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In Conversation with
Abbas Nordakh, National Coach

In Focus:
Ladakhi language -- a lost battle

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REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

Owner, Publisher & Printer: Tundup Dorjey

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Designer: Stanzin Rabgyas (CAGO)

Published at: Reach Ladakh, Skara Yokma, Airport Road, near Councillor Quarter
Contact: +91 9858394403
+91 8899418322

Printed at: Ala Printing Press
3636 Katra Dina Baig
Lal Quan Delhi -110006

Kargil Vijay Diwas observed with solemn tribute in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The 26th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas was solemnly commemorated at the War Memorial at Singye Namgyal Chowk in Leh, as Ladakh paid heartfelt tribute to the brave hearts of the 1999 Kargil War. The ceremony honored the unparalleled courage, sacrifice, and service of the Indian Armed Forces in securing India's victory.



Photo Caption: Dignitaries during the 26th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas at the War Memorial in Leh.

Chief Secretary of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Dr. Kotwal paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of the Kargil War, highlighting the courage and resilience of the Indian Armed Forces during one of the most critical confrontations between India and Pakistan.

"We are gathered here today to honor the bravehearts who laid down their lives for our nation. The Kargil War reminds us of the unparalleled valor with which our soldiers defended every inch of our land," he stated.

He recalled key strategic points that were recaptured during the war and shared stories of heroism, including that of Param Vir Chakra recipients and Col. Sonam Wangchuk, Mahavir Chakra awardee, who was present at the event. Dr. Kotwal also emphasized the administration's commitment—alongside the Government of India—to support armed and paramilitary forces through initiatives such as Project Suraj and ongoing border infrastructure development. He further recognized the vital role of ex-servicemen in Operation Vijay and the recent Operation Sindoor, calling them pillars of strength for the Ladakhi community.

President of the Ex-Servicemen Association expressed heartfelt gratitude to the martyrs and their families. He also acknowledged the efforts of the Ladakh Administration and the Department of Tourism for organizing the event, which serves both to pay homage to the fallen and to educate youth about the significance of this historic day. The Association also requested that future events be held at a larger venue to better reflect the solemnity and scale of the occasion.

Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson offered a ceremonial wreath at the memorial and recalled the harsh conditions of the Kargil conflict and the immense bravery displayed by Indian soldiers.

He stressed that Kargil Vijay Diwas is not merely symbolic but a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made for India's sovereignty. He called on every citizen to contribute to nation-building by fulfilling their fundamental duties, noting that patriotism must extend beyond observance to active participation in the country's progress.

CEC also highlighted Operation Sindoor, recognizing the ongoing sacrifices made by the armed forces beyond the Kargil conflict. He paid special tribute to the families of martyrs, describing them as

the silent pillars of strength behind every soldier.

oing war veterans, senior officials, and citizens in remembering the soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for the nation.

Dr. Kotwal and the CEC honored Veer Naris, war veterans, and ex-servicemen who played pivotal roles during the Kargil War and other military operations.

Prominent dignitaries in attendance included the CEC LAHDC Leh, Deputy Commissioner Leh, SSP Ladakh, former MP Thupstan Tsewang, former CECs Rigzin Spalgon and Gyal P. Wangyal, Administrative Secretary Tourism Sanjit Rodrigues, Col. Sonam Wangchuk (MVC), ALTA President, BJP State President Tashi Khachu, and representatives of various religious and civil society organizations.

The commemoration served not only as a tribute to fallen soldiers but also as a powerful reminder that freedom is not free—it is earned through sacrifice, defended by courage, and sustained by collective responsibility. Kargil Vijay Diwas stands as a call to renew our commitment to the nation and to honor

...continues on page 2

Leh launches cervical cancer vaccine drive with blessings from His Holiness

Vaccine to be provided to girls aged 15–18 under LAHDC's preventive healthcare



Photo Caption: His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama launching Free Cervical Cancer Vaccination Drive with blessings.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a significant step towards preventive healthcare for adolescent girls in Ladakh, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama launched a Free Cervical Cancer Vaccination Drive at Jewetsal Photang, Choglamsar on July 27. The initiative is part of the LAHDC, Leh Subsidy Scheme 2025, implemented in collaboration with the Phande Lekjin Welfare Society and the Medical Department, Leh.

