

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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Courtesy Tsetan Angmo



Correction and clarification

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Schools reopen after COVID-19 lockdown

Administration to open schools in phased manner with Covid-19 SOPs



Students of Ladakh Public School on their way to school after COVID-19 lockdown.

Tenzin Dajon

LEH: The reopening of schools in phases from March 1, 2021, after the COVID-19 lockdown is a positive sign but parents are concerned and, schools are grappling with multiple challenges over how to get back to the regular regimen amidst the prevailing COVID-19 situation.

With the school reopening decision, schools have to ensure all the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/ Guidelines for Health and Safety Protocols such as proper cleaning and sanitation facilities, social distancing, appointing staff to monitor students, seating arrangement, thermal checking, sanitization of school transportation, disinfecting all teaching-learning material, etc.

Girdhari Lal Atri, Chief Education Officer, Leh, said, "Our priority is to ensure the hygiene of the school premises and to create awareness among the students

and parents. Parents in Ladakh give priority to education and students are also interested in coming to school after a long gap. So there are not much of difficulties in convincing the parents to send their children back to schools in the prevailing COVID-19 situation."

Regaining the interest of the students to start classroom study is also a concern as they have continuously been in their homes for a long time. Regular classrooms filled with hands-on activities, lab work, and excitement, have been exchanged for a computer or phone screen. The online education system during the lockdown has definitely kept the academic session going but in Ladakh, the network connectivity issue poses a question on the success of online education.

Rinchen Takpa, a student of class 9th said, "Online education is good but at the

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L-G Mathur launches 'Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav'

Flags off cycle rally and symbolic Dandi March



Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur flagging off the cycle rally during the celebration of 75 years of India's Independence themed, 'Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav'.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A nation-wide event celebrating 75 years of India's Independence-themed, 'Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav' was launched by Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur on March 12 in Leh.

A cycle rally and a symbolic Dandi March were flagged off during the event. Commencing the 7500 trees plantation drive, L-G Mathur planted an apricot sapling at Raj Niwas.

Addressing the gathering, L-G Mathur said that the celebration of "Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav" is to pay tribute to the martyrs by taking a pledge to make India a nation that they aspire for and to project the glory of ancient India and the progress of modern India.

He said that despite having a rich civilization with a unique cultural heritage, development in Ladakh has always re-

mained a challenge even post-independence due to its geographic remoteness, harsh climatic conditions, and connectivity issues. This has deprived Ladakh of the progress and development that they deserve. He asserted the fulfillment of the long-pending demand of Union Territory status for Ladakh by the Prime Minister of India would usher in a new beginning for the progress and prosperity of Ladakh.

He further reiterated the commitment of the UT Administration to ensure a sustainable and progressive Ladakh.

Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalsan shared that the event is a time to reflect the hardships the citizens of the country faced during the freedom struggle. He said that people should take a cue from Gandhi Ji and raise their voice against

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25th national Road Cycling Championship: Leakzes Angmo wins gold



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

MUMBAI: Cyclist, Leakzes Angmo won a gold medal in the 25th national Road Cycling Championship held in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra from March 5 to 8.

The race was conducted by the Cycling Federation of India, in which more than 35 girl riders from across the country participated in the final round of the championship.

Leakzes Angmo covered the distance of 50 km in 1:40:43:420 with an average speed of 29.78 km/hr beating her immediate rival with a margin of just a few seconds.

Ladakh Cycling Association congratulated Leakzes Angmo and wish her the best for future championships. They said that it is a historic moment for Ladakh because riders from Ladakh, especially girls are getting the opportunity to represent Ladakh at the national level championship after Ladakh became Union Territory.

The cycling association also thanked Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP Ladakh; Tashi Gyalsong, CEC, LAHDC, Leh; R.K. Mathur, LG Ladakh, Administration of UT Ladakh, and the Cycling Federation of India for making this possible.

PAGIR celebrates 14th Foundation day



LSRC Commanding officer Col Rinchen Dorje interacting with PAGIR tailoring unit members.

Morup Stanzin

LEH: Physically challenged people's society, People's Action Group for Inclusive and Rights (PAGIR) celebrated the 14th Foundation day with great enthusiasm on March 12 in Leh.

Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre, Commanding officer, Col Rinchen Dorje was the chief guest.

The celebration began with cake cutting ceremony followed by culture programme presented by specially-abled members. An exhibition showcasing different products made by PAGIR members from waste materials were displayed.

Appreciating PAGIR for its advocacy and activism to fight for the rights of the disabled people, Col

Rinchen assured his best possible support to PAGIR from LSRC to further strengthen PAGIR's movement. Terming sport as best medium for social inclusion, Col Rinchen assured to organise next winter Ice Hockey at LSRC in collaboration with PAGIR. He added that there is ample scope for specially-abled sportsmen to shine at International level.

ALTOA President, Tsetan Angchuk informed that ALTOA in collaboration with PAGIR made 6000 facemask for frontline worker during pandemic which proves how PAGIR is contributing towards society.

Advisors PAGIR, Tsetan Angchok and Dy SP Nawang Nurboo briefed the gathering about objective behind founding PAGIR and its 14 years of activism and advocacy about inclusion and rights.

PAGIR member Chemet Rafel in his speech expressed his gratitude to different organizations and individuals for their support to strengthen PAGIR over the years.

Earlier, PAGIR President Tsewang Dorjay said that their strong determination and commitment made a difference in the journey of PAGIR to this day. While thanking everyone for the support PAGIR received over the years, Dorje said still lot of things need to be done for the welfare of the physically challenged people.

