 'tro' means 'Happiness'.

### Correction and clarification

It is the policy of 'Reach Ladakh Bulletin' to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition, date, news item or the article.

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All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone numbers.

## REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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## Stomach cancer most prevalent in Ladakh

Caused primarily due to lack of personal hygiene

Dawa Dolma

LEH: To educate and raise awareness about preventable cancers, the month of February is universally dedicated as National Cancer Prevention Month. According to Sonam Norboo Memorial Hospital, Leh records, the highest patients of cancer in Ladakh is that of stomach cancer, the ailment which is caused by a virus known as Helicobacter Pylori that develops solely because of lack of hygiene. Gastrointestinal cancer, liver cancer from Hepatitis B, cervical cancer, breast cancer, and lung cancer are the other prevalent cancers in the region.

Surgeons believed that people generally assume cancer death rates are on the rise in Ladakh. Yes, advances in and the presence of diagnostic tools and technologies have allowed early diagnosis and identification of the ailments but that does not mean there has been a significant increase in the number.

Lack of awareness among the people has found to be the key reason behind many cancer ailments in Ladakh.

Cancer Registry of SNM Hospital Leh			
Surgery, Medicine and Allied Service	Year		
	2017-18	2018-19	
Stomach	19	22	
Breast	F	5	4
	M	2	-
Genito-urinary	8	8	
Liver	6	7	
Gall Bladder	4	5	
Colorectal	0	3	
Lungs	5	3	
Blood	0	3	



Cancer Registry of SNM Hospital Leh		
Gynecology	Year	
	2017-18	2018-19
Uterus	-	1
Cervix	1	3
Ovary	1	3
ENT		
Esophagus	3	4
Larynx	1	1
Thyroid	2	-
Sino Nasal	1	1
Lymphorrhoea	2	-

### Causes

Living at high altitude under the hypoxic conditions is a risk factor; dietary habits, alcoholism, and smoking cigarettes are major contributors to many cancer ailments.

Dr. Tashi Thinlas, Consultant Physician, SNM Hospital, Leh said, "Viruses like Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and Hepatitis B are common cancers causing virus

found predominately in Ladakh along with Helicobacter Pylori infection of the stomach."

When asked whether sedentary lifestyle is the primary cause of cancer in Ladakh, Dr. Tashi Motup, Senior Consultant Surgeon, SNM Hospital, Leh mentioned that sedentary lifestyle does not apply rightly to people of Ladakh as they are engaged in agro-based farming, active and hardworking life. In contrast, non-communicable diseases such as Hypertension, Obesity, Diabetic and Blood pressure along with inactive life results in a sedentary lifestyle.

Likewise, there are plenty of myths associated with cancer and it is extremely crucial to debunk these myths. Cancer is highly equivalent to a death sentence and incurable which is not true with scientific research and methods, more than 60 percent of patients may be cured which entirely depends on the early detection of the ailment.

Experts explained that in Ladakh, late diagnosis is one of the major concerns in the development of cancer. Early diagnosis and screening are extremely important. Traditionally vaccine treats diseases, but there is no vaccine that cures cancer rather vaccine for preventing cancer viruses including HPV and Hepatitis B. Perception about cancer patient is misunderstood especially thinking cancer as a contagious disease that spreads easily from person to person. Cancer can spread only when organ and tissue transplant from one to another person.

Clarifying cancer is not a hereditary disease, Dr. Tashi Motup, General Laparoscopic surgeon, SNM Hospital, Leh said that cancer is a disease of genetically/immune modular alteration in cellular organs of a living organism that results in the disproportionate increase in size.

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## Leh celebrates International Mother Language Day

Hill Council Leh's priority to preserve and promote Bhoti language, says CEC



CEC with other dignitaries during the celebration of International Mother Language Day.

Rigzin Wangmo

LEH: Marking International Mother Language Day, a program themed 'Indigenous languages matter for Development and Reconciliation' was celebrated on February 21 at Lotsava Auditorium, Cultural Academy.

It was organised by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages Leh in collaboration with Buddhist Association Youth Wing, Culture and Language Welfare Society, Leh and students Welfare Society, CIBS.

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, CEC was the chief guest while Tsewang Thinles, President, Ladakh Buddhist Association was the guest of honour.

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal said, "Language is the main identity of society and we all must strive to use our own lan-

guage and pass on the values. We should be responsible for preserving our language. Also, one should stop blaming the younger generation for not speaking the language properly. The experts should encourage them to learn better".

He also expressed his satisfaction over the younger generation taking a keen interest in the Bhoti language. But unfortunately, they are given less platform and opportunities.

He further informed that Hill Council, Leh would give the highest priority for preservation and propagation of Bhoti language. Also, advice to write applications to Hill Council, Leh in Bhoti language.

Tsewang Thinles, President LBA highlighted the initiatives and Bhoti promo-

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## Panel for Ladakh meets Councilors, Leh

The panel to work towards equal development of both Leh and Kargil districts



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A committee for Ladakh constituted by State Administrative Council under Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary (Planning & Development) convened a meeting with the Hill Council, Leh on February 18 at Council Secretariat.

The aim of the committee visit to Leh was to study on the periodicity of the newly created Ladakh Division, understand and resolve the concerns of both Leh and Kargil districts.

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, CEC raised certain points concerning the people of the district such as the creation of the

post of Commissioner Secretary rank for the district as Chief Executive Officer LAHDC, the directorates must function under the overall control and superintendent of the LAHDCs Leh and Kargil.

He further said that the district stands with the Govt. decision for sanctioned headquarters of the Ladakh Division in Leh as per the Govt. SRO-110 with no modifications to any other location. Reason being Leh is equidistant from all the Sub-divisions/blocks of the entire Ladakh region, better infrastructure and approachable via both air and road connectivity with the rest of the world.