The campaign, aimed at adolescent girls aged 15 to 18, will provide the Gardasil-9 vaccine free of cost, particularly targeting underprivileged and school-going girls. The drive seeks to significantly

reduce the risk of cervical cancer through timely immunization.

The ceremonial launch was attended by several dignitaries, including Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson, Deputy Chairman Tsering Angchok, DC Leh Romil Singh Donk, CPO Tsewang Gyalson, OSD to CEC Deachen Chondol, CCF Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, CMO Dr. Dolma Chuskit, Medical Superintendent of SNM Hospital Dr. Rinchen Chosdon, and Urgan Gyatso from the Phande Lekjin Welfare Society.

Since schools are currently closed for summer vacation,

the vaccination rollout will commence on August 5, across sub-divisional hospitals in the district. The vaccine will be administered in two doses over a six-month interval, following national immunization guidelines.

This health initiative aligns with LAHDC Leh's declaration of July as the "Month of Compassion", commemorating the 90th birth year of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Throughout the month, various charitable and welfare activities have been organized across the district to embody the values of compassion, service, and care that His Holiness represents.

A particularly moving moment during the event was when Jigmet Dolma, a specially-abled student from CWSN School, Choshot Yokma, became the first recipient of the HPV vaccine. She received blessings from His Holiness, symbolizing the initiative's inclusive spirit and commitment to ensuring that no child is left behind when it comes to health and protection.

The campaign is being spearheaded under the leadership of Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson, whose commitment to youth welfare and public health was widely acknowledged during the launch.

Ladakh wins best adventure destination award at ITCTA 2025



Photo Caption: Kunzes Angmo, Director of Tourism receiving "Award of Ladakh as Best Adventure Destination" at 10th B2B International Tourism Expo.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Ladakh has been conferred the "Award of Best Adventure Destination" at the 10th B2B International Tourism Expo, Conclave & Travel Awards (ITCTA 2025), organized by the ICM Group in New Delhi as part of its Silver Jubilee celebrations on July 26.

The award was received by Kunzes Angmo (JKAS), Di-

rector of Tourism, UT Ladakh, and presented by Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, along with Pirzada Farooq Ahmed Shah, MLA, Jammu & Kashmir.

This prestigious recognition underscores Ladakh's unwavering commitment to sustainable and experiential adventure tourism, while celebrating its distinctive natural and cultural offerings.

Ladakh's growing reputation as a global adventure destination is rooted in responsible tourism practices, cultural immersion, and eco-conscious exploration, setting a benchmark for destinations aiming to balance adventure with environmental and cultural stewardship.

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Fortnightly News

Lt Governor Kavinder Gupta meets HoDs, delegations at KHALTSE

Reiterates UT administration's commitment to inclusive development



Photo Caption: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta convening a comprehensive interaction with Heads of Departments (HoDs) of the KHALTSE Sub-Division.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHALTSE: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, held a comprehensive interaction with Heads of Departments (HoDs) of the KHALTSE Sub-Division during his visit en route to Kargil on July 25. The session focused on departmental performance and developmental challenges in the region.

Upon arrival, the LG was received with a ceremonial guard of honour by Ladakh Police, accompanied by Councillor KHALTSE, Lobzang Sherab; Deputy Commissioner Leh, Romil Singh Donk (IAS); and SSP Leh, Shrutu Arora (IPS).

During the meeting, departmental HoDs briefed the LG on staffing levels and ongoing projects. A common concern highlighted was manpower shortage across various departments. Taking note, the LG instructed SDM KHALTSE, Mohd Sharief, to compile a detailed report along with actionable solutions.

Councillor Sherab raised key local issues, including the long-pending BSNL mobile tower installation, urgent approval of the Draft Sports Policy, and declining agricultural activity, urging policy-level interventions. He also

flagged the growing threat from stray/feral dogs, to which the LG assured appropriate action.

Later, the LG met with various delegations including monks from Lamayuru Monastery, President LBA Sham, Contractor Association Sham, Nambardars, and representatives of Youth and Women's Associations. The delegations submitted memoranda on critical concerns such as:

- Staff shortages across public offices
- Installation of CCTV at key village junctions amid rising theft cases
- Infrastructure upgrades at Govt. Degree College, KHALTSE
- Land disputes with the Army in Aryan Valley
- Demand for irrigation canal development

The LG gave a patient hearing and reaffirmed the UT Administration's commitment to inclusive and balanced development, assuring timely redressal of all genuine grievances.