Talking about PAGIR's project called 'Jungwa Srungskyob' – care for the environment – he mentioned about recycling waste papers to make envelopes, file covers to save environment thus contributing towards the society by reducing the garbage into useful products.

International Women's day: L-G Mathur inaugurates Mahila Shakti Kendra, One-Stop Centre in Kargil



During the e-inauguration of Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) and One Stop Centre (OSC) in Kargil by Lieutenant Governor, R K Mathur.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: On International Women's Day, Lieutenant Governor, R K Mathur, e-inaugurated Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) and One Stop Centre (OSC) in Kargil on March 8.

Quoting the theme of International Women's Day, "Let us all Change to Challenge," L G Mathur said that everyone- be it, men or women- has to be a part of the change. He urged them to accept this challenge to ensure equal opportunity and place to women in society.

He stated that Ladakhi women enjoy respect and independent status compared to the rest of the country. "There are countable numbers of women achievers in Ladakh, be it in sports, entrepreneurship, medical, IT, academics, and other fields, which is a matter of pride," added Mathur.

Citing the example of the ongoing 'Enchanting Ladakh' event at New Delhi, LG Mathur said the participation of women from remote villages of Ladakh in the event is a sign of progress and development of the region. He spoke about the need to run a publicity campaign that aims to promote the handloom and handicraft sector by focusing on

locally homemade products by women.

Sharing some data from the National Health Survey of Ladakh for the year 2015-16 and 2019-20, the Lt. Governor expressed serious concern over the huge literacy gap between male and female, which is 93:76.8%, and stressed the need to work on it. He also underlined the rise in the percentage of cesarean birth, overall weight gain, anaemia, sexual violence among women over the last five years and emphasized taking measures to improve it.

He appealed particularly to the political executives to initiate a mission mode campaign to ensure 100% school enrolment and zero dropouts between the age group of 3 to 14 for this academic year under the New Education Policy. He exhorted on the need for all to work together towards improving the female literacy rate in Ladakh keeping the view the high birth ratio of a girl child over a boy. However, he said that the positive trends like celebrating the birth of a girl child in Ladakh, high enrolment of girls in schools and colleges, national and international women achievers in sports, academics, etc are overwhelming and women hold a bright future.

Chairman, LAHDC Kargil, Feroz Ahmad Khan expressed his gratitude to LG Mathur for launching the Mahila Shakti Kendra and the One-Stop Centre and assured him to utilize it to full potential. He also requested LG Mathur to open a women's police station in Kargil.

Ladakh Member of Parliament, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Executive Councillor (Agriculture), LAHDC Leh, Stanzin Chospel also spoke on the occasion.

Administrative Secretary, Social/ Tribal Welfare Department, Padma Angmo, highlighted the achievements of women from Ladakh. She said Ladakhi women have not only made the region proud in academics but in all spheres of life as well. She apprised Ladakhi women involved in various schemes implemented by the Social Welfare Department for females, including Poshan Abhiyan and Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra Yojana.

A video depicting the status of Ladakhi women was screened during the event. Mobile phones and iron pots were given to Anganwadi workers (AWWS) and Anganwadi centers (AWCs) under the Poshan Abhiyan scheme.

Schools reopen after COVID-19 lockdown

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same time it is quite disturbing and sometimes difficult to understand. While being on phones and computers we get distracted by entertainment content found on social media. So I don't feel online classes are so effective. I also think that it has adversely impacted me both physically and mentally."

Takpa feels that the pandemic has created a big gap, affecting the performances and capabilities of students.

"Right now our classes are running on alternate days, due to which we can come to school for three days in a week. I think that I am wasting another three days of the week. It will be much better if we could attend all the days", he added.

It will take time both for students and teachers to get back to the structured mode of learning or recommence a disciplined daily routine after a long gap.

Lobzang Dolma, a Maths teacher said, "The pandemic has adversely affected the students in many ways like - halt in studies, break-in punctuality, etc. So the most challenging task will be to bring back students to the normal daily school routine."

L-G Mathur launches 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav'

...Continued from Page 1

injustice and wrong-doings and walk on the path showed by him.

Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, highlighted the importance of the event and how the public suffered under British rule due to the heavy tax imposed on salt despite it being a necessary commodity. He shared how the Dandi March initiated by Mahatma Gandhi holds a special place in India's history.

MP also stated that the Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav is not a 75-week-long celebration but rather a 25-yearlong movement till India completes a century of its independence from British rule. He

urged all the people to take part in the movement.

Earlier, Administrative Secretary, Ravinder Kumar shared the activities to be held during the event, including Cycle Rally, Freedom Run, Symbolic Dandi March, Painting and Essay competition, and the plantation drive. Terming the event as a curtain-raiser for the celebration of 75 years of India's independence, Administrative Secretary Ravinder shared the objective behind organising the event is to remember people who sacrificed their lives for the country.

Songs and a skit were performed by the Ladakh Cultural Academy Department and Housing and Urban Development Department, respectively, highlighting patriotism and the importance of keeping the environment clean.

So far, senior students of class 10th to 12th are back in school. The stakeholders of the school education department are directed to prepare all arrangements, COVID-19 guideline/ SOP'S for the reopening of the rest of the classes.

"It also taught me the importance of self-study. Otherwise, during class we have teachers pressure due to which we do our homework and studies, etc.", she added.

So far, senior students of class 10th to 12th are back in school. The stakeholders of the school education department are directed to prepare all arrangements, COVID-19 guideline/ SOP'S for the reopening of the rest of the classes.