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## First winter kisan mela cum exhibition held in Leh



CEC and other dignitaries during the Kisan Mela

### Rigzin Wangmo

AGLING: With an aim to revive the traditional crops, the first ever winter Kisan Mela cum exhibition was held on February 21 at Farmers Hostel, Agling.

The fest was organised by District Agriculture Office Leh under the scheme ATMA (CSS) SMAE 2018-19.

Farmers of Leh district exhibited their greenhouse-grown vegetables and perennial potted flowers. DIHAR, CAZIRI, and KVK also had their stalls for demonstration.

Inaugurating the exhibition, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, CEC appreciated the department and associated research stations for organising the Kisan mela in winter to make people aware that vegetables can be grown in this season also.

Recollecting the old methods of farming he said, "Earlier everything was fabricated locally, people were not dependent on the outside products and were self-sustained. Now with the tremendous development and lack of poor management we are depended on the goods bought

from other places neglecting our own goods".

"LAHDC will be come up with various methods and implementations in the agriculture sector and people can sell local vegetables through Cooperative societies. The local product will have values in the market as the local government will not allow the vegetables which are bought in from other places", he added.

He further stressed on the need for age-old sustainable agricultural practice. Villages with minimal use of chemical fertilizers will be made fully organic by 2021, and the rest of the villages with high or more usage of chemical fertilizers will be transformed into sustainable farming method thus making Ladakh fully organic by the year 2024.

Phuntsog Stanzin, Executive Councillor, Agriculture said, "We have been working on making amendments in the agriculture sector for positive changes. The machinery for packaging is now available with the department. The packing of local products can be done and sold in the market which will boost the economic sector of the local

farmers".

He also spoke about the launching of local rajma as a souvenir 'Ladakhi Rajma' in the next month.

Tashi Tsetan, Chief Agriculture Officer Leh spoke about the sufficient stock of seeds and plans for uniform distribution.

He also informed about the successful trial of flori-culture at Thiksay farm and reduction in procurement of chemical fertilizers. Also, the new machine introduced by the department and PM Soil Health Card.

'Best Farmer' awards to 10 farmers of different blocks with a cash prize of ₹10,000 and certificates were distributed under ATMA scheme.

Dr. Srivastava, Director DIHAR, Dr. Harpreet Kaur, District Forest Officer Leh, Dr. Mohd. Iqbal, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Tashi Tsetan, Chief Agriculture Officer Leh, Thinley Dawa, Assistant Soil Chemist Agriculture officers and officials of Agriculture Department Leh, and large numbers of farmers of Leh district were present.

## Panel for Ladakh meets Councillors, Leh

...Continued from Page 1

Also, Leh has more availability of land to expand the headquarter and directorates of all the administrative departments in the future. Considering the geo-strategic relevance of Leh, he advocated for the headquarter in Leh.

Stressing on the fact that Leh is already accommodating the multi-ethnic groups of people from all the corners of the Ladakh region, including Kargil, he said that having headquarter in Leh would be in the great interest of the common mass.

He urged on the creation of all the posts on the lines of other divisions of the state and requested for creation of a separate Directorate of Hospitality, Tribal Affairs, Civil aviation among others.

Rohit Kansal, Chairman of the Committee said that the main objective of their visit to Leh is to ensure greater development and prosperity to Ladakh as a whole by finding ways for best operationalisation of the division here so that benefits flow to the people.

He assured that the committee is committed for a fair report considering the long term sustainable development of this region focusing on the promotion of art, culture, handicraft, and Pashmina.

Rohit Kansal said that they are here to achieve the aim of divisional status by identifying the overall actual requirements of the departments and officers

on the ground.

The committee will work towards equal development of both Leh and Kargil districts, asserted Kansal.

Members of the committee, Shahid Anayatullah, Commissioner/Secretary to Govt. Revenue Department, Mohd. Yaqoob Itoo, Director General Budget Finance Department said that this is a continuous process and things will be completed with a flow.

Later, the committee also held a meeting with the District Officers at DC Conference hall and took firsthand information about the power and exercise of major departments in terms of developmental schemes under District and State sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, and their fund flow mechanism.

Detail enquiry about procedural issues and administrative problems pertaining to various departments were also carried out.

Avny Lavasa, DC, Leh gave inputs on various important issues during the meeting.

Rigzin Samphel, Commissioner/Secretary to Govt. Ladakh Affairs, Sheetal Nanda, Secretary Dept. Rural Dev. & PR, Saugat Biswas, Divisional Commissioner Ladakh, Stanzin Phuntsog, EC Agriculture, Tsering Sandup, EC Health, Sargun Shukla, SSP Leh, councillors, and HODs were present during the meeting.

## 14-day theatre workshop held in Leh

Authenticity is the key to become an artist rather than imitating someone else's art, says Mipham Otsal



Mipham Otsal while explaining the importance of theatre.

### Dawa Dolma & Rigzin Wangmo

LEH: A 14-day play oriented theatre workshop was initiated by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Arts, Culture and Language from February 15 to 28 at Ladakh Theatre Organization hall.

The workshop is intended to produce promising artists and theatrical students in the field of drama, play and movie. The workshop is conducted by Mipham Otsal.

Ven. Lobzang Nyantak, Councillor, Upper Leh, chief guest asserted the importance of reviving Bhoti language as it is an essential part of Ladakhi culture, tradition, and arts. He said that theatre has greatly contributed in preserving the values of culture and traditions thereby building a cultured society.

In the wake of external entertaining means causing a threat to local cultural values Lobzang Ven. Nyantak strongly insists on Ladakhi leaders and policymakers to prioritize in safeguarding

Ladakh distinct culture rather than giving importance to infrastructure development.

Mipham Otsal, Director LTO, Leh emphasized that the main objective of organising this workshop is to bring out arts within an individual and to transform oneself into an artist and a theatre lover. He focused on authenticity as the key to becoming an artist rather than imitating someone else's art.

