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December 01-15, 2023

# REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



**In Conversation with**  
**Chamba Tsetan Founder ASFL & Project Head Centre for Pastoralism**

**Expert Talk:**  
**Child Welfare: Challenges and collective solutions for a safer future**



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**Tele-MANAS: Ladakh's mental health hub fields 1400+ calls in 7 months**

*Exam stress, relationships key concerns in such call surges*

*Nenzes Chodon*

LEH: The prevalence of mental health issues is increasing globally. The prevailing belief in Ladakh that mental illness was uncommon has been shattered. While many individuals have started acknowledging their mental health challenges, there's still a significant number who haven't. The stigma surrounding mental illness is deeply ingrained, often leading patients to feel abnormal and fearing an inability to lead a normal life. Society needs to detach constructive perspectives from these misconceptions.

Contrary to the misconception of mental illness as symptomless, experts note several observable behavioral changes in affected individuals. Feeling momentarily sad differs vastly from persistent sadness, tearfulness, and alterations in interaction patterns. With the rising incidence of mental health concerns in Ladakh, increased awareness becomes imperative.

Ladakh grapples with a substantial burden of mental illness, compounded by a scarcity of psychiatrists compared to the prevalence of psychiatric disorders. The absence of psychiatrists in Kargil results in calls received from that region. Launched in Ladakh in May 2023, Tele-MANAS have handled approximately 1400+ calls in seven months, addressing a variety of cases. Tele MANAS, an online portal initiated by the Indian government, operates through a 24/7 hotline—14416—of-



Tele-MANAS team of Ladakh.

fering anonymous counseling services.

Most calls received by Tele-MANAS concern youngsters and teenagers facing challenges such as exam stress, relationship issues, and relatively fewer cases of clinical depression, anxiety, and panic. Interestingly, slightly more calls originate from females than males.

Dr. Samina Batool, Jr. Consultant Psychiatrist at Tele-MANAS, highlighted, "The causes of mental illness vary, including genetic factors and deficiencies in neurochemicals like serotonin and dopamine. These imbalances can lead to clinical depression and other symptoms of mental illness." She urged people to understand the vast spectrum of mental illnesses, differentiating between conditions like mood disorders, anxiety disorders, factitious disorders, personality disorders, trauma and stress-related disorders, psychosis, and eating disorders—emphasizing these

terms over generic labels like depression, anxiety, 'nyomba,' or psychosis.

"Mental illness classification by age reveals childhood psychiatric disorders among children up to the 5th grade. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), identifiable by symptoms like inattentiveness, restlessness, and disruptive behavior, requires early psychiatric intervention and is preventable. In younger demographics, prevalent issues include anxiety, social anxiety, phobias, and depression. Middle-aged individuals commonly grapple with mood-related disorders like depression and anxiety, often triggered by financial strain and overwhelming responsibilities. In the geriatric age group (above 60 years), dementia becomes more frequent—a condition characterized by abnormal forgetfulness. While not curable, dementia can be managed and improved through medication and psychoeducation, alleviating the caregiver's burden", she added.

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**Ladakh's cultural crossroads: Tradition clashes with modernity in ceremonial shifts**

*Calls for reforms in social celebrations*

*Stanzin Dasal*

LEH: In the serene landscapes of Ladakh, where culture and tradition are etched deep into everyday life, winds of change are altering more than just infrastructure. The shifting dynamics are now penetrating the very fabric of social ceremonies, prompting both reflection and action among the region's communities.

Social customs and celebratory events, once steeped in age-old practices, find themselves at a crossroads as modern influences seep in. While people have embraced and incorporated new changes into social ceremonies over the years to enhance celebrations, these alterations are also contributing to the erosion of age-old culture and widening the gap between the affluent and the less privileged.

The impetus for these changes can be traced to the surging tides of modernization, urbanization, and migration, reshaping Ladakh's societal tapestry. Weddings, retirement parties, and other gatherings that used to be meaningful have changed a lot. Now, they've become extravagant displays. As Ladakh embraces progress, the very essence of its traditional ceremonies and cultural practices is at risk.

Recognizing the perils of these evolving norms, the Ladakh Buddhist Association has decided to address this growing concern by eliminating few elements that burden society. In alignment with this, Goba's of Leh new settlement area have resolved to initiate reforms in social ceremonies. Anjuman



Goba's of Leh new settlement area addressing press conference on their resolve to initiate reforms in social ceremonies.

Imamia has also emphasized the imperative to eliminate new modern changes while preserving age-old customs and culture.

Specifically addressing retirement celebrations, representatives have agreed to keep these occasions limited to families rather than turning them into social events. Practices such as distributing cards, money garlands, and extravagant gifts during such celebrations have become burdensome for many. Consequently, in response to these growing concerns, such celebrations are now banned.

Ashraf Ali Barcha, President of Anjuman Imamia, underscored the urgency of this decision, citing the degradation of age-old cultural values and traditions over time. The need to preserve and protect these cultural values is paramount in the face of evolving societal norms.

Similarly, the sanctity of

marriage in Ladakh has undergone a remarkable shift, transitioning from simple and traditional affairs to lavish and extravagant events. What once resonated with simplicity and tradition now brims with modern accoutrements like cake-cutting ceremonies, flamboyant bachelorette parties, and pre-wedding shoots. Yes, these alterations can be an individual's choice to make their day special, but their broader impact extends to society at large.

Money has surreptitiously morphed into a centerpiece of these matrimonial ceremonies, evident in the ritualistic money garlands and exorbitant charges for minor aspects like hiding vehicle keys, preparing the bride, bridesmaid expenses, etc. Families, grappling with financial constraints, find themselves coerced into upholding these traditions, transforming marriage into a burden rather than a cele-

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## Fortnightly News

### Arunachal Lit fest emphasises language preservation

Nawang Tsering Shakspo focuses on Himalayan linguistics

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**ITANAGAR:** The 5th edition of the Arunachal Literary Festival was concluded on November 21 at Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.

Chief Guest of the occasion, Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh said that one should strive hard to promote and protect the mother tongue and its literary trend. He said that for the preservation of traditional culture and way of life, the local language plays a very crucial.

Nawang Tsering Shakspo, Director, Centre for Research on Ladakh said that the people of Himalayan regions are fortunate that in every region the foundation of the mother tongue is Tibetan and we address our local dialect or the mother tongue as Ladakhi and write in Tibetan script, similarly, I understand that the name of the mother tongue of the Tawang region in Arunachal as Monpa which is again written in Tibetan script. This is also the case with other Himalayan countries or regions where the Tibetan form of Buddhism is prevalent.



Nawang Tsering Shakspo presenting the book *A Cultural History of Ladakh* to Pema Khandu, C.M. Arunachal Pradesh.

Nawang mentioned that Arunachal Pradesh, historically known as NEFA, held a familiar association for Ladakhis, dating back to the 1970s when Padmabhusan Kushok Bakula, revered as the architect of Modern Ladakh, led the people in demanding a NEFA-style administration for Ladakh. This agitation culminated after over five decades of struggle, resulting in Ladakh becoming India's 8th Union Territory in 2019.

Expanding on his speech, Nawang highlighted Ladakh's geo-

graphical position as the northernmost region in India, sharing borders with China in the east and Pakistan in the north. He drew parallels between Arunachal and Ladakh, stressing their shared sensitivity due to border tensions with neighboring countries. He underscored the commonalities in the hopes, aspirations, and concerns of the residents in both states, given the geopolitical challenges they face.

Earlier Nawang presented a copy of his book, 'A Cultural History of Ladakh' to Pema Khandu.

### 3 students from University of Ladakh selected for Rajya Sabha Internship



Students of the University of Ladakh who got selected for the 2nd batch of the two-week Rajya Sabha Internship Programme.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Three students of the University of Ladakh got selected for 2nd batch of the two-week Rajya Sabha Internship Programme (RSIP) starting from November 28.

Choskit Angmo, MA political science 1st semester, Leh campus; Diskit

Palmo, B.Ed 1st semester, Leh campus; Mohd Hassanian, MA Political Science, 1st semester, Kargil campus are the selected students. Vice Chancellor, University of Ladakh, Professor S. K. Mehta congratulated the selected students and extended his best wishes for the suc-

cessful completion of the reputed internship program.

Rajya Sabha Internship Programme is the brainchild of the Vice President of India, Jagdeep Thakkar. The purpose of the internship programme is to familiarize students from a social science background with the various functions of the Parliament. All the internship-related expenses (air travel, accommodation, and food) are borne by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

Dean of Students Welfare, University of Ladakh, Dr. Jigmet Dachen said that this internship program is well known for providing a platform for talented students to gain valuable insights into parliamentary proceedings and public policy.

### Ladakh's cultural crossroads: Tradition clashes with modernity in ceremonial shifts

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bration.

In a concerted effort to reclaim the essence of Ladakh's heritage, the Goba's of Leh new settlement area initiated sweeping reforms to reintroduce age-old customs and traditions.

Tsering Angchuk, Goba of Skara Yokma, expressed concern about the unnecessary complexities arising from modern changes in social ceremonies. These changes, he argued, not only make things burdensome for many but also contribute to the fading of Ladakh's rich tradition and culture, leading to a loss of values, morals, and principles among its people.

"The unchecked trends will breed a gaping disparity between the affluent and the less privileged within Ladakh's societal framework," Tsering Angchuk cautioned, highlighting the urgency of halting these evolving norms before they exacerbate socioeconomic disparities.

### Tele-MANAS: Ladakh's mental health hub fields 1400+ calls in 7 months

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She emphasized the need to destigmatize mental health conditions, citing the common association of mental hospitals and illnesses with terms like 'nyomba' or 'pagal.' She clarified that illnesses like schizophrenia, where individuals disconnect from the external world, are treatable, enabling patients to lead normal lives.

Suicide rates are increasing across India, including Ladakh. Tele-MANAS Leh has conducted awareness programs in local schools and universities addressing this issue. However, the facility didn't receive calls from individuals associated with recent suicide cases in Ladakh.

Tele MANAS also maintains an Instagram page for regular updates. Emphasizing confidentiality, it allows individuals uncomfortable with in-person visits to seek help from their homes. In addition to schools and universities, Tele-MANAS extend its services to healthcare centres, communities, conduct Zoom meetings, and organizes awareness programs in various workplaces.