Training on investigation, handling wildlife crime cases held

32 frontline staffs of Ladakh's Wildlife Department were trained



During the three days Capacity Building Training Programme on Investigation and Handling of Wildlife Crime Cases in Ladakh.

Tenzin Dajon

LEH: A three days Capacity Building Training Programme on Investigation and Handling of Wildlife Crime Cases in Ladakh, for the frontline staff of Forest and Wildlife Departments of Union Territory of Ladakh on March 10-12.

The training programme was organised by GoI-UNDP-GEFs SECURE Himalaya Project in collaboration with the Department of Wildlife Protection and under the technical guidance of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

A total of 32 personnels were trained in a range of subjects

covering interrogation, investigation, evidence collection, digital forensics, documenting and processing of cases and collection of bio-evidence.

An Inter-agency coordination meeting which was attended by representatives of a range of stakeholders like - Ladakh Police, Indian Army, ITBP, ITBF, CRPF, Airport Authority, Postal Department, Department of Wildlife Protection and ED (Enforcement Directorate) was carried out. The meeting was chaired by B.S. Tuti (IPS), DIG, Ladakh Police.

Discussion on important issues like intelligence sharing on Illegal Wildlife Trade, Trade routes,

Monitoring and awareness initiatives that must be taken up with the cooperation of all the stakeholders in Ladakh was held. Other important issues like - shortage of wildlife staffs, lack of coordination among the enforcement agencies, importance of involving locals, licensed gun control, vigilance over international tourists are also discussed to avoid wildlife trade in Ladakh.

B.S. Tuti said, "Ladakh is a peaceful place, there is no need to keep licensed gun like other regions. Because many poaching cases are related to licensed gun.

The meeting deliberated on formation of Coordination Committee to strengthen the intelligence sharing on wildlife crime.

Creating awareness among both the locals and tourists on illegality of wildlife and natural products trades like - shahtoosh, stones, birds & animals body parts and petroglyphs etc were discussed. The member from each department shared their experiences and put some suggestions to minimise the wildlife related crime in Ladakh.

District Disaster Management Authority intensifies drive against Covid-19 violation

COVID-19 test and registration mandatory for all inbound labourers and workers

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Leh made COVID-19 test and registration mandatory for all inbound labourers and workers.

DDMA intensified the drive against COVID-19 violation and COVID surveillance with an increasing number of people travelling to Leh from across the country.

Chairman, DDMA Leh, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse directed the Labour Department to ensure that labourers are registered at authorized labour agencies. Health Department has been directed to reactivate the entry-point COVID test facilities at Khalte and Upshi when the Leh-Srinagar and Leh-Manali National Highways are opened for vehicular traffic. Similarly, District Police Leh should allow only registered labourers with an ID card to cross police checkpoints or TCPs, and District Surveillance Officer, Leh should depute four officials at KBR airport, Leh for the registration of labourers.

The Chairman, DDMA also issued strict instructions to the SDMs to ensure that the labour-



ers entering their respective sub-divisions should undergo mandatory seven-day quarantine before allowing them to work at the sites. He asked them to constitute a Village Level Surveillance Committee (VLSC) comprising sarpanch, panchayat secretary, panch, nambardar and patwari. VLSC should ensure that all the labourers in the village have proper registration cards issued by the authorised labour agencies in Leh.

Similar instructions have been issued to the GREF, Army and other agencies involved in the hiring of labourers.

A subdivision-wise squad to keep a tab on people violating COVID-19 standard operating

procedures (SOPs) was also formed. DDMA Leh has identified locations such as Choglam-sar, Skalzangling, Skara, Housing Colony, New Bus Stand, Main Market, Skampari, Gangles, and Yurtung in Leh, where officials have been appointed to check and impose fine on violators.

More than 30 people were found violating COVID-19 SOPs in these areas in the last two days. A fine of ₹500 was collected from them.

DDMA Leh has advised the public to strictly adhere to the SOPs and follow COVID appropriate behaviour (CAB), including wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing.

NCW launches 'Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship' program in Leh

Women should be empowered for the development of the country says, LG

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: National Commission for Women launched two programs, Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship and phase 3 of We Think Digital on March 4 at Sindhu Sanskriti hall, Leh Ladakh.

The programs were launched in the presence of Lieutenant Governor, Radha Krishna Mathur; MP Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, members, and other senior officials of the Commission.

Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship is an action-oriented business and management course to support and sponsor the digital learning of 5000 aspiring women entrepreneurs. While, We Think Digital is an online programme on digital literacy collaboratively run by NCW, Facebook, and Cyber Peace Foundation.

L- G Mathur said that empowering women to join the workforce and fostering entrepreneurship among women has many positive outcomes ranging from enhancing pay parity and productivity to alleviate poverty and contributing to the country's economy.

He thanked the National Commission for Women for working towards enabling women to achieve equality and equal participation in all spheres of life and providing women entrepreneurs access to knowledge and skills required to grow and sustain their entrepreneurial ventures. He said the digital training would inspire women entrepreneurs to leverage technology to accelerate their ideas and business growth.

Calling gender inequality not only a social and ethical issue but also a severe economic issue, Mathur said that the world would suffer if women, who make up for half of the world's working population, are unable to achieve their full economic potential.

He also urged aspiring woman entrepreneurs with an idea to own and run an enterprise- be it in the IT or the beauty sector, food products or handicrafts- not to miss the opportunity and apply on the My-Gov portal.