He further spoke about the need for sincerity, dedication, commitment and discipline to become a genuine artist since; there has been no improvement in the field of theatre in Ladakh since 1982.

Dr. Thupstan Norbu, Assistant Editor, J&K Culture Academy, Leh said, "Theatre is a medium of spreading information, bringing changes and source of entertainment."

He also highlighted theater as part of the ordinary aspect of knowledge and Buddhist education.

Tsetan Angchuk, Senior teach-

er, Department of Education stressed on lack of confidence among students and youths of Ladakh. He believed that the workshop will be a perfect platform to boost and build the confidence of Ladakhi youths.

He also mentioned that being a student of Mipham Otsal (a master in theatrical work), students can expect to see growth while taking part in this wonderful opportunity and requested students not to hesitate to ask questions.

Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, writer/translator was also felicitated for receiving state award.

Tsering Wangdus urged participants to consider the workshop important to experience transformation within yourself. He also advised students to advance their language skills particularly Bhoti during the workshop.

Tsering Yangchan, student cum LTO member sharing her experiences suggested aspirant artists to join the training to advance their skills.

## Leh condemns Pulwama attack



### Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Paying solidarity and tribute to the martyred soldiers in Pulwama attack, thousands of people joined candle light march on February 15 in Leh which

was organised by Ladakh Buddhist Association.

The speakers strongly condemn the killing of soldiers and conveyed condolence to the families of the bereaved.

As many as 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed after a suicide bomber attacked a CRPF convoy in Pulwama district on February 14.

## Leh administration expresses satisfaction over regulations implemented by various agencies on Chadar trek



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: With the conclusion of 2019 Chadar Trek, Avny Lavasa took stock of the overall implementation and identify areas for improvement in next year on February 15.

The inspection was carried out up to Shingra Yokma along with Moses Kunzang, ADC, AD Sheep Husbandry and Wildlife Warden.

Expressing satisfaction over the results, Avny Lavasa said that barring the unfortunate death of one person due to HAPO, many lives were saved because of the medical facilities available en route and swift action taken by ALTOA and the insurance company ASC 360.

She said that there is still scope for further improvement in all these facilities which will be taken care of next year.

She further added that the idea of handing over garbage bags to all tour guides for garbage collection and depositing back at the wildlife check post has been a great success.

A total of 3,000 kg garbage was collected during this Chadar season which has been brought to project Tsangda centre for scientific disposal.

While appreciating the Wildlife Department, Health Department, District Police, ALTOA, Ladakh Rescue Centre and Adventure Sports Cover(ASC 360) insurance company for effective implementation of the regulations, she said that performance of all the above-mentioned departments and stakeholders remained exceptional.

Keeping the large influx of tourists every year for Chadar trek and consequential degradation of the environment coupled with health hazards and fatalities because of non-availability of proper regulations and facilities, District Administration has put certain regulations for Chadar Trek this year. Basic facilities like health check-up, mandatory acclimatization, insurance cover, provision of toilets, garbage bags/dustbins en route, air evacuation in case of any exigency and Sat phone communication etc. were provided to the tourists.

Also, the procedure for obtaining the permit was streamlined for the convenience of tourists.

## Hill Council Leh plans action policy for Sowa-Rigpa system

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: To develop Sowa Rigpa Amchi System in Ladakh, Hill Council Leh expresses keen to formulate an action policy plan during a meeting on February 17.

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, CEC said that traditional Amchi system of Himalayan region is a valuable treasure for Ladakh and Hill Council is committed to developing this ancient system in an organised way. To do so, an inclusive action policy will be formulated and urged upon Leh based traditional medical institute and Amchies to give their valuable suggestions and feedbacks.

He further added that Hill Council Leh is keen to add Sowa-Rigpa sector under the portfolio of an Executive Councillor LAHDC, Leh in days to come.

While discussing various issues, demands and the problem of Leh based institutes and Amchies, it was decided to pursue different genuine demands with concerned ministry at GoI level and with Governor Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh state shortly.

Issues and demands highlighted were creation of 24 posts of Amchi and Pharmacist in Leh



district at par with Ayurvedic and Unani doctors in SNM Hospital Leh and other Primary Health Centers of Leh, relaxation in the amendment of J&K Ayurvedic, Unani, Sowa-Rigpa (Amchi) System of Medicine Act 1959 and 2017 as per which traditional trained Amchi required 10 year experience in Amchi medicine practice with matriculation for registration and practice, enhancement in the Stipend of Amchies which is stand still at ₹300 since many decades, up-gradation of Chief Amchi post at the level of CMO and creation of 22 Medical Officers posts to regulate Sowa-Rigpa system in the Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh state.

Also, future requirements of the education and research institutes like NRIS Leh, CIBS, Choglamsar Leh and SNM Hospital for strengthening of Sowa-Rigpa system in Ladakh was discussed.

Dr. Padma Gurmet, Chief officer, NRIS Leh informed that as per the Gazette of GoI Ministry of Ayurveda and Homeopathy 2018 and Central Council of Indian Medicine Act, 1970, the degree holders in Sowa Rigpa Amchi System from four institutes of India including CIBS (Deemed University) Choglamsar Leh, Men-Tsee-Khang College Dharmsala (HP), Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath Varanasi (UP) and Chagpori Tibetan Medical Institute, Darjeeling ( West Bengal ) are also recognized for registration, practice and eligible for posts equivalent to Ayurvedic and Unani doctors under NHM. He said that there is a good number of such degree holders in Ladakh.

The meeting decided to sit monthly under the chairmanship of Executive Councillor for Health to devise the action policy plan.

## Leh celebrates International Mother Language day

...Continued from Page 1

tional programmes organised by LBA for the students in Leh, Jammu and other cities as an annual feature and also informed about their future course of Bhoti learning programmes. He also said Cultural Academy is much more capable of shouldering bigger responsibilities but the constraint of funds is becoming an obstruction in their way.