Dr. Samina noted that if someone needs to talk and seek help, they can contact

Changes are not only evident during joyous gatherings or celebrations; they also extend to somber occasions, particularly in the rituals associated with death. A notable shift is observed in the distribution of tea, snacks, and juices to those attending funerals or last rite, turning what was once a solemn observance into a source of significant disruption.

Amidst the clash of tradition and modernity, Ladakh stands at a critical juncture where progress and preservation must find a delicate balance. The collective efforts of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, Goba's of Leh new settlement area, and Anjuman Imamia signal a united front against the encroachment on Ladakh's cultural heritage. It is a call to action for society at large to reflect on the true essence of celebrations and ceremonies, striking a harmonious chord between tradition and modernity for the sustained well-being of Ladakh's cultural fabric.

Tele-MANAS for counseling and psychotherapy. For sensitive cases, the facility ensures transferring the call and referring the patient to the District hospital, ensuring continuous tracking and informing caregivers. She emphasized recognizing early warning signs such as isolation, changes in behaviour, or persistent tearfulness, urging caregivers to seek professional help.

Different countries have their cultural approaches to mental health. In Ladakh, Oracle healers (lha or lhamo) provide an alternative choice for patients. It is undeniable that people are deeply rooted with religious norms and cultures.

It's time for a community to detach the term 'Nyomba' from mental illness and eradicate its stigma. Understanding the diverse spectrum of mental illnesses is crucial. It's essential for family members or caregivers to keenly observe any behavioural shifts in their loved ones, as psychiatric disorders often begin with such changes. If there's even a slight deviation from one's usual behaviour or a noticeable shift, seeking the guidance of a psychiatrist, alongside a caregiver, is strongly recommended.

### District Child Protection unit opens child open shelter in Leh



During the inauguration of the Child Helpline Unit and Open Shelter at the District Child Protection Office.

Yangchen Dolma

**LEH:** Child Helpline Unit and Open Shelter was inaugurated by CEC, Hill Council, Leh Tashi Gyalson on November 14 at the District Child Protection Office.

Member Secretary Lada-

kh Legal Service Authority, Spalzes Angmo; Principal Magistrate Juvenile Justice Board, District Social Welfare Officer Leh, SHO Women's Police Station Leh, and many dignitaries and attendees were present at the inau-

guration ceremony.

CEC, Tashi Gyalson stressed the importance of protecting children and the role of the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) Dial112 helpline in addressing social issues and child abuse. He also highlighted the need to educate children about the harmful effects of drug abuse. He praised the efforts of the Social & Tribal Welfare Department in Leh for implementing programs like Mission Vatsalya and ensuring coverage of all the social Welfare Schemes throughout the district. He reaffirmed the com-

mitment of the Hill Council, Leh to provide assistance, particularly in offering quality education to underprivileged students from economically weaker backgrounds.

Spalzes Angmo spoke about the importance of informing students about the benefits of the child helpline number. She said that the number can be a lifeline for anyone in need, and it should be available always. She stated that it is crucial for all the stakeholders like the Legal Service Authority, DCPO, NGOs, and the Police to come together and pri-

oritize the protection of children.

District Child Protection Officer, Nilza Angmo said that the Child Helpline Service is for children who are feeling stressed or facing any problems.

"Dial 112, the universal emergency number in case of an emergency, and the immediate concern department takes it up. If it's a non-emergency but further action is needed, it's taken up by the District Child Protection Unit. And if a child needs counseling or support, we provide those services also.

### Delegation of District Congress Committee meets L-G

Raise issues of Nubra sub-division

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A delegation comprising members of District Congress Committee led by its President, Rigzin Namgyal called on Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) at the LG Secretariat on November 25.

Secretary to L-G, Ravinder Kumar and Secretary, GAD/PWD, Michael D'Souza were present in the meeting.

President, District Congress Committee apprised the L-G of the recent tour conducted by them to the Nubra valley and informed him about various issues raised by the villagers during the visit. He raised the need for the delimitation of the Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary as the people of Nubra Valley are facing issues in carrying out tourism and developmental activities due to the restrictions imposed in



Delegation of District Congress Committee led by its President, Rigzin Namgyal during their meeting with Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) at the LG Secretariat.

wildlife-protected areas. He also raised the issue of the early completion of the Shatse-Taknak bridge to reduce the travel time of the villagers from Charasa to Disket sub-divisional headquarter.

Several issues of Nubra sub-division, viz. the need for telecommunication connectivity in Digar village, the need to provide water tap connections to

households under Jal Jeevan Mission in Digar and Khungru villages, the need to ensure flood protection measures in Khalsar village, the need for a special medical centre with oxygen therapy room along with other facilities for tourists suffering from acute mountain sickness at Khardong village; the need to provide uninterrupted power supply, the need for Block Development

Officer along with proper Block Development Office at Panamik, the need for a new ambulance at Primary Health Centre (PHC) Panamik, the need for a medical sub-centre at Youlkam village, the need to allow tourists to visit Siachen base camp, the need to make the BSNL mobile tower at Taksha village functional, the need to ensure saturation of JJM work in Tegar village, the need to upgrade motorable road from Kubet to Charasa-Burma, the need to restore main irrigation canal at Charasa village at the earliest; the need for a separate Government Degree College for Turtuk, the need to upgrade facilities at PHC Turtuk, the need to complete the construction of the hydel project at Bogdang village and the motorable bridge for Udmara and Hundri, the delineation of boundaries for army and civilian settlements at Partapur, the need to construct road on the Largy-

ab-Pachathang-Tia road; the need to complete the Udmara-Hundri and Lakjung-Disket bridges at the earliest, etc were raised.

L-G informed the delegates of various measures being taken by the UT Administration for the rationalisation of the boundaries of the Karakoram/Changthang Wildlife Sanctuaries, the construction of bridges and roads in Ladakh for the ease and convenience of the public, the continuous effort being made to achieve the saturation of providing FHTCs under JJM across Ladakh and the issue taken up with the Union Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy to provide uninterrupted power supply to the citizens of Ladakh. He instructed Michael D'Souza, IAS, to examine the feasibility of the Largyab-Tia Road. He asked the delegates to meet CEC Leh regarding the Block Development Office at Panamik.

### Art and photo exhibition 'Ladakh's Pride' held in Delhi

Showcases the Geographical Indication treasures of Ladakh



Dignitaries checking the wood carving section during the exclusive Photo Exhibition and Live Demonstration of all the GI-tagged products of Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** Showcasing the Geographical Indication treasures of Ladakh, an exclusive Photo Exhibition and Live Demonstration of all the GI-tagged products of Ladakh held at All India Fine Art & Crafts Society on 26 November.

Union Minister of State (Ind Charge) for Science & Technology/DoPT/PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the exhibition. Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson, and Executive Councillor for Industries/Handicraft/Handloom, LAHDC Leh, Ghulam Mehdi were also present.

Dr. Jitendra Singh commended LAHDC Leh led by CEC Tashi Gyalson for a successful showcase of Ladakh's Geographical Indication treasures on a national platform. He emphasised the union gov-

ernment's commitment to developing Ladakh across various sectors, encouraging the people to present their unique culture, art, and traditions. He also highlighted the ongoing projects, including the establishment of a Dark Sky Sanctuary at Hanle, which aims to boost rural tourism and allied sectors in Ladakh. He urged the people of Ladakh to participate actively in the nation's comprehensive vision aimed at becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Addressing the gathering, CEC Tashi Gyalson informed that the Hill Council, Leh has been successfully able to bring the hidden arts and traditions of Ladakh in the form of Geographical Indication treasures, complementing the achievements of the current government post-formation of UT La-

dakh. He expressed gratitude to the Union Government led by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi for supporting and fulfilling the aspirations and outlined the Hill Council Leh's collaborative efforts with the Ladakh Administration for holistic development.

Addressing past challenges, he also informed that receiving prestigious GI Tags has opened doors of opportunity globally for its traditions and unique products. He thanked the Minister for gracing the occasion and for assistance in various developmental initiatives to strengthen Ladakh in various sectors.

EC Handicraft/Handloom, Ghulam Mehdi also addressed the audience and highlighted the achievements of LAHDC Leh over the past few years in the overall comprehensive development of Ladakh. He thanked the Union Minister, Chairman LAHDC Leh, and all the organising committee of this unique exhibition for the successful conduct of the opening event, presenting the GI treasures of Ladakh to the outside world. He emphasised the need for a collective collaboration to ensure Ladakh's art and products reach a wider audience.

Exhibition Curator, Vijay Kranti presented the note of thanks and the programme concluded with colourful cultural performances by the students and volunteers of Ladakh Student Welfare Society, New Delhi.

### CEC finalises winter vacation schedule for Kargil schools



CEC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** A meeting on the declaration of winter vacation in Government and Private schools of Kar-

gil district was convened by CEC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun on November 28.

Up to class 8th, the winter vacation shall commence from December 4 to February, 2024 ending. For higher classes excluding Class 10th & 12th, the vacation shall commence from December 18 to February 2024.

The decision was taken after a thorough discus-

sion, keeping in view the weather conditions and the health issues of students into consideration. The decision is also conveyed to the Principal Secretary School Education Department, Union Territory of Ladakh.

Executive Councillors, Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC, Kargil, Chief Education Officer, Kargil & Deputy Chief Education Officer attended the meeting.

### Advisor conducts extensive review of health initiatives



Advisor, Dr Pawan Kotwal.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Advisor, Dr Pawan Kotwal reviewed various projects and schemes under the aegis of the Health & Medical Education Department on November 28. The meeting delved into the progress made on initiatives, addressing challenges, and outlining the future course for the enhancement of healthcare services in Ladakh, at the Civil Secretariat, Leh.

Dr Pawan Kotwal scrutinized the ongoing projects and schemes under the Special Development Package (SDP) to ensure optimal utilization of resources and timely completion. He examined the status and development of Community Health Centers (CHC) in Zanskar and Shargole, emphasizing the importance of accessible healthcare in remote areas. He also sought updates on the establishment of the Medical College with a focus on ensuring the infrastructure and faculty requirements are met for a world-class educational institution. The progress of Nursing Colleges was reviewed, emphasizing the critical role of nursing education in bolstering the healthcare workforce.

Dr Pawan Kotwal sought an update on the status of Pending Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to streamline the approval

process and expedite project implementation. The efficiency and coverage of 108 Ambulance Services were assessed to enhance emergency medical response across Ladakh. Ensuring the availability and accessibility of free diagnostic services for the residents of Ladakh were discussed to promote preventive healthcare.