NCW Chairperson, Rekha Sharma expressed her happiness for conducting a programme in Ladakh for the first time in which women would be taught the fundamentals of starting online businesses. She



During the launch Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship and We Think Digital at Sindhu Sanskriti hall, Leh Ladakh.

stressed the need to make women financially independent.

She highlighted the various programs conducted by NCW to empower them financially, economically, and emotionally. She further added that institutes such as IIM Bangalore are providing training to empower women.

National Commission for Women has joined hands with the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, and the India SME Forum for an online training programme to support and sponsor digital learning of 5000 aspiring women entrepreneurs. Selected women will also get a special chance to be mentored and incubated after completion of the course.

Selected participants will learn the "Do Your Venture" ideology, which will teach them common paths entrepreneurs make when launching their own venture. They will also learn the tools and techniques for generating ideas and then test their ideas in the field and gather feedback. The Course will be sponsored by the National Commission for Women for all 5000 selected participants and will be delivered by IIM Bangalore. The Course is designed to enable aspiring women entrepreneurs to capitalize on this opportunity and learn from the eminent faculty of IIMB. The course can be attended from any location at a convenient time. During the course, participants will also be encouraged to leverage on the peer network through a discussion forum and other online tools at their disposal.

MP Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Sushma Morthania, Director General of India SME Forum; Suresh Bhagavatula from IIMB and Vineet Kumar from Cyber Peace Foundation also spoke on the occasion.

CEC Gyalson visits Changthang region, discuss issues concerning border villages



Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Leh, Advocate Tashi Gyalson and other officials while interacting with the people of Changthang region.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

CHANGTHANG: Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Leh, Advocate Tashi Gyalson visited the border villages of Changthang region on March 9.

Deputy Chairman, LAHDC Leh,

Tsering Anghuk; Executive Councillor for RDD/Councillor Tangste, Tashi Namgyal Yakzee; Nominated Councillor Ven. Konchok Tsephel; Councillor Chushul, Konchok Stanzin and sub-divisional officers/officials of various departments were also present.

The village representatives put forth the issues and grievances of border villages to the Chairman and requested him to resolve on-ground issues. CEC Gyalson assed and resolved a few on-ground issues at Chushul with the help of concerned sub-divisional and army officials. He also assured the villagers to take up few concerns with the higher authorities and to resolve them at the earliest priority.

CEC Gyalson also visited Maan, Merak, and Spangmik villages, Centralised Residential school at Sato, PHC Chushul, and PHC Tangste. Interacting with the villagers and concern officials, he assured LAHDC Leh's assistance in resolving their grievances at the earliest.

Ladakh Police plants 2500 saplings in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Celebrating 75th years of Indian Independence Day, themed "Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav", Ladakh Police carried out plantation drive at Police Headquarters on March 12 in Agling.

The plantation drive was organized at Police Headquarters Leh and participated by volunteers of Go Green- Go Organic. 2500 saplings were planted. The program was headed by S.S Khandare-IPS, Additional Director General of Police, U.T Ladakh.

Addressing police personnel and distinguished guests, he stated the significance of this day during our struggle for freedom. He reiterated the importance of



During the three days Capacity Building Training Programme on Investigation and Handling of Wildlife Crime Cases in Ladakh.

planting more and more trees in cold desert areas like Ladakh and also emphasized that it is easy to plant trees but it is difficult to nurture them to their full potential growth.

A signature campaign drive was also initiated by putting signature of all the officers and officials to pledge planting more

and more trees and taking proper care of them.

Rajiv Pandey-IPS, SSP Leh; Stanzin Nurbu-JKPS, Commandant IR 25th, BN; Sonam Dechen-JKPS, AIG (Provison); Kameshwar Puri-JKPS, S.O to ADGP, Ladakh and other Police officers/ police personnel were also present.

People's Voice

By Nayanika Guha and Tenzin Dajon

A stark example of the water crisis in Ladakh is that of Kulum, a village 50kms away from Leh, where villagers have been forced to migrate to different villages due to water scarcity. With reduced snowfall, this season, many, especially farmers, are worried about the anticipated water shortage in early spring. While some initiatives from the government and other non-governmental bodies are helping to alleviate some of these concerns, there is still uncertainty about the future of water in Ladakh. Lack of data on the situation is also a cause for concern.

Let's see what different stakeholders have to say about this:



SONAM ZANGPO, Farmer: The availability of irrigation water in Leh town has been declining since the nineties. Earlier, the sources of water like streams and rivers used to flow full of water round the year, but have now dried up and the volume of water has reduced by more than half. Earlier there used to be a good amount of snowfall in the winter, and the mountains near Leh town used to remain covered with snow. In summer there used to be good rainfall as well. Therefore, a farmer could easily irrigate their field any time, but now one has to wait for their turn, and sometimes due to long route water can't reach the field on time. Now there is no snowfall, no rainfall like earlier times. The climate of Ladakh has also changed, earlier the temperature used to remain very low. Glaciers used to melt only in summer, now it is melting very early.

Agriculture activities have been reducing for the last so many years due to water scarcity. Earlier the population of Leh town was small and most of the people were dependent on agriculture only. The availability of water for irrigation was easily available at the time. Everyone used to plough and irrigate their fields, without any water crisis. Now people have to leave their fields unploughed because of the shortage of water. In addition to that, the income from agriculture is also meager. Therefore many farmers have changed their profession. Now the population of Leh has increased manifold, but the availability of water has reduced. Tourism has flourished, deployment of army

Water crisis in Ladakh

personnel has also increased. Therefore the pressure on water resources has increased in Leh. The town is full of hotels and guest houses, and each one has a borewell, due to which groundwater is depleting at a very fast rate. There should be control over groundwater usage so that we can use it sustainably. Small dams should be constructed to store water during the night and use it during the day. Concrete canals can also be helpful to save water and to do fast irrigation.