He appealed LAHDC to provide funds to the Academy so that cultural promotion programmes would be carried out smoothly.

Dr. Thupstan Norbu, Assistant Editor, J&K Culture Academy spoke about the importance of the language and highlighted the history and how the International Mother Language Day is essential to observe.

Ven. Shadup Chamba, President, Ladakh Gonpa Association, Konchok Ishey Stak, President, LBA Youth, Dr. Urgain Dadul, Reader of Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh, Haji Riyas Ahmad, Ven. Konchok Gyatso, Molvi Shabir, Ven. Stobdan Paldan, Mohd. Ali and Konchok Tashi also spoke on the occasion and urged every citizen of Ladakh to use own language with the greatest pride.

## Leh district express resentment on repeal of SRO 110 to SRO 120

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A meeting to discuss the function of division in Ladakh region was convened under the chairmanship of Tsewang Thinles, President LBA on February 25 at LBA office.

The meeting was attended by All Ladakh Gonpa Association, Anjuman Imamia, Anjuman-Moin-ul-Islam, Christian Community, Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Leh, BJP, Indian National Congress, National Conference, PDP, Chairman, Sarpanch Coordination Committee, Leh, Vice President, Municipal Committee, Leh, Leader of opposition, LAHDC, Leh.

A joint resolution was passed unanimously which states that the Divisional Status should not undermine the functioning of the LAHDC. To ensure the smooth functioning of the LAHDC a proposal of making CEO, LAHDC post of Commissioner Secretary rank was raised. Divisional status should be purposeful and on ground. All departments functioning in the district to be given full-fledged Directorate with required numbers of staff with preference to the local participation on top priority.

Also, the memorandum reads as, "Post creations for implementation of the new dispensation be done forthwith otherwise we have a bitter experience that the Government had introduced Bhoti Language teachings in government schools in the year 1969 with the promise to create post for Bhoti teachers in all schools (which at the initial stage only 27 posts created) and no fresh post created after that in last 50 years."

It was also decided that the struggle for UT with legislature will continue and committed to struggle for honour, dignity and achieving the aspirations of people.

The participants also expressed their resentment on repeal of SRO 110 to SRO 120. They said that declaring Leh as the headquarter of newly created Division was very thoughtful and a decision of wisdom keeping in view the international historical, cultural and strategic importance of Leh city. But unfortunately, the decision has been reversed under the pressure of Kargil population thereby resulting in extreme humiliation and disappointment among the people of Leh district. They demanded all the headquarters of the Directorates be stationed in Leh so as to ensure that the status of Leh city too is not undermined.

It was also decided that if the demands are not given due consideration they have no option left except to fight for our rights.

## Cultural Academy, Kargil, organises folk music competition



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Around 80 children under different age groups took part in the three days long folk music competition which started on February 23 at Language Centre New Academy complex.

The program was organised by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages Kargil.

The aim of the competition is to instill an appreciation for folk music among youngsters besides providing a platform to showcase their folk musical skills.

Welcoming the children, teachers, jury, and guests on the first day, Muhammad Ali Tak, Special Officer for Culture Kargil said that a series of such children based programmes being conducted by Cultural Academy Kargil in different blocks of the district.

He said that the core idea behind organising such events is to introduce the young minds to the realm of creative arts in music and to invoke cultural awakening among youngsters.

The children were categorized under age groups including Junior (9-13 years), Senior (13-16 years) and Amateur (16-21 years).

## Stomach cancer most prevalent in Ladakh

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Only about 5 to 10 percent of cancer cases are hereditary but 90 percent are directly caused by chronic cellular damage and genetic immunological alteration. However, it does not indicate that you are cancer free; many people are diagnosed with cancer at some age primarily due to genetic changes and exposure to environmental factors like radiation, tobacco, smoke, and alcoholism.

**Prevention**

There are various possible ways to prevent cancer. People must pay serious attention to their dietary habits; consumption of stored meats and leftover food that develops the growth of fungal organism due to the assorted temperature which can cause chronic diseases.

Dr. Tashi Motup informed that the notion of the food, 'Leftovers taste better' need to be thrown away. Researches and studies in Japan and China claim that salt and butter are the worst combinations that could deteriorate an individual's health.

He further added that personal hygiene is extremely important to stay away from many cancer ailments.

In Ladakh, people lack the habit of washing hands before and after meals and after using toilets. People do grow fresh vegetable and fruits but they don't eat and consume fresh milk.

Dr. Tashi Thinlas focused on eating dry fruits like walnut, almond and apricot can prevent cancer and taking them daily is highly crucial. Similarly, fresh milk contains calcium that prevents bone-related ailments. Exposure to sun, breathing fresh air and drinking fresh water are must things to do, Ladakhis tend to spend their time indoor that results in vitamins D deficiency.

At the same time, social workers can also assist cancer patients in giving psychological support, understanding medical procedures, building a positive attitude and care management.

Tashi Angchuk, President of Medical Social Service Association, Leh stressed on the role of social workers for the welfare of cancer patients like providing counseling, offering palliative care, and rehabilitation.

Cancer is a preventable disease and the need of the hour is to have a proper cancer registry and active cancer society in Ladakh to bring a wind of change.

## EXPERT TALK

## Importance of Voter's Participation

By Stanzin Dasal



**Avny Lavasa, Deputy Commissioner/ District Election Officer, Leh:** Voting is a fundamental right of every citizen to choose the leaders and to form the government. Voter's participation is very important in the electoral process to run the democracy successfully.

District administration, Leh have already launched the voter awareness programme focusing on the electoral registration of the voters and awareness of machines such as Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

Under the flagship program of the Election Commission of India, Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation - SVEEP, we started activities to educate voters and spreading awareness. Focusing the young voters, we have conducted awareness campaign in winter coaching centres, ice hockey tournaments, and Ladakh Scouts. Presently, the election in Ladakh is conducted towards the closing phases and we are planning to carry out the awareness program in full swing once the date of election is finalized. The target is to reach every voter of the district for the enrollment, to educate about EVM/VVPAT's and to encourage them to vote.