He emphasized the importance of the procurement of MRI, CT scan, and state-of-the-art medical equipment for accurate diagnosis and treatment. He underscored the commitment of the administration to delivering high-quality healthcare services to the people of Ladakh. The comprehensive review aimed to identify areas for improvement, streamline processes, and accelerate the pace of healthcare development in the UT. He expressed his appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the Health & Medical Education Department.

Dr Pawan Kotwal directed the concerned departments to submit the Annual Action Plans under SDP and State Capex with schemes-wise allocation reflective for the year 2024-25 after due consultation and vetting by the respective Chief Executive Councillors of the LAHDCs.



## Fortnightly News

### Book, Ladakh from Potential to Prosperity: The 4-Year Journey, released



During the launch ceremony of the book titled, 'Ladakh from Potential to Prosperity: The 4-Year Journey'.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A book titled, "Ladakh from Potential to Prosperity: The 4-Year Journey", a compilation of the achievements of the UT Administration ever since Ladakh became a Union Territory in 2019 was released on November 20.

The launch ceremony was held at the DC Conference Hall and Commissioner/Secretary Padma Angmo released the book. Additional District Development Commissioner, Leh, Sonam Norboo, Assistant Director of Information

and Public Relations, Leh Dr. Tundup Namgail amongst other concerned officials were present.

The book, a comprehensive chronicle of Ladakh's transformative journey over the past four years, provides a detailed account of Ladakh's development and progress across various sectors.

Commissioner/Secretary Padma Angmo underscored the significance of documenting Ladakh's developmental trajectory and urged the Rural De-

velopment Department to play its role productively in disseminating the book to every household in Ladakh, as envisioned by the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

The Additional District Development Commissioner, Sonam Norboo commended the book as a valuable resource that captures Ladakh's evolution, shedding light on the strategic initiatives that have propelled the region towards sustained growth.

Assistant Director of Information & Public Relations, Dr. Tundup Namgail lauded the efforts invested in compiling the book, acknowledging its role in disseminating information about Ladakh's progress to a broader audience.

The launch ceremony was also attended by panchayat representatives, community leaders, and representatives from diverse sectors.

### Meeting to formulate information and cyber security policy held

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Administrative Secretary of Information Technology, UT Ladakh Amit Sharma discussed the formulation of a comprehensive Information and Cyber Security Policy for Ladakh during a meeting at the Civil Secretariat on November 21.



Administrative Secretary of Information Technology, UT Ladakh Amit Sharma.

Experts from the National Institute for Smart Government, and officers from the Information Technology Department were present in the meeting.

The discussions explored various facets of information security, encompassing the protection of sensitive data, critical infrastructure, and the privacy of citizens. Participants engaged in a thorough analysis of emerging cyber threats and vulnerabilities specific to the Ladakh region, paving the way for a targeted and effective policy.

ative nature of a robust cybersecurity framework, especially in an era where digital advancements are transforming the landscape of governance and public services. He highlighted the need for a collective effort to combat cyber threats and promote a culture of cybersecurity awareness and education among the populace. The meeting marks a crucial step towards fortifying defenses against cyber threats and ensuring the trust and safety of citizens in the digital realm, Amit Sharma stated.

Key areas addressed in the meeting included mechanisms compliance, the

institutional framework for implementation, the establishment of a dedicated cybersecurity task force, regular security audits, and the development of capacity-building programs, etc. for government officials and the public.

The proposed Information and Cyber Security Policy is expected to be a benchmark document, aligning with international best practices while addressing the unique challenges faced by Ladakh. The meeting concluded with a consensus on the urgency of finalizing the policy and initiating its implementation at the earliest.

### ADGP S.D Singh Jamwal inspects Indo-China LAC sectors



Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), UT Ladakh, Dr. S.D Singh Jamwal during the three-day visit to Indo-China LAC areas.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**CHANGTHANG:** Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), UT Ladakh, Dr. S.D Singh Jamwal concluded the three-day visit to Indo-China LAC areas in eastern Ladakh on November 23.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the security scenario in LAC areas and to evaluate police infrastructure and the welfare of police personnel posted in these strategically important areas.

During the visit, Dr. Jamwal inaugurated several key initiatives and infrastructures of the Police. On the first day, he inaugurated the Tourist

Facilitation Centre and quarters/ barrack at Police Post Tangtse, emphasizing the importance of enhancing facilities for tourists.

He inaugurated the Tourist Transit Camp and Solar Photovoltaic Plant at Pangong, showcasing the integration of sustainable practices into policing efforts.

The second day of the visit witnessed the inauguration of the Type-II Jawan Quarter at Police Post Chushul. He also inspected greenhouses constructed by Ladakh Police at Chushul, Tangtse, and Nyoma.

On the concluding day of the visit, Dr. Jamwal visited Demjok, Tsaga, and Dungi villages where he visited and interacted with ITBP and Army jawans. He commended all security personnel for their dedication; he acknowledged their crucial role in maintaining peace and security in the border areas.

At Hanlay, he inspected the under-construction police check post. Dr. Jamwal also inaugurated the Jawans Barrack and Photovoltaic Plant at Police Station Nyoma.

Besides, Dr. Jamwal interacted with the general public of various villages of Changthang region providing a platform for addressing community concerns.

He stressed the significance of education for young children. Urging parents to guide their children against drug abuse, he emphasized the role of the community in supporting policing efforts and crime detection.

### MP raises transport issues with L-G

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A delegation of Transport Cooperative Societies of Ladakh led by MP Ladakh Jamyang Tsering Namgyal met Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) at the LG Secretariat on November 25.

MP Ladakh informed the L-G that the Indian Army is not allowed to hire civil-owned commercial taxis, buses and trucks beyond the fixed years as mentioned in the policy of the Government of India. He suggested a relaxation to the civil-owned com-

mercial taxis, buses and trucks of Ladakh by the concerned authorities for their hiring by the Army in the region. He requested the L-G to take up the matter of considering the fitness certificate of the vehicles and not consider their age while hiring these vehicles for various purposes by the Army.

He informed the L-G about the terms and conditions of the Army for civil-hired transport contracts of the Indian Army on Government e-Market (GeM) platform. He also informed about the chal-

lenges faced by the local transport associations in applying for contracts on GeM and requested the L-G to intervene ensuring that these local transport societies are hired based on contracts.

L-G spoke to GOC 14 Corps, Lt Gen Rashim Bali and asked him to instruct the concerned Army official to get in touch with the MP Ladakh and provide all possible assistance to the transport societies regarding their hiring for various purposes by the Army which are within the rule of law.

### Computer-based test centres to be established in Leh and Kargil

Advisor sets Jan 2024 deadline

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** In a major step towards facilitating the youth of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Advisor, Dr Pawan Kotwal chaired a meeting on the establishment of Computer-Based Test (CBT) Centres in Leh and Kargil at the Civil Secretariat on November 21.

Setting up of the CBTs shall allow the National Testing Agency (NTA), Government of India, to conduct national examinations like CUET, UGC NET, JEE etc in Ladakh. The meeting deliberated on the establishment of Computer-Based Test (CBT) Centres in Leh and



Kargil, for holding examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) from next year.

Advisor Dr Pawan Kotwal directed for establishment of the CBTs in Ladakh by January 2024 so that all exams conducted by NTA from the year 2024, with considerable applicants from Ladakh, can be held in Leh and Kargil centres.

He said that the proposed CBT Centres in Leh and Kargil will be crucial facilitating factors for the youth of Ladakh.

Commissioner Secretary of Higher Education, Padma Angmo earlier briefed the Advisor that NTA requires a minimum of 100 nodes (computers) available in a single premise along with an internet facility for

sanctioning a centre as CBT centre for the national level examinations. She also thanked the National Testing Agency and the Government of India for agreeing to sanction centres in the Leh and Kargil districts.

Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Shrikant Balasahab Suse briefed regarding the availability of space and computers in the two adjoining premises of Govt Degree College Kargil and ITI Kargil. Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Leh Shabir Hussain briefed regarding the availability of adequate space and computers in the Employment

Office, Leh that can be set up as CBT for the exams.

Director, NTA, Varun Bhardwaj said that NTA will extend all possible technical support to the District Administration in setting up of the CBTs and shall send a technical team next week to assess the availability of space and computers in the identified premises by the District Administration.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous commitment to expedite the necessary preparations and create an environment conducive to the success of the NTA CBT Centres in Leh and Kargil.

### Chadar Trek to proceed with Nimu-Padum-Darcha Road development plans

Revised route plan soon



Commissioner/Secretary (Tourism), Ladakh, Kachho Mehboob Ali Khan.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Commissioner/Secretary (Tourism), Ladakh, Kachho Mehboob Ali Khan convened a meeting on November 21 to address the issue of holding the Chadar Trek on the Zaskar river without disturbing the ongoing work on the construction of the Nimu-Padum-Darcha Road (NPDR) being built by the Border Roads Organisation (Project Yojak).

Concerned officers from the Civil Administration, Police Department, BRO, Tourism Stakeholders' Association heads etc. were present in the meeting. The discussion focused on primarily ensuring the uninterrupted construction work on the NPDR Road and at the same time organizing the Chadar Trek safely on a truncated route on the Zaskar River. Deleks Namgyal, President of the All Ladakh

ensure a safe and smooth Chadar Trek experience.

The representation from religious/social Organisations of the Zaskar Sub-division was also considered and it has been discussed that their concerns are being taken care of. There will be no disruption in the road construction work and BRO will be part of the overall coordination exercise. The Chadar Trek is an important winter tourist activity spanning over a period of about one and a half months in the months of January and February hence efforts are being made to continue with the same.

BRO expressed its commitment to closely collaborate with the UT Administration and stakeholders to facilitate the trek and assured that requisite safety measures would be followed as per requirement. The meeting was attended by key representatives, including SSP Leh, PD Nitya; Director (Tourism), Kunzes Angmo; ADC, Leh, Sonam Chosjor; Wildlife Warden, Leh, Pankaj Raina; Commander, Yojak, Chilling; AD (Tourism), Tsering Spalzes; Inspector (UT-DRF), Tsewang Namgyal; President, LTTA, P. T. Kunzang; President ALTOA, Deleks Namgyal; Stanzin Norboo; ALTOA; and Tsewang Tundup, LMGA besides other officers/officials.