RIGZEN MINGYUR, Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh: I have been working with the artificial glaciers and Ice Stupa team for the past five years. In this time, I have seen that most villages are facing a water crisis, especially in the early spring. In early April, there is an intense water shortage for the farmers. For example, Kulum village turned into a ghost village due to acute water shortages. The villagers mostly settled in Upshi, where also there is a water shortage in early spring but in peak summer months such as in June and July, there is a good water supply, as the glaciers start melting and also there is rainfall. Such stories of water crisis can be found in almost every village.

One possible solution to the water crisis is artificial glaciers. Even before the concept of ice stupas, there was a tradition of villagers making such artificial glaciers 100-200 years ago. A few years ago, Chewang Norphel, a Glacier man started making these artificial glaciers but his model had some drawbacks. To overcome those drawbacks, the concept of ice stupas was created by Sonam Wangchuk, Magsaysay awardee. He came up with the idea of making conical-shaped artificial glaciers or ice stupas, to ensure that maximum ice can be stored in the minimum amount of surface area. We did a pilot project in 2014 and built the first ice stupa in Phyang. We planted 5000 plants and through the drip irrigation method, we used the water from the ice stupa to water these plants. After the successful pilot project, we also started an ice stupa competition, in which many villages took an interest, especially those facing water shortages. However, we have not yet evaluated how these have affected other villages and what changes have been seen. This year, we are making 3 ice stupas in Kulum, and planning to use the water to revive agriculture there. It is difficult to assess the long-term benefits of ice stupas. We are also trying to see whether it is viable to make artifi-

cial snow, here in Ladakh. We are hopeful about these solutions, but a more permanent solution may be required in the future.



ANUB TSETAN, Ladakh Ecological Development, and Environmental Group: LEDEG focuses on urban management in Leh town, including the situation of water management. The Central Ground Water Board carries out these groundwater testing and checking every few years. If you see the latest one, they had gone to all these different locations and checked the groundwater situation and found it to be stable and found potential for there to be better utilization of the groundwater. However, if you look specifically at Leh town, there are already a lot of borewells dugouts. The problem with Leh town is that we are majorly dependent on one source, which is underground water. The PHE department, households, guest houses, and hotels, are all dependent on groundwater right now. This was not the case 2-3 decades ago. There used to be other sources that provided drinking water for the people of Leh town, such as spring water, and about 3-4 decades ago, you could directly drink from streams because the water was so clean.

We have to also remember that we live in a cold desert. So yes, water is a scarce. The traditional systems put in to manage water are very strong in rural areas, but this is not the case in Leh. As the agricultural practices in Leh have died out, people are no longer using traditional methods to manage water for farming. With the tourism boom, people realize it's easier to build hotels than work in their fields all day, and people don't care if they have water for their field because they can instead dig borewells for their hotels. This whole practice is very unsustainable. The reason that households and hotels have dug private borewells is that they are either not getting enough water or there are other issues. We can say that Leh is facing a water management crisis.

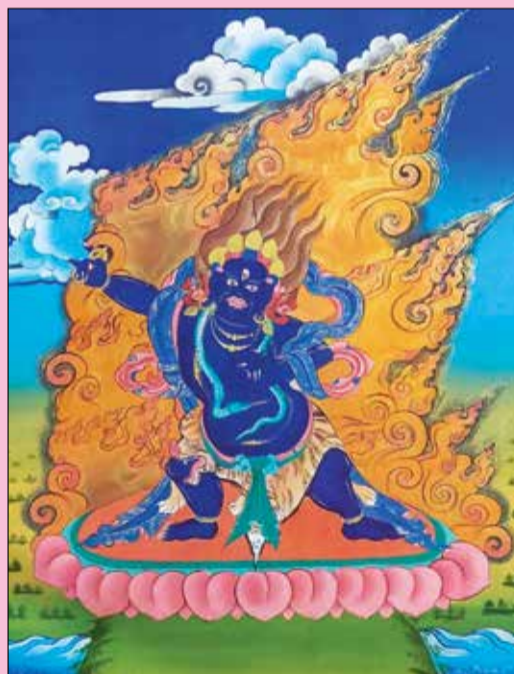
Finally, there are not a lot of groundwater studies done in Leh town, and doing more of these studies would give us a better idea of what the situation is. Are we running out of water? What is the quality of the water? Right now, everyone is assuming that others are all digging borewells so it must be fine to dig more, without understanding its repercussions.

The World of Juniors



JIGMATH TSEWANG NORBU

He is a child artist interested in thanka painting. A class 8th student of Druk Padma Karpo School has participated in national workshop cum exhibition on Thangka painting organised by Bihar museum.



SoulSpeak

P.P. Wangchuk

Just being good is not good enough!



Come spring, and you raise your hopes for the good and the beautiful. The spring season symbolises the onset of all that is good and lovely. Nature turns the planet into a fairy land with its myriad of colours all over. And one gets a sense of joy that all is well with the world.