VVPAT is a new machine which will ensure the voting process even more transparent than it was. Talking about the technical aspects of EVM, it is a standalone machine which cannot be connected with Wi-Fi networks or any external devices. The machine is electronically protected to prevent any tampering/manipulation.

There are two things which constitute the EVM, ballot unit and control unit. Now, the VVPAT will also be connected and apart from these three units no other devices or connection is possible.

Election will be fair and transparent and there is no doubt about it.

There are strict legal provisions against defaulters. During the election time, if any political parties violate the Model Code of Conduct, legal action will be taken against them. Anyone can come and complain if found such illegal practices and also, there is an app named C vigil where one can upload images of such practices within 5 minutes and we will take action.

Regarding polling duty, a local of a particular block will not be deployed in the respective block for polling duty and local officers

will not be there in local subdivisions. Apart from it, the EVM's are randomized when they are allotted to polling stations and the polling staffs are also randomized thrice with the final one before 48 hours of the elections. Prior to this, nobody knows who is going where. This will ensure check and balance in the system itself.

Voting gives the power to an individual to question the government about issues and clarifications. We should cast our vote wisely for the leaders who can bring change. If people votes are based on corrupt practices, the government you will get will also be corrupt and simultaneously one loses the right to complain.

There are issues regarding maximum number of youths studying outside unable to exercise their right to vote. But the problem is not just faced by the Ladakh region only but in other states as well. But as of now we must plan and try to cast our vote because the date of the election is announced almost 2 months ago. The consideration of demand for polling station in other states during election time is under Election Commission of India.

The participation of voters is must but the turnout ratio of voters is less in Leh as compared to Kargil. I feel that the interest in politics or the government you chose, and the issues are needed for maximum voter's participation.

There are challenges faced by the department such as the accessibility in far-flung nomadic areas where we need to install tents for polling station but I am proud to say that we have always reached out and conducted the election smoothly.

**Solution**

- Awareness program such as Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation-SVEEP will help in making people understand the importance of the vote.
- The thought of 'My vote counts' or 'One vote can change' needs to inculcate among the voters.
- Political parties can also play a big role in imparting the value and importance of the vote.

**Message**

"We may be very cynical and think one vote does not count and bring change. Each vote makes a difference and one must vote to the right candidate. The right to complain is not there if we don't vote."



**Nargis Banoo, Deputy District Election Officer, Kargil:** In a democratic setup, people play a very important role to form government of their own choice. India being the world's largest democracy has given right to vote to every citizen who has attained the age of 18 years and above. With the responsibility of choosing a good leader, maximum participation of voters becomes cru-

cial so that the views/choice of the majority prevail.

The voters are the primary medium to form a democratic government and should know the value of his / her vote. The voter should not be impressed or mobilized under any unlawful means /pressure and exercise the right to vote fearlessly. Also, they should not be involved in any exercise of bogus voting.

District Election Office under the control of the Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, plays a vital role for smooth conduct of elections. Preparation of plans, arrangement of different activities such as transport, communication, drafting of polling personnel, trainings, facilities at polling stations such as EVM/VVPAT and other material management, dispatch and receiving plan, counting plan, security arrangement and different assignments through various Nodal Officers etc. are to be handled and supervised.

EVM / VVPAT awareness drive is planned to take up to the bottom under SVEEP but because of blockage of various route, weather challenges and heavy snowfall the programme is at turtle speed. But we will gear up with the change in climatic conditions and opening of routes. However training/demonstration for employees and different sections of the society will start at Tehsil level within a day or two.

The awareness drive will play an important role to clear all doubts and increase voter participation.

If we look at the voter's turnout of previous elections in Kargil, it is always above 70%. This shows that people in Kargil are much aware of the importance of participation in the electoral process. Also, the voter awareness programmes are conducted at grass root level under different schemes of ECI at regular intervals. The religious organisations also suggest people to exercise his/her right to vote as a moral duty to elect capable leader. Your vote to A, B, or C candidate, goes to the nation and its democratic setup.

**Solution**

- Voters awareness forum under SVEEP
- Reaching at the grass root level through field workers like, AWWs, ASHAs, MPHs, FMPHs, BLOs, BLAs, BAGs, VLWs and MPWs
- Imparting the value and importance of vote through posters, banners hoardings pamphlets and local AIR.

**Message**

"To cast vote today is not only to exercise a right but to perform a duty towards strengthening national democratic system. I urge upon all eligible electors to participate in elections with a free mind."

## IN FOCUS

## What is Article 35A?

Krishnadas Rajagopal

**What is it?**

Article 35A is a provision incorporated in the Constitution giving the Jammu and Kashmir Legislature a carte blanche to decide who all are 'permanent residents' of the State and confer on them special rights and privileges in public sector jobs, acquisition of property in the State, scholarships and other public aid and welfare. The provision mandates that no act of the legislature coming under it can be challenged for violating the Constitution or any other law of the land.

**How did it come about?**

Article 35A was incorporated into the Constitution in 1954 by an order of the then President Rajendra Prasad on the advice of the Jawaharlal Nehru Cabinet. The controversial Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order of 1954 followed the 1952 Delhi Agreement entered into between Nehru and the then Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah, which extended Indian citizenship to the 'State subjects' of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Presidential Order was issued under Article 370 (1) (d) of the Constitution. This provision allows the President to make certain "exceptions and modifications" to the Constitution for the benefit of 'State subjects' of Jammu and Kashmir.

So Article 35A was added to the Constitution as a testimony of the special consideration the Indian government accorded to the 'permanent residents' of Jammu and Kashmir.