### Ladakh hosts Digital Transformational conclave & awards

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The 12th edition of the Digital Transformation Conclave & Awards, 2023 held in Leh on November 24.

The conclave was organised by GovConnect and iLounge Media Private Limited in collaboration with the IT Department of UT Ladakh, led by IT Secretary Amit Sharma. It is a maiden mega-scale event in Ladakh since its formation wherein more than 20 states/UTs participated.

During the inaugural Digital Transformation Conclave in Ladakh, a diverse audience, including government officers/officials from Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, industry experts, and technology enthusiasts were present. The gathering aimed to delve into the latest trends, challenges, and success stories in the digital realm. Additionally, it sheds light on the unique challenges faced by the public sector in embracing digital technologies for enhanced governance, service delivery, and citizen engagement.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brig (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) emphasised

Ladakh's rapid progress in digital transformation. He highlighted the importance of digital sovereignty for national defense, stressing towards creation of total autonomy in the IT domain. Mishra acknowledged the significant contributions to the conclave, citing examples like digital transactions and income tax digitization.

MP Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal; Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal; Secretary, IT Ladakh Amit Sharma also spoke on the occasion.

The conclave featured presentations by industry experts who covered the topics on Smart Display Solutions: Transforming Government, overcome challenges of Digital Transformation using Zero Trust Technology, Securing Digital Transformation: Evolution of SOC etc. It also comprised a series of insightful panel discussions, each shedding light on crucial aspects of e-governance and digital transformation initiatives.

The conclave concluded with the felicitation of great initiatives taken in the IT domain all across the nation.

### Ladakh 9th State Board of Wildlife meeting held

Board members give clearance to 25 projects in wildlife areas

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) chaired the meeting of the 9th State Board of Wildlife of UT Ladakh at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on November 24.

The wildlife clearance for 25 projects, including 20 for 4G saturation of BSNL/Jio mobile towers in uncovered areas of Ladakh under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), four roads for security purposes, and one for the national large solar telescope on the bank of Pangong Lake in the Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary were discussed in the meeting.

LG highlighted the importance of achieving 100 percent saturation of providing telecommunication connectivity in remote uncovered areas of Ladakh for the ease and convenience of the people of Ladakh and also of defence personnel. He also highlighted the importance of improving road connectivity in Ladakh due to security reasons.

The Board members gave approval to all these projects.

Renowned wildlife expert Dr MK Ranjitsinh highlighted the importance of notifying the rationalization of the boundaries of Karakoram/Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary at the earliest. He suggested involving the army as partners as the UT Administration has to work closely with them in infrastructure development projects. He highlighted



During the meeting of the 9th State Board of Wildlife of UT Ladakh.

the issue of dog menace in wildlife areas and emphasised taking concrete steps to tackle the issue. He also suggested nominating honorary chief wildlife wardens in wildlife areas. Dr. Bilal Habib from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun informed the Board members that the process of rationalisation of Karakoram/Changthang wildlife sanctuaries would be finalized soon and sent for approval from the National Board of Wildlife. He highlighted the point brought out by the National Board of Wildlife regarding the need to conduct a comprehensive study plan to assess the impact of development projects cleared in Ladakh by the National Board.

Wildlife expert Dr RK Singh suggested that wildlife-related policies should also be discussed in the Wildlife Board Meeting along with conducting physical meetings with board members. He also suggested constituting a Standing Committee of the State Board of Wildlife of UT Ladakh.

Tsewang Namgyal from Snow Leopard Conservancy suggested that annual funds should be provided for organising training for inhabitants

residing in wildlife-protected areas to conserve wildlife.

MP Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal; Advisor to LG, Dr Pawan Kotwal; Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Namgyal Yakzee also gave their valuable suggestions regarding the issues discussed in the meeting.

Member of Parliament from Ladakh, Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal; Advisor to HLG, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Namgyal Yakzee; Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Panchok Tashi; ADGP, Ladakh, Dr. SD Singh Jamwal; Chief Wildlife Warden, UT Ladakh, Brig Mohan Sharma; Commissioner Secretary, Padma Angmo; Secretary to LG, Ravinder Kumar; wildlife experts Dr. MK Ranjitsinh, Dr. RK Singh, representatives from Wildlife Institute of India, Zoological Survey of India; Senior Scientist, Nature Conservation Foundation, Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar; representatives from Border Roads Organisation, Indian Army, BSNL/Jio and other officials from different organisations and institutions joined the meeting physically and virtually.

### DC chairs meeting on 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' progress

Emphasises on 100 % saturation of all schemes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve deliberated on the progress and implementation of the ongoing 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' in the Leh district on November 23.

ADDC, Leh, Sonam Norboo provided a comprehensive update on the overall progress of the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' camp. He added that 13 Gram Panchayats have been covered, attracting the participation of 1676 individuals. Also, the health camp organised during the VBSY camp successfully screened 1071 people.

The meeting also highlighted the socio-cultural impact of the initiative, with 155 awards conferred upon women, 154 on students, and 74 recognizing the achievements of local sports persons and 22 local artists. Furthermore, 63 registrations for the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) have been successfully completed.

In terms of administrative achievements, he informed that four Gram Panchayats have achieved 100% Ayushman card saturation, 11 Gram Panchayats with 100% Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) saturation, and three Gram Pancha-

yats with 100% Jan Dhan Saturation. Additionally, four Gram Panchayats have achieved 100% digitalization of land records.

Deputy Commissioner, Sukhadeve directed the ADDC Leh, in collaboration with Block Development Officers (BDOs) and other stakeholders, to further enhance these figures. Emphasizing the importance of timely information dissemination, he directed the concerned officers to upload data promptly on the designated portal.

DC Leh stressed the need for the saturation of all schemes, urging officials to elaborate on activities and extend the coverage of health camps. He also instructed a proactive approach in increasing public participation in PMUY registration.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Dev. Leh; Chief Medical Officer, Leh; Chief Agriculture Officer, Leh; District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Leh; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Leh; Chief Education Officer, Leh; General manager DIC, Leh; Programme Officer ICDS, Leh; District Social welfare Officer Leh; Assistant Director, CA&PDs Leh; Assistant Director Information, Leh; Manager, Lead Bank Leh; Manager, SBI, Leh; Manager, J&K Bank Leh.



## Expert Talk:

## Child Welfare: Challenges and collective solutions for a safer future

By Stanzin Padma &amp; Yangchen Dolma



**Nilza Angmo, District Child Protection Officer:** Similar to other regions, Ladakh has children in need of care and protection, while some are involved in unlawful activities. To address this, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has introduced the Mission Vatsalya scheme. Each district has a District Child Protection Unit managed by a District Child Protection Officer, overseeing children in need and those in conflict with the law under the JJ Act. Additionally, the scheme includes a Child Welfare Committee comprising a chairman and members, which currently has one chairman serving both Leh and Kargil districts. The Juvenile Justice Board, headed by a Principal Magistrate and two members, handles cases involving children in conflict with the law, ensuring judgments are in accordance with legal provisions. Some children may be released on bail, while others are placed in observation homes."

The Child Welfare Committee, a statutory body, addresses cases of both children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with the law, ensuring care and support for both categories. While one group may have committed or been involved in crimes, both receive necessary care and protection.

The District Child Protection Unit oversees the functions of both the Juvenile Justice Board and the Child Welfare Committee. The team includes professionals such as social workers, counselors, protection officers, and those involved in institutional and non-institutional care to cater to the diverse needs of children.

Institutional care caters to various categories of children in need, offering hostels for destitute, orphaned, semi-orphaned, and those in conflict with the law. Government-managed facilities include four Child Care Institutions (CCIs), boys' and girls' hostels (also known as Places of Safety), observation homes for children who have committed offenses, and open shelters for children found on the streets while their parents are at work. These shelters provide lunch and educational facilities.

Non-institutional care includes sponsorship programs, where, upon the Deputy Commissioner's approval, children not residing in hostels receive a monthly amount of 4000 rupees under specific conditions. Some children benefit from foster care arrangements. Upon turning 18, non-institutional care assesses the individual needs of the child, covering aspects such as care, education, and financial support.

Additionally, there are social workers, outreach workers, counselors, and miscellaneous staff supporting both institutional and non-institutional care.

Furthermore, there is a legal and probationary officer responsible for handling legal matters.

The cases we handle vary significantly, encompassing neglected children, instances falling under POCSO where minors endure sexual abuse, medical concerns, and those related to criminal activities. Our primary goal within the scheme is to ensure the well-being of these children within their family environment, irrespective of their economic background. Our preference is always to resolve issues through non-institutional care rather than bringing them to hostels.

However, if a child's safety is compromised within their family, the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) intervenes, declaring the environment unsafe and immediately providing legal support to bring the child to a hostel. In Ladakh, societal issues significantly impact such cases, with some individuals having criminal intent, leading to neglect or even exploitation, particularly in cases of sexual abuse.

Regarding drug addiction, although official data is lacking, our social welfare department has initiated research efforts to gather accurate information. As members of society, we witness numerous instances of substance abuse and addiction, prompting us to take a closer look and address these concerning trends.

We are actively combating drug abuse in schools through the YATO club, a peer-led intervention promoting awareness among students. Peers communicate in a language more relatable to fellow students, particularly targeting backbenchers to divert their focus towards constructive activities.

We aim to establish a rehabilitation center in Leh within a month.

The Specialized Adoption Center, a unit of the district child protection, handles adoption policies and deals with cases of newborns abandoned, sometimes attacked by dogs. Cradles at public places offer safety for these infants, activating our team upon placement. Two caretakers and a supervisor ensure immediate care, including warmth, clothing, and nourishment. We search for childless prospective adoptive parents, facilitating legal adoptions to provide these children with loving homes.

Recently, we launched the child helpline number 112, providing a safe, confidential space for children to freely share their concerns without hesitation.

**Solutions:**

- **Society holds varied perspectives; some emphasize prevention through increased awareness.**
- **My observations reveal that 90% of offenders are unaware of POCSO, which mandates a minimum 20-year sentence. Raising awareness about POCSO could significantly deter sexual assaults.**
- **Strengthening institutional capacity is crucial for advancing the primary objective of the Mission Vatsalya Scheme. Our current system requires further fortification to better support its goals.**



**Shehlla Khan, Member, Child Welfare Committee, Leh:** In 2018, the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) was established with a mission to provide comprehensive care and protection for children lacking financial security, abandoned, or orphaned in terms of education, care, and accommodation. Serving as a safety net, our committee steps in when families or relatives are unable or unwilling to support these vulnerable children.