Having said that, this spring came into my life with a beautiful book that I had always been looking for. And that is Roman statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero's book, 'On Good Life'. It says that life is nothing if not full of morality. Now, one has to understand this point of view of those years during the BCE when mankind had hardly formed any opinion about good and bad, forget about philosophical writings to have a life that is purposeful and meaningful.

But Cicero had given to mankind in those days everything about morality and the goodness of a purposeful life. And he was very dynamic in his views. At one point in his life, he happily admitted that his thoughts had undergone drastic changes. In fact, he says that the dynamics of life is such that without change, nothing good remains good forever.

The broad picture that the book presents is that just being good is not good enough. That has to be morally good as well. A perfect moral goodness lands one directly into a world of happiness and contentment. Here, contentment does not mean that one does not do anything after sometime, and feels happy in not doing anything. It means that while one is not unhappy with what one has at any given point of time, one never stops in the pursuit of all that is good, beautiful and meaningful.

That is because the moment you give a break for a pause in life, you are as good as dead. And your 'revival' thereafter involves quite a difficult task. Life is a continuous process, and its journey ends only with our death.

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

DID YOU KNOW



Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar is the highest civilian honor which is given for exceptional abilities and achievements in the field like arts, culture, academics, bravery, innovative thinking, design, research work, sports, and social service under the age of 18. It was formerly known as the National Child Award for Exceptional Achievement. The award ceremony is organized in the

week of Republic Day. The President of India presents this award at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Awardees are also felicitated by the Prime Minister of India.

Humans share 98.8% of chimpanzee DNA. But even with DNA so similar, humans and chimps have around 35 million differences between them.

When they find a source of water, wild Bactrian (two-humped) camels will drink as much as 50 litres (88 pints). They will even drink salty water, unlike other mammals.

In Conversation with State Awardee, Rigzin Sangdup, Surna player

Interviewed by Tenzin Dajon

Q. Tell us about yourself and how your journey as a musician started?

I have been playing the Surna for over 27 years now. Initially, I used to play Daman (A traditional word for drum) but I was more into playing surna. I started practicing playing surna but was not satisfied, thus, decided to take a guidance of a good teacher. I approached famous surna player and expert, Ali Mohammad and learned for nine years under his guidance.

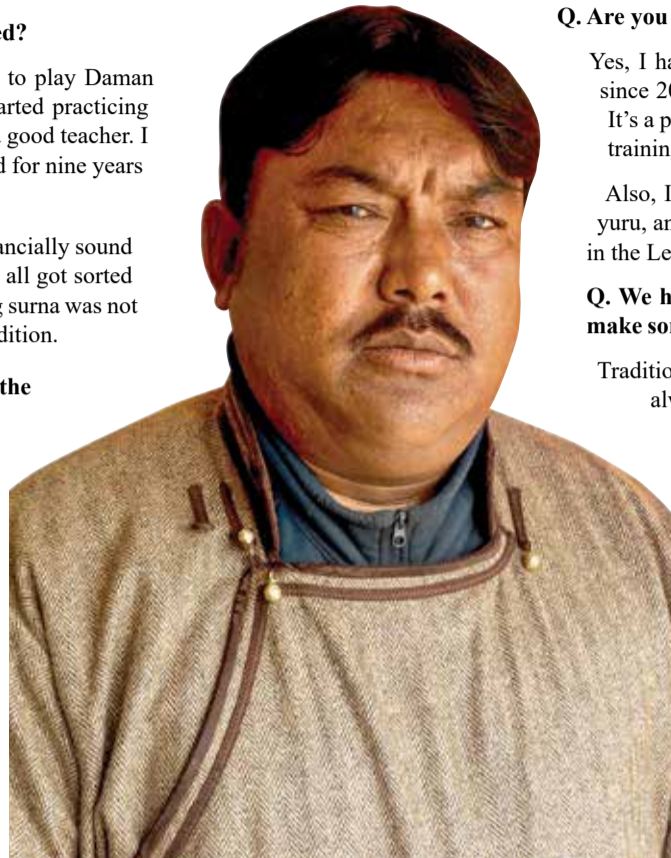
It took time for me to learn and pursue it full time as I was not from a financially sound family, and owning a surna personally was a bit challenging. With time all got sorted out and I never give up no matter how challenging it was because playing surna was not just my interest but the importance of instruments in our culture and tradition.

Q. Are folk music and traditional musical instruments stand at the brink of extinction? What do you say about it?

Folk music is an integral part of our culture. We have songs and music for different occasions be it a religious ceremony, weddings, harvest, etc. We have some of the most indigenous musical instruments such as 'Pivang' which is hard to find these days. Similarly, instruments like Dimjang, Linyu (flute), Damnyan (string instrument) Pivang, Khakong, (sitar) Daph (Daffi) are also facing the threat of extinction.

Daman and Surna players are there but are also facing challenges because of the social stigma attached to it. Earlier, the musical instrument player is not considered equal in society they are often looked down and discriminated. The younger generation prefers to do some other professions than to carry forward their ancestral skills because of the stigma attached. This is one reason that the number of instrument players got reduced.

Over the years things have started changing now, there is not much discrimination. I would like to express my gratitude to Ladakh Buddhist Association who had played an extensive role in making the society inclusive for all without any differentiation. Today, the new generation doesn't believe in class and casteism, for them playing a musical instrument is an art and embrace and learn it with great interest. Today, daman and surna are played by everyone which is a very positive step.



MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“Folk music is an integral part of our culture. We must maintain the originality of the traditional song and music because it has its own importance and value.”