# ARTICLE 35A?

**Why does it matter?**

The parliamentary route of lawmaking was bypassed when the President incorporated Article 35A into the Constitution. Article 368 (i) of the Constitution empowers only Parliament to amend the Constitution. So did the President act outside his jurisdiction? Is Article 35A void because the Nehru government did not place it before Parliament for discussion? A five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in its March 1961 judgment in *Puranlal Lakhanpal vs. The President of India* discusses the President's powers under Article 370 to 'modify' the Constitution. Though the court observes that the President may modify an existing provision in the Constitution under Article 370, the judgment is silent as to whether the President can, without the Parliament's knowledge, introduce a new Article. This question remains open.

A writ petition filed by NGO We the Citizens challenges the validity of both Article 35A and Article 370. It argues that four representatives from Kashmir were part of

the Constituent Assembly involved in the drafting of the Constitution and the State of Jammu and Kashmir was never accorded any special status in the Constitution. Article 370 was only a 'temporary provision' to help bring normality in Jammu and Kashmir and strengthen democracy in that State, it contends. The Constitution-makers did not intend Article 370 to be a tool to bring permanent amendments, like Article 35A, in the Constitution.

The petition said Article 35 A is against the "very spirit of oneness of India" as it creates a "class within a class of Indian citizens". Restricting citizens from other States from getting employment or buying property within Jammu and Kashmir is a violation of fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution.

A second petition filed by Jammu and Kashmir native Charu Wali Khanna has challenged Article 35A for protecting certain provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution, which restrict the basic right to property if a native woman marries a man not holding a permanent resident certificate. "Her children are denied a permanent resident certificate, thereby considering them illegitimate," the petition said.

**Why does it matter?**

Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal has called for a debate in the Supreme Court on the sensitive subject.

Recently, a Supreme Court Bench, led by Justice Dipak Misra, tagged the Khanna petition with the *We the Citizens* case, which has been referred to a three-judge Bench. The court has indicated that the validity of Articles 35A and 370 may ultimately be decided by a Constitution Bench.

Courtesy: *The Hindu*

## SoulSpeak

P. P. Wangchuk

## Life is all about the celebration of the brighter moments



One quite-often-asked question is: Why do we have to suffer? The answer is quite simple as well as complex. My answer, the simple one, is because life is all about joy and suffering because it begins with the joy of birth and ends with the sadness of death. And, in-between, you have the vicissitudes of happiness and sadness. That is the law of nature, and sooner we realise it, the better.

As such, everybody suffers now and then, but then everybody does not face it to overcome it. Those who do are conscious of the fact that suffering is an essential part of life, and that it has to be taken in our stride instead of getting bogged down. That calls for celebration of life over its brighter aspects by coming out of the trauma of sufferings with greater zest.

The realisation of the truth that nothing good comes without experiencing bad moments gives one the strength to carry on with one's mission to fruition. A time comes when you get to forget all the bad experiences because your 'mission accomplished' is too great to remember anything else.

Irish author Oliver Goldsmith says life is a journey that must be travelled, no matter how bad the roads and accommodations are. There would be good times as well as bad times but the journey must go on until the very last moment of your rendezvous with this world. If one realises this and cares to be serious enough to do that on a daily basis, then the vicissitudes of life becomes more of a daily routine than a struggle. We need to pause every morning for a few minutes and deliberate on our ultimate goal.

Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*

The author is a New Delhi-based Editor-at-large, columnist and professional speaker

## In Conversation with Jigmet Desal, Orderly DC Office

Interviewed by Dawa Dolma

**Q. First of all, congratulation on receiving district award for your extraordinary dedication and service during Republic Day celebration. Tell us briefly about you?**

Firstly, I would like to thank Reach Ladakh Bulletin for giving me this opportunity. I am from Yortung, Leh and have been working for over three years as an orderly in Revenue Department, Deputy Commissioner Office, Leh. I believe in hard work, self-motivation, and dedication in life as there is no substitution to these strengths. I can work in any environment and circumstances that cultivated skills like adaptability, time-management, and punctuality.

**Q. What does it mean to you to receive this award?**

I extend my gratitude to everyone for considering me worthy of this precious award. I am highly honored and overwhelmed for the consideration that it is difficult to elaborate in words. Being awarded at a very young age has further motivated me to work harder and achieve in the future. I will cherish this moment throughout my life and look upon this time whenever I feel low and discouraged.

**Q. Being the recipient of this award, how would you use it to influence others and how would it impact your career?**

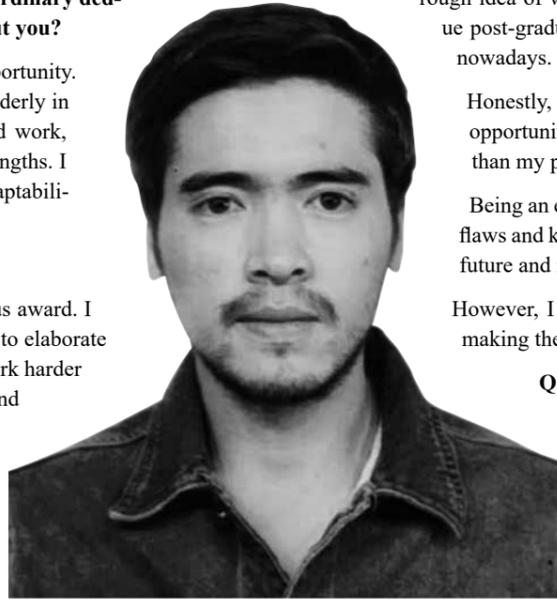
Really!!! I can't think of doing something very special to influence others by visiting them in person and give them a message or advice as it requires skill. However, I shall continue working hard and stay motivated. It would be my privilege if someone gets inspired by my fundamental values of life and being capable of doing something that makes a difference in their life.