Our network includes 14 Childcare Institutions (CCIs), each serving a unique purpose. From the SAAH adoption institution to shelters where children can stay and observation homes for those in conflict cases, these institutions are the bedrock of our commitment to nurturing and developing young lives.

Ladakh, known for its soft-natured and polite people, is not immune to the harsh realities of child abuse, abandonment, and exploitation. Since the initiation of our child protection policy, we have encountered cases ranging from physical abuse and torture to child marriages, rescuing minors from labor and addressing issues like corporal punishment and POCSO cases in schools. The sudden surge in such cases in Leh prompted us to fortify our efforts.

...continues on page 6



## National Pollution Control Day



National Pollution Control Day is honoured every year on December 2. It honours those who died in the Bhopal Gas catastrophe on December 2nd and 3rd in 1984. On this day in December, almost 45 tonnes of the hazardous gas methyl isocyanate (MIC) escaped from a chemical plant owned by the Indian unit of the American company Union Carbide Corporation. Within minutes, the poisonous gas killed thousands of people. The Bhopal Gas Tragedy is one of the deadliest industrial pollution catastrophes in the history. For the first time in India, the case led to a focus on the need for protecting people

and the environment from industrial accidents, with new laws introduced by the government afterwards. Study shows that the accident – often considered the worst industrial disaster in history – affected not just those who were exposed to the gas that night but also the generation of babies still in the womb when the accident happened. In fact, men born in Bhopal in 1985 have a higher risk of cancer, lower education accomplishment and higher rates of disabilities compared with those born before or after 1985.

This day is celebrated to create awareness

among people to prevent any industrial disasters. The day is dedicated to encourage people and industries to adopt pollution control measures to create awareness about environmental pollution.

In India, around 7 million people die due to air pollution each year, of which 4 million are killed by indoor air pollution. It is estimated that nine out of ten people in the world do not have safe air to breathe. It should be noted that air pollutants are so tiny that they can pass through mucus membranes and other protective barriers to harm the lungs, heart, and brain.

DID YOU KNOW 

- In New Delhi, the Sulabh International Museum Of Toilets features a rare collection that details the historic evolution of toilets from 2500 BC all the way up to the present day. When you browse through the exhibit, you'll learn about the plumbing system of ancient societies, marvel at the elaborately decorated toilets of 18th and 19th-century Europe, and even get to sit upon one from Austria that is shaped like a lion!

- According to the Guinness Book of World Records, "strengths" is the longest word in the English language with one vowel. The word contains nine letters, eight of them being consonants.

- While studying mice, a team of Swiss researchers found that the mice's liver cells

swelled and contracted up to 40% while doing their daily activities. Though research being conducted whether that happens to that extent in humans, one study from 1986 found a person's liver swells about 20 percent between day and night—presumably related to the fact that the liver is not working as hard when a person is sleeping.

- Located in Scotland, Loch Ness holds more freshwater than any other British lake at a volume of 7,452 cubic meters! If any lake could hold a mythical dinosaur-like monster, it's this one.

- According to official Olympic records, the youngest athlete to win an Olympic medal was Greek gymnast Dimitrios Loundras, who finished

third at the 1896 Olympic Games when he was 10 years old.

- Boasting around 159 failed products and innovations, the touring Museum of Failure features displays on such bad ideas as Harley-Davidson perfume, Colgate frozen entrees, and Microsoft Zune.

- At the base of every hair follicle are tiny fan-shaped muscles called Arrector pili. These muscles contract when the body is cold in an effort to warm the body up and cause a person's hair to "stand up straight" on their skin aka goosebumps.

Courtesy: parade.com

## SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

## Let's choose to be happy



Life and death are my main concerns, and hence my favourite topics to think about every day. Every time I think of life, I think of happiness and death. The reason being that happiness is crucial to both life and death. A happy life is a necessity for a quiet and comfortable death.

Therefore, our stress in life has to be about happiness on a war-footing. Nothing good can happen until you are in a state of happiness. One of the things that I remind myself quite

often is that being happy could mean many things; and one of them is that you are all set to begin a journey of purpose.

But our objective here is only one aspect, that of highlighting the importance of happiness in life. Without happiness, life is like having no purpose or mission which necessarily leads to a miserable and destructive journey. Happiness is the key to any kind of success and the saddle to your ultimate journey in life.

Happiness does not come on its own. We need to cultivate it. And there are many ways, small and big. Small experiences of good deeds on a daily basis are the most satisfying ones. After a gap of time, these very small experiences of good deeds accumulate into a great deed that gets you happiness unbound.

You know that many things happen to you every day. Each one of those things can be a source of happiness if you can handle them well and positively.

But, for all this, you need to understand and know yourself well, your ability and your energy. Energy here means your willingness and your innate capability to surmount difficulties on the way to your progression.

Finally, let us quote Anna Howard Shaw, an American activist: "To live joyfully, I wake up every morning with a great desire to live joyfully." Surely, nothing will work until you choose to be happy!

Courtesy: WongWorld

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



**Fortnightly News**

**In Conversation with  
Chamba Tsetan Founder ASFL & Project Head Centre for Pastoralism**

*Interviewed by Nenzes Chodon*

**Q. Brief us about yourself.**

My name is Chamba Tsetan, and I hail from the village of Kargyam in eastern Ladakh. My educational journey took me through my village school, college in Leh, and a master's degree in Liberal Arts from Delhi. Presently, I am devoted to working within the realm of Pastoralism. In Ladakh, Pastoralists and Nomads predominantly reside in Changthang, where the practice has long revolved around self-sustainability.

With the advent of tourism in Ladakh, there came a shift towards a more capitalist and free-market economy. The influence of modernity is evident, particularly in agriculture, where machinery and tractors have replaced traditional methods involving horses. This shift has prompted a significant migration from villages to urban areas. For instance, in Kharnakling, the population has relocated from Kharnak to Leh. This pattern signifies a broader trend in the region.

Despite its historical significance, pastoralism—a traditional livelihood practice—has struggled to adapt to modern methods. Unlike agriculture, machinery hasn't seamlessly integrated into this ancient practice.

**Q. Since you work with pastoralism, how do you perceive the value of Ladakh's indigenous wool beyond the region?**

The story of wool in India is rather disheartening. The market is predominantly dominated by Merino wool, leaving little to no value for wool from other regions within the country, ultimately leading to its disposal. Comparatively, Ladakh's wool stands as one of the finest available, yet it lacks competitiveness with Merino. Within Ladakh, wool finds its use in clothing and carpet making, holding immense potential in terms of achieving sustainability. It's important to note that shearing sheep isn't harmful; in fact, it's necessary for their well-being. Ladakh's wool has the potential to be both sustainable and indigenous, offering opportunities beyond the region.

**Q. In your observation, how has the emphasis on ice hockey evolved over the years since your involvement in the game for almost 9 years?**

It's incredible how much changed—access to equipment has, coaching, and substantial government funding dedicated to improving the game. Previously, ice hockey was predominantly played on natural rinks or frozen ponds in villages. Now, multiple rinks dot various villages, and whenever a politician visits, discussions about Changthang often include demands for ice hockey rinks alongside other necessities.

Ice hockey has nestled its way into the hearts of Ladakhis. In our region, it's the only sport that draws such large, enthusiastic crowds. It's come a long way but still has a journey ahead with much hard work required. The evolution isn't solely due to the government or players; it's also about the fervor shown by the people. Parents, passionate about the game, encourage their children to participate and even take them for ice skating—an integral part of the experience. It's a game that's not only enjoyable to play but also captivating to watch,



almost akin to cricket in other parts of India. The public's love for the sport has led to the development of infrastructure. Being the only region in India with natural ice, we have a unique advantage. It's a combination of people's affection, the game's intrinsic appeal, government support, contributions from NGOs, and volunteer coaches from around the globe coming to Ladakh—it's truly a collective effort.

**Q. What drove your founding of the Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh (ASFL)? Has it achieved the envisioned success, particularly with the Frozen Lake Marathon?**

This story intertwines with ice hockey itself. As a coach for children, I led a program called "Learn to Play" for beginners in Maan, a village near Pangong Lake. In winter, Pangong becomes almost deserted with few tourists, yet in the summer, it transforms into a bustling area filled with camps and resorts. This stark contrast fascinated me. The residents along the Pangong belt are primarily pastoralists or nomads, and seasonal tourism has significantly impacted their livelihoods, leaving them with limited sources of income. Witnessing Pangong's beauty in winter sparked an idea—to promote winter tourism in the region, showcasing the authentic lake experience and local culture.

During one December evening in 2021, while watching news coverage of an Ice Marathon in Antarctica, the idea struck—to organise a similar marathon in Pangong. However, I understood the importance of ensuring it wouldn't overcrowd or harm the area. Limiting the participants to 200 ensured the event's safety and sustainability. The marathon aimed to be unique, setting records as Asia's first frozen Lake Marathon, making a statement about Ladakh to the world.

The marathon's tagline, "The Last Run," was a poignant reminder of the alarming rate at which glaciers are melting due to global warming. This issue isn't just about the marathon or the game of ice hockey; it directly affects Ladakh's glaciers, contributing to water crises. For me, this holds a profound connection to the impact on the game I love. The possibility looms that in a few years, the lake might not freeze again, making every run potentially the final one.

Beyond athletes, non-athletes also joined the run, altering their perceptions of Ladakh. This marathon wasn't solely about reaching the finish line; it was about raising awareness. Participants became ambassadors, spreading the crucial message about climate change and the impending threats to the region's frozen lakes.

**Q. Are there more impactful sports and activities that could be introduced in the Changthang region to raise awareness about the growing environmental concerns?**

Certainly, Ladakh is a haven for sports, and we've been brainstorming ideas, particularly those linked to ice-related activities. One exciting concept is Ice

**MESSAGE TO THE READERS**

**“Ladakh is an incredibly delicate ecosystem, and we must handle its ecology and natural resources with utmost care. The glaciers are melting, and they represent our primary water source. This isn't just a concern for one particular community—whether you identify as Changpa or Shamma or belong elsewhere in Ladakh, it affects us all. It's a collective issue that demands our unified action. Unity is what we need to combat environmental crisis because its impact spares no one.”**

*...continues on page 7*

**Fortnight Highlights**



Ladakh Seabuckthorn', a product of wonder with immense health and medicinal benefits and potential has received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) Tag. Executive Councillor, Horticulture, Ghulam Mehdi presented the GI Certificate to the Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson.