Q. Are you training individuals in playing surna?

Yes, I have been imparting one-month free coaching to the students every year since 2017. During the lockdown, I gave online coaching to interested students. It's a pleasure to see the growing number of students every year. At present, I am training nearly 70 students.

Also, I have been to Tangtse-Durbuk in the Changthang region, Nubra, Lama-yuru, and Kharu block, etc. to give coaching. I have covered almost every region in the Leh district.

Q. We have seen that nowadays, traditional and modern music are fused to make something new. What's your opinion on these emerging modern genres?

Traditional music and songs of Ladakh have their essence and importance. It is always better to keep it in its original form. We have seen that nowadays, traditional music is blended with new modern songs; the old folk songs are modified and played on western instruments which I feel is not representing the rich culture of Ladakh. An artist should create new music, recreating the old traditional songs is not a good idea. We must maintain the originality of our folk music, it has its importance.

Promoting culture and tradition is good but it has to be done originally.

Q. What steps need to be taken to preserve and promote this folk art and music?

The culture academy has launched three books on folk music which includes thousands of songs. Along with it, we need to go through these books and learn those songs and sing them on different occasions. Interest and enthusiasm are key to learning folk music. Regular camps and coaching must be organised in different regions of Ladakh. We must encourage the younger generation to adopt this art. Also, every school must include the traditional music class along with western music class. It will be a good step to introduce in schools because the children of today are the future of tomorrow. They should be made aware of the tradition and culture of Ladakh so that it can be carried forward. There is a need to change the attitude towards folk songs and music to preserve it.

Fortnight Highlights



The week-long nation-wide Jan Aushadhi Diwas 2021 was celebrated at SNM Hospital, Leh, from March 1 to 7. Director, Health Services, UT Ladakh, Dr. Phuntsog Angchuk sharing schemes of the central government, including Jan Aushadhi Yojana and Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs).



Team Ladakh participated in the 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games at Gulmarg. Ice Stock Sports team bagged 12 gold and 1 Silver medal in the women's category.



The Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Advocate Tashi Gyalson reviewing the vetted CAPEX budget (Works) for the financial year 2021-22 of the PWD Sector. The meeting discussed the closure of works that have been causing implementation issues in the past years in the sectors.



Enchanting Ladakh 2021: Women from Dard Aryan Tribe exhibiting costumes of Aryan valley at Dilli Haat INA, New Delhi.



Athletes Jigmet Dolma and Tashi Ladol brought laurels to Ladakh by finishing on the podium in the New Delhi Marathon. Jigmet Dolma finished third in elite women, whereas Tashi Ladol came third in half marathon women category.

Ladakh bags gold, silver medals in 7th National Icestock Sports Championship



Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Ravinder Kumar with the ice stock players from Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Ravinder Kumar felicitated the ice stock players from Ladakh on March 10 who recently took part in the 7th Ice Stock Sports Games at Gulmarg.

The girls' team comprising Nusrat Fatima, Farhana Eliyaz, Deachen Dolkar, and Zahida Bano won gold whereas the boys' team, including Dorjay Namgyal, Adnand Tarik, Ahsan Ali, and Stanzin Phuntsog claimed silver. Shahnaz Parveen accompanied the team as the coach.

Secretary Sports congratulated and appreciated the spirit and enthusiasm of the players from Ladakh for bringing laurels to the region with their award-winning performances. He informed the players that the UT Administration is committed to promote sports by establishing Khelo India centres and creating state-of-the-art sports infrastructures such as multi-purpose stadiums, gymnasiums, synthetic track, Astroturf for football, and ice-hockey rinks.

He added sports stadium would be constructed in primary, middle, and higher secondary schools, and the latest sports equipment would be purchased to both the districts of UT Ladakh.

Training-cum awareness camp held for women farmers in Kargil

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: More than 850 progressive farmers and members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) participated in the two days training cum awareness camp for women farmers on March 7-8 in Kargil.

The mega farmers' Training-cum Awareness Camp was organised by the Department of Agriculture Kargil under Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA).

Acting Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Kargil, Aga Syed Hassan Arman; Executive Councillor for Agriculture, Muhammad Ali Chandan; Chief Agriculture Officer Kargil, Kacho Muhammad Ali Khan, officers and officials of Agriculture Department Kargil besides other concerned officers were present during the concluding day.

Aga Syed Hassan Arman expressed optimism that the training programme would have proved fruitful to the participating farmers in understanding



During the training-cum awareness camp was organised by the Department of Agriculture Kargil under Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) in Kargil.

various scientific methods to enhance farm productivity. He urged the farmers to properly implement the technical knowledge acquired from the training programme to make their agricultural activities beneficial thereby enhancing their economy.

EC Agriculture appreciated the Agriculture Department, Kargil for organizing the two days programme. He also exhorted upon farmers to keep liaison with the officers and field functionaries of Agriculture and line departments for technical guidance with re-

gard to the improvement of productivity.

During the two days training programme, scientists and experts of the Agriculture Department, Kargil and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kargil imparted training to the farmers on different aspects of agricultural enhancement and production. The farmers were also enlightened about the use of micro-irrigation systems, Green House Technology, and Vermicompost Production Units at KVK Kargil through demonstrations.

Advisor Ladakh chairs 2nd Apex Committee meeting on Jal Jeevan Mission



During the three days Capacity Building Training Programme on Investigation and Handling of Wildlife Crime Cases in Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Advisor Ladakh, Umang Narula chaired the 2nd Apex Committee meeting on Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) at the UT Secretariat on March 11.

The objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission is to provide piped drinking water to all rural households by 2024.