My responsibility towards work has increased and I will give my best to accomplish the tasks assigned by the higher authorities.

**Q. What motivates you to do a good job?**

Since the government employees are well-paid, one should approach work on their passion, focus, seriousness and keep up work ethics. One's conscience should do justice to the work for which one is assigned and paid for it.

Personally, I feel fortunate to work with the organisation where one can help people with selfless service. I cherish the philosophy to bring a smile on the face of living souls by helping them and this deed brings happiness within me. By recognizing this attitude, the district



### MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“As the proverb of George Crane goes “There is no future in any job. The future lies in the man who holds the job”. Similarly, irrespective of any jobs that one holds, working with dedication and honesty is a must.”

administration has chosen me for the district award thereby the responsibility to help others has expanded.

**Q. What is your future plan?**

Nothing big, well everything is subject to change though I have a

rough idea of what I am going to do with my career in the future. I would like to continue post-graduation through distance learning as it has become a minimum qualification nowadays.

Honestly, I am open to whatever opportunities may arise in the future. I will grasp the opportunity and seize it with passion and boldness. It could be a higher job position than my present job or pursuing further education.

Being an employee and undergraduate, I still have to design my life by confronting my flaws and keep learning at every path of life. I am extremely anxious about the uncertain future and need to prepare for this.

However, I think the best way of planning future is to make the most of present and making the right choice rather than having a life of material comfort and social status.

**Q. How would you define dedication? Could be in both personal and professional?**

For me, dedication is when you give your hundred percent to any task without expecting something in return. Professionally, dedication is putting your heart and soul to the job especially in the government job to compensate for the value of well-paid salary. Personally, dedication is a determination to decide for oneself what really matters.

**Q. In our society people values the government job more than a private job. What are your thoughts on it?**

It is true that ideally, people of Ladakh give more preference towards the government job primarily because of job security. In our society success is measured in money that you earned which is terribly heartbreaking and there is a need to break such social constructed myth.

As a matter of fact, job is job and being passionate about things you do matters the most. Passion is the key to success along with hard work, commitment, and dedication. There are many instances where one can achieve the highest goal that he or she could not achieve merely by having a government job. One such example is the legendary Sonam Wangchuk of SECMOL, a well-known persona in Ladakh and Stanzin Dorjay Gya, a popular filmmaker. Hypothetically, if they work in government service, I don't think they could have achieved such success.

## FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary (IAS-2015) took charge as new Deputy Commissioner of Kargil.



Kargil district received three awards during 'National Water Awards 2018' at Mavalankar Hall, Constitution Club of India, New Delhi.



All India Radio, Leh celebrated Kisan Divas on the theme 'Doubling the income of farmers by 2022'.



Artist showcased their talent by making snow sculptures in Main Market, Leh.



People of Nubra demands creation of Nubra Development Authority, UDAN Service, Khardongla tunnel and separate district for Nubra valley.

## KNOW YOUR CULTURE

### Muslim Festivals in Ladakh



In Ladakh, besides the great Muslim festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Zuha, the Muslim both Shias and Sunnis celebrate the Id-ul-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) and Milad-un-Ali (AS) on 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal and 13 of Rajab receptively at Leh itself. The Shia Muslims also celebrate Id-ul-Ghadeer.

On the 10th day, the Ashura and the Zuljanha procession are taken out in Leh town in which thousands of people of all the ages from different villages participate. They recite Marsiahs and Nowhas and also

express their pain by self-flagellating and by wounding themselves with iron chain and blades. The procession starts in the morning from Imamiya Jamamasjid, Chhute Rantag and after passing through the main bazaar Leh finally culminates at Iman Barah Leh in the evening.

However, at some of the villages, the Majlis continues till Chehlum or fortieth day of Muharram. Muharram is also celebrated at many places in Nubra valley, such as Diskit, Hunder, Partapur, Turtuk, Tyakshi, and Bogdang. It is because of these Majlis and festivals, that the Muslim of the area is well aware of their religious principles, teachings, Hadith, moral and ethical values, communal harmony and brotherhood.

Similarly, Yum-e-Hussaini is celebrated during summer at Imam Barah, Chuchot Gongma, Chuchot Yogma, Phyang and Thiksey, and the great scholars address the gathering during these festivals. The birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima Zuhra, the beloved of the prophet of Islam and mother of Imam Hassan and Hussain (AS) is celebrated as "Women's Day" at Imam Barah Chuchot Gongma, so as to inspire womenfolk with the moral, ethical and spiritual values of Islam.

On 21st of March every year, "Nawroz" is celebrated by Shia Muslims of Leh. In most of the functions, the social, political and religious leaders of other communities also participate and express their views so as to improve the relation between different sects and communities. Moreover, during Id, Losar, Christmas and other festivals, the people of different communities visit the house of their friends and relatives to congratulate and greet the occasion. If these good traditions continue in future, certainly they will help to promote national integration.



Source: Emergence of Islam in Ladakh: Zain-ul-Aabedin Aabedi

## Kargil celebrates birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A)



**Reach Ladakh Correspondent**

KARGIL: A religious congregation to celebrate birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A) was organised on February 26 at Indoor Stadium Kargil.

The programme was organised by the Sadaat Welfare Committee, Kargil.

Aga Syed Mujtaba Mosavi, EC Social Welfare said, "The life of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A) is the

manifestation of enlightenment, piety and purity. We should try to imbibe these virtues within them to lead a life of success and bring peace and order in the world."

On the occasion, several speakers spoke about the life and teachings of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A) and advice people to follow her teachings in their lives.

Syed Asadullah Hashimi Tambis conducted the proceedings of the

religious congregation while as Syed Abdul Hassan Akchamal delivered the vote of thanks.

Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner and CEO, LAHDC, Kargil, Sheikh Bashir Shakir, Vice Chairman, Religious Affairs, Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, Kargil, religious scholars, district officers, prominent citizens and many devotees across the district also attended.