A delegation of women representatives hailing from Kargil led by Nominated Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Dr Yangchen Dolma met Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson at Council Secretariat. Various women-centric issues related to women empowerment, better coordination between women of both the districts and other related issues were discussed.



District Police Leh arrested three persons and recovered 986 grams of charas-like substances from their possession on November 16.



Mountain Agriculture Research and Extension Station Kargil, SKUAST-K organised a training-cum-seed distribution program at Garkhon village.



The Health Department Nyoma as a part of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, conducted a medical camp at Samad Rokchan on November 27. The camp aimed to provide essential health services to the rural population.



Constitution Day of India was observed at Hill Council Leh. Executive Councillor Stanzin Chosphele administered the reading of the Preamble to the Constitution of India.



LAHDC Leh led by the Chairman/CEC, Tashi Gyalson in the presence of Dy Chairman, Tsering Angchuk, bid warm adieu to the outgoing Chief Engineer of Project Himank, Border Roads Organization, Brig Gaurav S Karki and simultaneously welcomed the new Chief Engineer, Brig Vishal Srivastava at Council Secretariat, Leh.



Traffic Police Ladakh launched a special drive in Leh town against usage of high beam lights by commuters.



## Fortnightly News

### Kargil Hill Council reviews progress of various projects under CAPEX Budget 2023-24

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo assessed the physical and financial progress of various projects under the CAPEX Budget 2023-24 on November 18.



Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo assessing the physical and financial progress of various projects under the CAPEX Budget 2023-24.

Executive Councilors, Zakir Hussain, Kacho Feroz Ahmed, Aga Syed Mujataba, and Er. Punchook Tashi; Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC, Kargil Srikant Balasahab Suse, SDMs, Councilors of LAHDC Kargil from respective constituencies, district officers from all departments, and other officials were present during the meeting.

CPO Kargil, Abdul Hadi provided a comprehensive presentation on the physical and financial progress achieved under the CAPEX budget by various departments to date. He informed that the UT administration has approved approximately ₹30000.00 lakh under the CAPEX Budget for the financial year 2023-24.

He further informed that in the Engineering sector, out of ₹ 15687.69 lakh till 10/20/23, ₹5920.13 lakh expenditure has been booked which sums up around 37.74%. He also informed that in the non-engineering sector, out of ₹14312.21 till 10/20/23 around ₹8359.40 lakh expenditure has been booked which sums around 27.86%.

The CPO also informed that administrative approval of the majority of the works has been done furthermore in some places land dispute has to be resolved at the earliest.

CEC emphasized that all departments and executing agencies must intensify their efforts to incur maximum expenditure before the end of the working season. Reiterating the commitment to a corruption-free and prompt Ladakh, he urged all officers to align with the vision of LG Ladakh. He emphasized the importance of working with dedication and honesty to serve the people and contribute to their welfare.

CEC Akhoo also emphasized the adoption of eco-friendly and energy-efficient building techniques for sustainable development in the district. He inquired about the progress of works on both ongoing and new projects in the engineering and non-engineering sectors. The status of works, projects, and any associated issues were thoroughly reviewed and discussed on a department-wise basis.

Various departmental issues were also discussed and concerned officials provided suggestions.

The councillors highlighted different developmental issues pertaining to their respective constituencies while several unanimous decisions were taken by the house. The rationalization of schools and teaching staff in the district was also discussed. Councillors put forth their suggestions with regard to the rationalization of schools and teaching staff in the district, schemes proposed under the subsidy component, etc.

CEC expressed gratitude to Executive Councilors, Councillors, and the district officers for their continued efforts towards the development of the district. He urged them to work in tandem and close coordination to ensure the creation of tangible public assets on the ground.

### Administrator MC Kargil takes stock of development works

Calls for quality and time completion of projects

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** The Administrator Municipal Committee Kargil and Joint Director Information UT Ladakh, Imteaz Kacho inspected various ongoing developmental works undertaken by Municipal Committee, Kargil on November 21.



Administrator Municipal Committee Kargil and Joint Director Information UT Ladakh, Imteaz Kacho inspecting various ongoing developmental works.

Imteaz Kacho inspected the under-construction building of the slaughterhouse and truck terminal at Kharul. At the slaughterhouse, he was informed by the Project Engineer, Northern Eco Earth Design, Khadim Hussain that the construction works is almost 90% complete except for the deployment of machinery equipment. He further informed that the work has been executed under a Special Development Package (SDP) at a cost of Rs.2.00 crore for the first phase and Rs.15.14 crore in respect of the second phase of construction. The project will be completed by July 2024.

At the truck terminal, the Administrator was informed that the work is being executed under SDP by NHIDCL and that the total cost of the project is around Rs.62.00 crore. The terminal has a parking space for around 215 trucks and would have other facilities like a warehouse, dormitories, toilets,

spaces for eateries, admin block, etc. The official from NHIDCL informed that 15% of the project has been executed so far and should be completed entirely by October 2024. He was assured that the entire team of the agency is working on a war footing to meet the stipulated timelines.

At the solid waste treatment plant near the airport, the in-charge official from 3R Management Limited, Kapil Patel informed the Administrator that the total cost of the solid waste management plant is Rs.14.32 crores and the construction work has been executed under SDP. He added that the construction work has almost been completed except for the flooring and machinery deployment. He further informed that the solid waste treatment plant will be made functional by June 2024 if all goes well adding that over the first three-year period, the operation and maintenance of the plant will be taken care of

by the company itself.

The Administrator directed officials of the Municipal Committee to make the public shed near Iqbal Bridge and at other locations in the town for the convenience of the public at the earliest. He was earlier informed that work on all the sheds has already been completed and that they need to be handed over by the executing agency i.e. NHIDCL.

Meanwhile, the Administrator appreciated the sincere efforts put in by Shafiq Ali Khan, Executive Officer, the Municipal Committee and his team of officials as well as the Executing Agencies and their workforce for putting in their best efforts and for doing a commendable job in their respective fields. He also advised the Executing Agencies to ensure the usage of good quality materials in construction works as per the prescribed guidelines and to complete the works well within the stipulated deadlines.

### L-G meets Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy

Discusses power sector-related issues in Ladakh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) met Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, Raj Kumar Singh, in New Delhi on November 21 and discussed power sector-related issues in Ladakh.

L-G apprised the Minister of the need to import power in Ladakh in the winter months due to minimal power generation by the hydel power projects. He requested the Minister to direct Power Grid and Jammu & Kashmir Power Department to ensure power supply of up to 80 MW from the Northern Grid to UT Ladakh in the coming winter months.

He requested the minister for the early completion of the 220 KV Nubra and 220 KV Zaskar Transmission Line projects being constructed under Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan (PMRP) Scheme 2015 and the separation of both transmission lines budget



Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) with Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, Raj Kumar Singh, in New Delhi.

and execution-wise.

L-G apprised the Minister of Ladakh's hydro potential of around 2400 MW but he informed that only 100 MW hydro power is being used. He informed about the preparation of several detailed project reports (DPRs) on the feasibility of hydro projects to ensure energy security through clean energy. He requested the Minister to provide necessary Central Finance Assistance for development and stated that surplus power generated from hydel projects could be sold.

He requested the Minister for the early completion of the 20 MW AC/50 MWp solar project being developed at Phyang-Taru area in Leh by Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) Ltd due to the slow pace of the project being implemented by the company since 2022. He also requested the conversion of RAPDRP-B (Re-structured Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme) loan into a grant. He further discussed ways to utilise the renewable energy potential in Ladakh.

Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, Raj Kumar Singh assured to look into the matters raised by the L-G.

### 2nd District level advisory committee meeting highlights safe food and healthy diets

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve chaired the 2nd District Level Advisory Committee meeting on Safe Food and Healthy Diet at the VC room on November 23.

The meeting addressed crucial issues related to food safety, including food establishment licenses, mid-day meals, and the registration of all department canteens under the Food Safety Standard Act.

During the meeting, officials provided updates to the DC Leh on the current status of food safety in Leh and detailed the various proactive measures undertaken by the Food Safety Department to ensure the provision of safe and healthy food for the public.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining high standards of food safety, Deputy Commissioner Sukhadeve issued instructions to officials to ensure hygienic food availability in the market. He emphasized the need for inspection squads to monitor and



Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve chairing the 2nd District Level Advisory Committee meeting on Safe Food and Healthy Diet at VC room.

curb the sale of unhealthy and expired food products, especially those targeted at children, and to address misbranded food items.

In addition, DC Leh directed the committee members to initiate awareness programs involving all stakeholders. He emphasized making short videos to educate the public on the importance of safe food and maintaining a healthy diet.

The meeting was attended

### Students of Army Goodwill school go on National Integration tour

Interact with President at Rashtrapati Bhavan



Students of Army Goodwill School Farooana, Kargil with President of India Droupadi Murmu.

Mansoor Hosain Beigh

**KARGIL:** 206 Sata Battery unit under the banner of 8 mountain DIV Khumbathang conducted a National Integration Tour for the students of Army Goodwill School Farooana, Kargil.

A group of 25 students including 3 teachers and 3 army staff accompanied Army Major Himalaya for a National Integration Tour.

The students visited Srinagar, Jammu, Chandigarh, Delhi and Agra. The tour aims to broaden their horizons by showcasing various facets of India to gain first-hand experience of varied cultures, traditions, development, and technological & economic advancements across the nation.

This will motivate them to achieve better jobs and careers through education and contribute towards nation-building.

The students of Army Goodwill School Farooana called with the President of India Droupadi Murmu during their National Integration Tour at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 14 November. The President shared her thoughts and good wishes to the students on the occasion of Children's Day.

Archoo Hakima and Nisar Ali shared their experience and expressed their gratitude to the Indian Army for conducting such a National Integration tour. All students participated with a great amount of zeal and enthusiasm.

### NISR Leh participates in India International Trade Fair



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**DELHI:** The National Institute of Sowa-Rigpa (NISR), Leh participated in the India International Trade Fair (IITF) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on November 14.

The 42nd edition of India International Trade Fair (IITF), an annual event of India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) started on November 14 and will continue till November 27, 2023.