The issues including physical progress of coverage of functional household tap connections (FHTCs) against the given target, the 100-day campaign for providing FHTCs to Schools and Anganwadi Centres, improving quality of water, preparation of IEC, skill development and the grey water management plans etc was highlighted.

The officials informed Advisor Narula about the current status of FHTCs, the year-wise action plan, and targets to be completed in four phases by 2022-23. The officials apprised Advisor Narula of 7.59 per cent coverage of FHTCs in Ladakh. It was also mentioned in the meeting that the average connection of FHTC in Ladakh is 4.18 per day, including 1.8 in Leh and 2.35 in Kargil. It was informed that the water-testing laboratories of the PHE department are open for the public where they can test water samples at a nominal rate.

Advisor Narula underlined the need for ensuring the participation of public representatives, Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members and the public during the implementation of the JJM scheme at all levels.

Ladakh's archery team to take part in Nationals



An archery team from Ladakh with Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Ravinder Kumar.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: An archery team from Ladakh will be participating in the 41st NTPC Junior National Archery competition to be held at Dehradun from March 7.

The team comprises of five archers, Stanzin Delex, Stanzin Wangdus and Stanzin Norboo from Leh, and Deldar Abass and Issa Ali from Kargil. Phunchok Angchuk and Skarma Lotus

would accompany the team as coach and manager, respectively.

Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Ravinder Kumar met the archers on March 5. He informed that the administration is focusing on sports that have more potential like ice hockey, archery, and football.

He also assured that the administration would support all the Olympics and winter Olympic

games in the UT Ladakh and mentioned that many infrastructure projects are coming up within the next few years. UT administration is in the process of acquiring various sports equipment besides conducting professional training camps in various sport.

Ravinder Kumar further informed that the Department is going to establish the entire infrastructure and facilities needed for the archery sports at all the Govt. Higher Secondary Schools under SDP.

The team also met Executive Councillor for RDD, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Namgyal Yakzee and MP Ladakh Jamyang Tsering Namgyal.

EC Tashi Yakzee said that the LAHDC Leh has been working tirelessly for the upliftment of Archery as a professional sport in Ladakh and assured continuous support in the future as well.

Review meet held over plastic waste management

Involve community to promote paper bags & locally tailored cloth bags says, Advisor Narula



Advisor Ladakh, Umang Narula conveying a meeting to review waste management and ban on single-use plastics at UT Secretariat.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Advisor Ladakh, Umang Narula convened a meeting to review waste management and ban on single-use plastics on March 6 at UT Secretariat.

The meeting discussed the menace of single-use plastics and the need to make alternate products available in the market to the consumers. The Deputy Commissioners informed the meeting that regular inspections of the markets are being conducted and plastics bags are seized.

The Advisor asked the Secretaries to seek community participation in reducing the use of plastic products. He impressed upon mobilizing the Self-Help Groups to produce cloth, jute

and paper carry bags as an alternative to plastic bags. Secretary information was asked to conduct awareness campaigns for educating and urging the public to use eco-friendly products.

The meeting discussed the use of plastic waste in road construction. The Advisor asked Commissioner Secretary Housing to conduct capacity building programs for the concerned departments in plastic waste management and the use of plastic waste in road constructions.

Deputy Commissioner Kargil informed the meeting that a waste segregation centre at village Minji is functional. He informed the meeting that similar waste segregation centres are being established at various locations in

the Kargil district.

The Advisor asked the Deputy Commissioners to enforce the ban imposed on single-use and throwaway plastics.

The meeting was attended by ADGP Ladakh, SS Khandare; Commissioner Secretary, A K Sahu; Secretary/Divisional Commissioner, Saugat Biswas; Secretary Information, Padma Angmo; Chief Conservator of Forest Ladakh, Preet Pal Singh; Deputy Commissioner Leh, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse; Director Housing and Urban Local Bodies, Zahida Banoo and Director Health, Dr. Phuntsog Angchuk. Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Santosh Sukhadeve also participated in the meeting through video conference.

250 vacant posts in various departments to be filled soon

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Secretary, Labour and Employment, Ravinder Kumar convened a meeting with Deputy Director of both Leh and Kargil district to discuss recruitment for posts in different departments on March 11.

Secretary Labour and Employment approved the recruitment for 250 posts on a priority basis in the upcoming months. The

posts advertised for the recruitment have been pending as Ladakh became a union territory.

The District Employment and Counselling Centre (DE&CC) Leh and Kargil had advertised for non-gazetted and Class IV posts. The exams for the 210 non-gazetted posts have not been conducted LAHD-SSRB would reserve the posts for SRO-43. Meanwhile, the written examinations for 16 posts of Forest/

Wildlife guard in the Forest/Wildlife and other departments, would be conducted in the first week of April.

The Employment Department has issued directions for the completion of the recruitment within two months. The recruitment of Class IV posts that had to be put on hold due to the stay order issued by the Court, would soon be resolved.

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Fortune Everyday Basmati Rice, 5kg	740	570
Ladakh Toilet Tissue Roll	60	30
Ladakh Tissue Paper Napkin	60	35
Eggs Box	1400	1200
Migsal Cloth Bag	500	200
Abida Premium, 5kg	750	540
Fortune Soybean Refine Oil, 15 Ltr	2075	1874
Abida Premium, 10kg	1500	1050
Dalda Soybean 15 Ltr	2450	1849
Migsal Cushion Cover (24x24)Pair	800	350
Migsal Bolster Cover-Pair	800	450
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