## EVM & VVPAT awareness plan in full swing across Leh district

**Reach Ladakh Correspondent**

LEH: Training on Voter's Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) and live demonstration of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) was conducted on February 14 at DIET.

Keeping the forthcoming general election in view, district administration Leh launched the awareness campaign and demonstration on EVM/VVPAT in the district. The drive is being

carried out under the supervision of SDMs/Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars, where ICDS workers, ASHAs, Nambardars, Sarpanches Panches and public are made aware of EVM/VVPAT.

Avny Lavasa, DC/CEO, Leh supervised the session and spoke about the introduction and importance of VVPAT in the election process. She urged upon the participants to get full knowledge about the functioning and operation of VVPAT and spread aware-

ness amongst the family members, friends, and general masses.

The participants took a keen interest in the training session and asked question-related to its functioning. Mohd Ayub, Nodal Officer, and master trainer cleared all the doubts.

Tashi Dolma, Joint Director Education Ladakh also spoke on the occasion and appreciated the students for taking a keen interest in the training session.

## Meeting held to discuss smooth conduct of upcoming general elections in Kargil



**Reach Ladakh Correspondent**

KARGIL: To review the preparedness and discuss various issues for the smooth conduct of upcoming General Elections, 2019, Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner also the District Election Officer Kargil convened a meeting with the nominated Nodal Officers on February 25 at DC Office.

The discussion was held on all aspects of the District Election Management Plan (DEMP), Booth Level Election Management Plan (BEMP), District Security Management Plan and related aspects. Also, the physical verification of polling stations in the district, availability of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF), their vulnerability mapping and webcasting and other issues were discussed.

Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary instructed the officers to ensure the

provision of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) to the general voters like provision of toilets, water, electricity, and other related facilities and stressed to carry out necessary measures well in time. Also, to prepare the polling station wise list of PwD voters to ensure them a provision of ramps, wheelchairs, hearing aids and other facilities.

ADC was directed to convene a meeting of the District Level Committee to assess the requirements of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) across the designated polling stations in the district so that requirements of an urgent nature could be submitted to the Election Commission of India (ECI).

He also directed the Chief Education Officer Kargil to activate the MDM kitchens in the designated Government schools to provide boarding and lodging facilities to the polling parties

during elections.

Regarding communication plan, he stressed on the officers of Police administration and BSNL to work in close coordination to put in place a seamless communication especially in the far off areas of the district.

Nodal Officers were asked to gear up their men and machinery for the smooth conduct of elections in the district.

He also took a brief from the officers about the training calendar for imparting training and demonstration of the ENMs/VVPATs and other training to the polling personnel.

Dr. Vinod Kumar, Superintendent of Police Kargil, Sonam Chosjor, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Nargis Banoo, Deputy District Election Officer besides other concerned officers were present.

## Meeting held to prepare DPR for 24 MW Trisha-Thoise Multipurpose Hydel Project



**Reach Ladakh Correspondent**

LEH: To device a viable DPR for 24 MW Trisha-Thoise Multipurpose Micro Hydel Project over Siachen river, a meeting of all the stakeholders was held under the chairmanship of Gyal P. Wangyal, Deputy Chairman LAHDC, Leh on February 16 at Council Secretariat.

Chering Dorjey, MLC Leh, Tsering Sandup, EC Health and Rigzin Lundup, Councilor Tegar were present.

Shiv Kumar, Xen. PDC Leh gave detail power point presentation of the 24 MW Trisha-Thoise Multipurpose Micro Hydel Project highlighting the salient features of this mega project including dam, 13 km tunnel connecting Thoise and underground powerhouse.

He also highlighted other major proposed projects like overhead

water tank for drinking water supply, water filtration plant, irrigation channels, barrage, protection wall and bridges which will make this project a multipurpose one.

The dam of the project will turn into a large artificial lake which will become a major tourist attraction besides irrigating a land about 2900 hectare with Sea-buckthorn and other crops under this ambit on the left side. On Hundri side also, the discharge water from powerhouse will be used for irrigation purpose covering around 600-hectare command land of Hundri village. Moreover, this project will also prevent the soil erosion along the Siachen river which was a major problem in the area.

Chering Dorjey urged upon all the concerned departments to give their data working on the

cost-benefit ratio so that a viable DPR for the project could be prepared on time.

Gyal P Wangyal and Tsering Sandup directed HODs of Tourism, PHE, I&FC, DIHAR, and other stakeholders to submit their data by February 22, 2019.

In the meantime, discussions on Phey Lift Irrigation and Drinking Water Schemes project prepared by JK PDC funded by Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd under CSR scheme while executing the proposed 50 MW Solar Power Project at Phey Thang was also held.

Punchok Dorjey, Councillor Phyang and Nambardars of Phyang and Phey also attended the meeting.

Discussion on the present state of 12 MW Rongdo project and pending hydel project of Domkhar was also held.

## EVMs, VVPATs training and demonstration kick starts in Kargil



**Reach Ladakh Correspondent**

KARGIL: Training and demonstration of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trials (VVPATs) for 3 days started on February 26 in Kargil.

The training is being imparted to

different categories of employees, political workers, media persons, NGOs and members of the civil society organisations.

On the first day of training and demonstration, the Assembly Level Master Trainers (ALMTs) conducted training and demon-

stration to Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and Booth Level Agents (BLAs) at different designated training locations in the district.

Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary, DC/District Election Officer, Kargil instructed the officers to ensure suitable participation of the employees along with other concerned members during the training and demonstration sessions to acquaint them with the operationalization of EVM and VVPAT machines.

A training schedule to the polling personnel including the Presiding Officers (POs), Polling Officers 1 (P1), Polling Officers 2 (P2), Polling Officers 3 (P3) was also issued. The training will start from March 1 to 5 at different training venues across the district.



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