IITF is one of the world's largest integrated trade exhibitions, having both B2B and B2C components. The first five days is reserved for business-to-business exhibitors, the fair will be

open to the general public from November 19.

The National Institute of Sowa-Rigpa (NISR), Leh has organised an exhibition of Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine on digital mode along with free Sowa-Rigpa consultation and medicine to the general public.

The objective of the participation is to promote Sowa-Rigpa on National and Global level. The India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2023 has a diverse range of business, social, cultural, and educational dimensions. The theme of IITF 2023 is Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - United by Trade.

### SVEEP campaign via mobile democracy van flagged off



Santosh Sukhadeve, District Election Officer/ Deputy Commissioner, Leh flagging off the SVEEP campaign through mobile democracy van.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Santosh Sukhadeve, District Election Officer/ Deputy Commissioner, Leh flagged off the SVEEP campaign through mobile democracy van from DC Office Leh on 25 November.

The campaign launch is in connection with the Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls for the year 2024. The mobile democracy van will be playing an important role in disseminating information and encouraging voter participation across the region.

During the flag-off ceremony, DC Leh emphasised the importance of active citizen involvement in the electoral process.

The Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls-2024 aims to update and authenticate the voter database, ensuring accuracy and completeness. The SVEEP campaign, driven by the Mobile Democracy Van, will conduct awareness drives, interactive sessions, and on-the-spot registrations to encourage maximum participation from residents.

### Expert Talk: Child Welfare: Challenges and collective solutions for a safer future

...continues from page 4

Dealing with these cases was initially challenging, but with the arrival of Nilza Mam, the district social welfare officer, our operations have become more streamlined. Despite our progress, the small community of Ladakh presents unique challenges, such as the habit of concealing issues and pointing fingers elsewhere, often due to financial insecurities, marital discord, or societal pressure leading to a child's distress.

To further enhance our capabilities, we are in the process of developing well-structured infrastructure facilities. Under the assurance of Padma Mam, the commissioner secretary, plans for a comprehensive facility including shelters, observation homes, and hostels for both boys and girls are underway, with a strong emphasis on safety and functionality. Child protection efforts are divided into three main components: the Child Welfare Committee handling cases of children in need of care protection (CNCP), the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) addressing accidental crimes or incidents involving children below 18 years, and awareness initiatives initiated since 2017. Recently, the launch of the child help number 112 and the inception of SAAH have contributed to our cause.

However, challenges persist, particularly in cases involving newborns or illegitimate children. Discussions with local authorities indicate potential solutions, including the establishment of a child center at the Heart Foundation, enabling adoptions through the Central Adoption Resource Policy (CARA).

Highlighting our adoption policy, the SAAH initiative operates under the Hindustan Adoption Maintenance Act (HAMA) and CARA. The process involves presenting three babies to childless couples who then select one to initiate the adoption process. Legal freedom for a child is pursued if parents are willing to surrender, with a two-month grace period before the child is declared legally free, a responsibility now overseen by the deputy commissioner.

In recent times, the power to manage adoptions has shifted from the committee to the deputy commissioner, streamlining processes and ensuring thorough investigations into foster families. These arrangements, though intricate and requiring meticulous vetting, have yielded success stories, with children thriving in

nurturing environments.

The District Child Protection unit actively seeks foster families, and their advertisement encourages those willing to provide a nurturing environment for these children to come forward. However, addressing issues like child labor remains a challenge due to a lack of formal complaints or evidence. Our commitment extends to addressing drug addiction cases, where monthly counseling is provided. The confidentiality of the children's data is paramount, with strict measures in place to safeguard their identities.

In addressing these issues, we recognize that the causes are multifaceted. Financial insecurity, family disputes, and societal pressure often drive individuals to hide cases or deflect responsibility. Nevertheless, the gravity of these issues necessitates action and unity within our society.

However, solutions lie not merely within the confines of institutional mechanisms but in the collective conscience of the community. Encouraging individuals to report cases of abuse, child labor, or educational neglect is pivotal. Uniting the community in raising its voice against such injustices can create a ripple effect, fostering an environment where children's welfare becomes a shared responsibility.

#### Solution

• **It's crucial that if anyone is aware of cases involving child labor, physical abuse, or children being deprived of proper education in their vicinity, they should step forward and inform us promptly. Transparency and timely reporting are vital to ensure the safety and well-being of our children.**

• **The first step towards effective child protection is the unification of our entire society. It's imperative that we collectively raise our voices against such issues. This unified stance will not only impact the present but will also shape the values and actions of the younger generation. Alone, our efforts may be limited, but together, we can create a lasting impact.**

• **For those willing to contribute and support our cause, we encourage direct engagement. Anyone interested in providing sponsorship or assistance to aid our efforts in safeguarding and nurturing these children can approach us directly.**



# Fortnightly News

## Capacity-building training program on energy conservation begins



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Three-day training programme on Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) and Eco Niwas Samhita (ENS) was held at Conference Hall, Baroo on November 20.

The training was organised by Ladakh Power Development Department (LPDD) under the guidance of Chief Engineer, PDD Tsewang Paljor in collaboration with The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI). The programme emphasized means of energy conservation in commercial and residential buildings as its consumption has tremendously increased in the country.

Both trainers shared their experiences and gave a detailed presentation on the pattern of electricity consumption in commercial and residential buildings in the country and designed interventions to bring energy efficiency standards to buildings.

Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) and Eco Niwas Samhita (ENS) are the set of guidelines developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power under the aegis of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 to bring energy efficiency standards to reduce energy consumption in commercial and residential buildings.

J.K Vyas and Shiv Kumar Batra presided as master trainers for the first day of a three-day training pro-

## Secretary Health met CEC Kargil, discusses issues in health sector

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Dr. Vasanthakumar Namasivayam, Commissioner/Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Union Territory Ladakh met Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun at Council Secretariat LAHDC Kargil on November 20.



Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Director Health Services UT Ladakh, Chief Medical Officer Kargil, & Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kargil were also present.

The shortage of doctors in district Kargil came under discussion and starting of DNB courses in the District Hospital Kargil, which the Commissioner/Secretary of Health assured to address the same in the near future.

The CEC also took the matter of augmentation of infrastructure, machinery, and equipment in District Hospital Kargil and equal share to the district Kargil in the health sector.

The CEC took the matter for the establishment of Urban PHC at the old District Hospital premises keeping in view the far lo-

calization of the New District Hospital. The Commissioner/Secretary Health assured that the Urban PHC shall be established and start its functioning shortly.

## District level role play competition held at DIET

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** District level role play competition was held among the students of higher secondary schools of Leh district under the National Population Scheme of NCERT on November 25 at DIET, Leh.



The themes of the competition were Growing up healthy, Nutritious Food and Well-being, Personal Safety (physical, Mental, Emotional and Sexual), Safe Use of Internet, Gadgets and Media Literacy, Substance Abuse and its Causes and Prevention.

Higher Secondary School Skurbuchan secured first position, while Higher Secondary School Tangtse secured second position and Higher Secondary School Baima secured third position.

of culture and tradition, Lundup Dorje expressed that social values can preserve through Role Play.

Chetan Angchuk, stressed that Role Play is best medium for the preservation of moral values and remove social stigmas.

Padma Shri awardee Morup Namgail, Culture Officer, Lundup Dorjai, and Artist (Theatre) Chetan Angchuk were the judges.

Principal DIET Leh Chetan Dorje assured to continue such programs in future.

## Meeting on resolving electricity issues in Kargil town held



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Kargil, Zakir Hussain chaired a meeting with concerned officials regarding the ongoing issues related to electricity supply in Kargil town and Shargole constituency.

During the meeting, EC Zakir was briefed about the ongoing works and current status of commissioned works by the Electricity Department.

EC directed the power

curtailment in peak hours must be resolved further he also highlighted the electricity issues of Tacha Karith, Garpoung Apatce, Baroo-Minjee, and Fokar Foo, which came to his notice during the recent tour.

Zakir Hussain reiterated to ensure uninterrupted power supply to Kargil town and Shargole constituency.

He added that all assistance will be provided by LAHDC to take up these concerns with the Power Secretary of the Government of India.

Executive Engineer, Electricity Power Division briefed about the scheme of Roof Top Solar Projects in the government offices & government institutions in detail.

## DC chairs meeting on mobile telecom saturation in Phobrang

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A meeting to discuss the saturation of Mobile Telecommunications in Phobrang village was chaired by Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve at VC Hall on November 23.

During the meeting, Councillor Chushul, Konchok Stanzin, provided a detailed overview of the current status of telecom services in Phobrang village, emphasizing the need for saturation to meet the growing communication demands of the local community.

He discussed various ob-

stacles hindering the saturation process and sought potential solutions to ensure seamless connectivity for the villagers.

Highlighting the concerns faced by the residents, Councillor Stanzin shed light on the challenges posed by the existing telecommunication infrastructure. Issues such as network connectivity, signal strength, and limited coverage were brought to the forefront, underlining the necessity for immediate intervention to bridge the digital divide in this remote region.

DC Leh, Sukhadeve, acknowledging the im-



During the meeting on saturation of Mobile Telecommunications in Phobrang village.

portance of reliable telecommunication services, expressed his commitment to addressing the challenges faced by Phobrang village. He stressed the need for collaborative efforts

between the local administration and telecommunication service providers to expedite the saturation process and ensure comprehensive coverage.

During the meeting, specific attention was also directed towards the status of Airtel services in Hemishukpachan and Hanu. DC Leh enquired about the current state of Airtel services, recognizing the significance of multiple service providers in enhancing competition and improving the overall quality of telecommunication services in the region.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Leh; General Manager, BSNL, Leh; Chief Technology Officer, JK & Ladakh, Manager, Bharti Airtel, Leh; Sarpanch and Nambardar Phobrang village.

## Kargil commemorates 75th Yom-e-Fateh anniversary



During the commemoration ceremony of the 75th anniversary of Yom-e-Fateh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** The commemoration ceremony of the 75th anniversary of Yom-e-Fateh, Liberation of Kargil from Pakistani intruders on 23 Nov 1948 was held at Kthree Sultan Cho Sports Stadium, Kargil on November 23.

The event was organised by Forever in the Operations Division of the Indian Army in collaboration with LAHDC, Kargil, District Administration, and Kargil Police.

The dignitaries paid tributes to the soldiers who laid down their lives for the nation by laying wreaths at the Kargil War Memorial at Helipad Kargil.

Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohammad Jaffer Akhoun salute at an impressive march past presented by Ladakh Police, NCC cadets, students of Harka Bahadur, Mutahary Public School Kurbathang, Govt. Boys High School Baroo, Govt. High School Baroo, students of SAI, and others.

Different tribes of Purgi, Shina, Balti, and Dardi presented cultural dances.

Guljabeen Fatima, a local rapper from Kargil presented her rap song on Indian Army and dedicated it to the Jawans serving on the borders. Hundreds of locals and army personnel participated in the program. Weapons and equipment were on display and a medical camp was established.

CEC paid heartfelt tribute to the valiant soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for the nation. He also extended sincere congratulations to the commendable Army Officers and soldiers on Yom-e-Fateh for their dedicated service.

He said that the Indian Army has not only safeguarded the borders of Kargil but has also played a pivotal role in advancing education, healthcare, and disaster management initiatives in the region.

He remarked that the event served not only as a tribute to history but also as a platform fostering a spirit of national building. This resonated with the resilient character that defines the community of Kargil.

He conveyed that the Army has been actively involved in training the youth, preparing them to participate in the Army and other recruitment processes throughout the Ladakh region. The CEC assured full cooperation and coordination with the Indian Army for addressing any kind of issue.

The event featured captivating presentations of patriotic songs that enthralled the audience. One of the major highlights of the day was the Khukri Dance performed by units of the Indian Army, symbolizing the formidable advance of The First Battalion of The Fifth Gorkha Rifles (1/5 GR).

The Liberation of Kargil has brought tremendous improvements to the region in the past 75 years. The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, the Kargil district administration, and the Indian Army have joined hands to bring out synergized and coordinated development that has met the aspirations of the local population.

## Five-day health & wellness program commences at DIET Leh



During the five-day Health & Wellness program at DIET Leh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Medical Department, Leh, in collaboration with DIET Leh launched the 10th batch of a five-day Health & Wellness program from November 28 to December 2. This initiative is part of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) aimed at enhancing the health of school children in Leh district.

Simultaneously, DIET Leh organised a virtual Core Group meeting for the School Leadership Academy. Assistant Professor at the National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration (NIEPA), Dr. Charu Malik, was the resource person for the session. The orientation program was attended by 11 Heads of Institutions and DIET faculty members. CEO Leh, Sonam Dorje Namgail, and DEPO Sonam Wangchuk also joined the session virtually.

The training program includes 31 Health & Wellness School Ambassadors who will undergo comprehensive sessions over the course of five days. Present at the inauguration were Dr. Jammila Bano, District Immunization Officer, Leh; Dr. Padma Angmo, State Nodal Officer for Mental Health; and Chetan Dorje, Principal of DIET Leh.

During the event, Principal DIET Leh, Chetan Dorje, highlighted the significance of leadership qualities among the heads of institution. He also presented the progress report for the current year carried out by SLA Ladakh.

## CEC, Kargil, discusses land compensation issues of Kargil-Zanskar National Highway



CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun discussing land compensation and other issues of Kargil Zanskar Highway, NH - 301 at the Council Secretariat.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun discussed land compensation and other issues of Kargil Zanskar Highway, NH - 301 at the Council Secretariat on November 28.

NHIDCL gave a detailed presentation about work progress achieved and compensation disbursed among the beneficiaries in various packages from Zone 1 to 8 at Kargil Zanskar National Highway NH 301.

They further informed that compensation for properties including the acquisition of trees, land, houses private properties has been done in various packages and is under the disbursing phase, further in the Zanskar sub-division 90 percent of the compensation money has been disbursed. Meanwhile, in other packages, the disbursing process is undergoing simultaneously.

During the meeting, public representatives raised and discussed various issues with NHIDCL. CEC directed SDM Sankoo and Tehsildar Sankoo, Taisuru, and Zanskar to pace up the process of land compensation and completion of other relat-

ed works by March 2024 in order to achieve hassle-free completion of the National Highway within the revised timelines.

Dr. Jaffer directed GM NHIDCL to personally monitor and supervise the work regularly to redress the issues of the public on the ground at the earliest possibility, also directed to work in close coordination with the local engineers for early completion of the works.

CEC asked DC Kargil and DFO to have a meeting immediately and revise the rates of popular trees so that people can get genuine compensation for their trees.

Dr. Jaffer directed NHIDCL to avoid unnecessary damage to public property and advised to construct breast walls at required places only. He also directed to repair of necessary khuls which are required for irrigation purposes adding that public assets should not be affected during the next irrigation session.

Regarding the CSR works of NHIDCL, CEC said after a thorough discussion on the proposals and meeting with DC Kargil, approved proposals will be submitted to NHIDCL for CSR works.

**NOTICE**

An application has been received from one Nema Lhamo D/o Tsering Dorjay R/o Achinathang UT Ladakh to transfer the vehicle No. LA 02 4299 owned by Deasal Angmo D/o Tsewang Namgyal R/o Spituk UT Ladakh. Now, it is therefore notified for general information that objection if any to the proposed transfer shall be filed in writing in the office of Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) within a period of 10 days from date of publication of this notice.

No: ARTO/ UT/L/2023-24/2608-09      Asstt. Regional Transport Officer  
Date: 25-11-23      Leh Ladakh

**NOTICE**

I, Nawang Choldan F/o Sonam Chospal R/o Kharnakling, Choglamsar, District Leh, UT Ladakh, declare that my son Date of Birth has been wrongly entered as 06-01-2008 instead of actual and correct Date of Birth 31-12-2007 in his Aadhaar card bearing no. 8264 8660 5748 and I'm applying for the correction in my son's Aadhaar Card.

*...continues from page 5*

**Sailing**—it involves a skate-like structure that harnesses the wind to propel across the ice. However, while such activities can be engaging, it's essential to recognize that they alone aren't the solution. They serve primarily to spread awareness. To truly combat environmental issues, people must actively engage and participate on the ground.

**Q. Once, you were found riding a horse around Leh, was it intentional to highlight another environment-related issue?**

While riding a horse nearby, multiple thoughts were triggered on how we could enhance pastoralism practices. Nomads typically traverse with their animals, so why not consider using horses for this purpose? It's disheartening to witness the plight of horses, abandoned and left to fend for themselves. In the past, they were instrumental in transporting army loads, but now they face threats from wild animals. There's a pressing need to utilize them as a mode of transportation as they don't contribute to pollution. Horses offer a sustainable means of travel, particularly in shepherding and pastoralism, reaching areas inaccessible to vehicles.

**Q. Any plans for a sustainable future without compromising the sensitive ecosystem?**

We are closely collaborating with the Center of Pastoralism, focusing on Changthang and developing a vision doc-

ument outlining the region's objectives for the next 20-30 years. The mountains harbor numerous resources like herbs and shrubs, often inaccessible to direct human consumption. However, goats and sheep play a vital role in converting these resources into essential products such as milk, meat, and wool. Previously, when yaks, goats, and sheep were more abundant, grassland was more prevalent. However, their declining numbers have led to a reduction in available grass. Their grazing activities contribute to soil fertilization and carbon enrichment in the grass. Grazed grass maximizes its potential and regrows upon multiple consumptions, prolonging its lifespan. This illustrates how pastoralism plays a role in sustainable farming practices.

I've proposed an experiment to the Lieutenant Governor regarding drone shepherding, exploring the integration of drone technology into traditional shepherding methods. The repetitive nature of shepherding, although an age-old tradition can be tedious. We aim to infuse innovation into this sector by introducing technical solutions. Instead of mundane manual tasks, there's potential to create inventive products like Pashmina, wool, and local cheese for the market. Despite being educated, many youths are unemployed and overlook pastoralism due to its perceived backwardness. By revitalizing traditional techniques and presenting pastoralism as a luxury through creative avenues, we hope to attract more young individuals to this field, albeit gradually, thereby fostering its improvement.



Advertisement

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 7 Days 6 Nights  
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**Thailand: Phuket 2N, Krabi 2N, Bangkok 2N**

**Tour Price Includes:**

- Cost of return economy class airfare from Delhi
- Cost of any internal airfare/cruise ticket as mentioned in the itinerary.
- Cost of visa as per the itinerary.
- Accommodation on twin sharing basis for the duration of the tour in the itinerary.
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary.
- Cost of Travel insurance up to 60 years of age
- Coach transfers from First day meeting point of the group to the last day of the dropping point of the group of the tour.
- All entrance fees of the sightseeing places mentioned in the itinerary.
- Services of the Tour Manager from first day to the last day of the tour.
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**Tour Price Includes:**

- Cost of return economy class airfare from Delhi
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- Cost of visa as per the itinerary.
- Accommodation on twin sharing basis for the duration of the tour in the itinerary.
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**BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE TOUR**



**Leh-Delhi-Lumbini-Sravasti-Kushinagar-Sarnath-Bodhgaya-Rajgir-Nalanda-Vaishali-Bylakuppe-Mundgod-Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves**

32 Days: January 14, 2024 to February 14, 2024

**Tour Cost includes :**

- Accommodation on a Sharing basis
- All Meals (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner)
- Tea, Coffee & Snacks
- Monastery Guide, 01 Male, 01 Female Tour Escort, Cook & Helper
- Leh/Delhi /Lucknow by Flight & Lucknow to Lumbini by Bus
- Patna/Bangalore by Flight
- Aurangabad to Delhi by Train
- Delhi to Leh by Flight
- All Transportation by 30-seater bus
- Monument Entrance Fees

**₹1,03,000 per person**



**Leh-Delhi-Kathmandu-Maratika-Lumbini-Sravasti-Kushinagar-Sarnath- Bodhgaya-Rajgir-Nalanda-Vaishali-Bylakuppe-Mundgod-Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves**

43 Days: January 3, 2024 to February 14, 2024

**Tour Cost includes :**

- Accommodation on sharing basis
- All meals (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner)
- Tea, Coffee & Snacks
- Monastery Guide, 01 Male, 01 Female Tour Escort, Cook & Helper
- Leh/Delhi by flight & Delhi /Kathmandu by flight/
- Volvo bus Patna/Bangalore by flight
- Aurangabad to Delhi by train
- Delhi to Leh by flight
- All transportation by 30-seater bus
- Monument Entrance Fees

**₹1,28,000 per person**

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