The meeting was attended by Councillor KHALTSE, senior district officials, HoDs, and community representatives from across Sham region.

Special Secretary KK Pathak chairs review meeting on compliance reduction and deregulation in Ladakh

Meets industry stakeholders, discusses regional challenges and reforms



Photo Caption: Centre's Task Force on Deregulation and Compliance Reduction, chaired by a stakeholder consultation meeting in Leh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, KK Pathak, who also heads the Centre's Task Force on Deregulation and Compliance Reduction, chaired a stakeholder consultation meeting in Leh on July 24, alongside Chief Secretary of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal. The meeting reviewed ongoing efforts to simplify regulations and promote ease of doing business in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Sanjeev Khirwar opened the session with an overview of Ladakh's industrial landscape, highlighting key sectors such as tourism, food processing, pashmina production, and small-scale manufacturing. He noted the efforts since 2014 to streamline regulatory processes and make Ladakh more business-friendly. Khirwar also addressed regulatory hurdles and proposed reforms to support local entrepreneurs.

Stakeholders from various sectors presented their concerns and suggestions. The

tourism industry sought support in recovering from a recent downturn linked to external incidents and emphasized the need for improved infrastructure. Manufacturers from Kargil raised issues related to industrial land, storage, and distribution. Food processing entrepreneurs requested help with customs clearances and land allocation for export facilities. The pashmina industry advocated for GI tagging and the establishment of testing laboratories in Ladakh.

Responding to these inputs, Dr. Kotwal reiterated the UT Administration's commitment to local industry, emphasizing the importance of sustainable development tailored to Ladakh's climate and geography. He also pointed out that Ladakh industries operate within a short seasonal window due to harsh weather, necessitating intensive work during limited months.

In his closing remarks, KK Pathak acknowledged Ladakh's unique challenges and praised the visible progress made over the years.

"Ladakh is unlike any other region. I've witnessed its positive transformation over several visits. The submissions today are valid and necessary—the administration stands firmly with you and is committed to addressing these concerns," he said.

The second session focused on Deregulation and Compliance Reduction, including discussions on fire safety NOCs, building byelaws, and labour laws, based on the UT's priority areas submitted to the Task Force.

The Merchant strike isn't just about prices — It's about Ladakh's future

By Tsewang Nurbu

Ladakh has always flourished on a delicate balance — between tradition and change, between trade and trust, between the land and its people. But in recent years, that balance has begun to shift. The ongoing strike by the merchant association in Leh is not merely a protest over pricing — it is a powerful stand to safeguard our culture, economy, and collective dignity.

For generations, Ladakh's merchant community has been much more than just a network of shopkeepers. They have been cultural stewards — preserving local taste, oral traditions, and a way of life rooted in mutual respect and community values. From the neighborhood kirana stores to family-run general shops, these businesses are part of the very fabric that sustains Ladakhi identity.

Today, that ecosystem stands under threat.

The influx of large wholesalers and outside merchants has triggered a wave of economic disruption that Ladakh is ill-prepared for. These big players often sell at artificially low prices — operating at a loss just long enough to drive out local competition. Once the smaller businesses vanish, prices go back up. But by then, there's no one left to compete.

In Ladakh's context — with limited infrastructure and a small, close-knit consumer base — this model becomes not just unfair but deeply dangerous. A single powerful merchant can monopolize the entire market. And monopoly doesn't just stifle business; it erodes community well-being.

When local shopkeepers lose their livelihoods, it's more than lost income. It's a loss of status, of community participation, and of purpose. The ripple effect touches everything — from local food production and language preservation to the very warmth and trust that define our commerce.

More worryingly, the money that once circulated within Ladakh's borders is now flowing outward. When local merchants earn, they spend here. They hire locally. They invest in the community. But when external businesses take over, the profits exit — and seldom return. The result? A growing divide where a few gain, and the many lose — economically and emotionally.

And it's not just about rupees. It's about soul.

As every shop begins to look the same, stocked with the same mass-produced items, something uniquely Ladakhi fades. The smell of local goods, the sound of familiar greetings, the comfort of cultural continuity — all replaced by generic, impersonal transactions.

If this trend continues unchecked, we won't just lose businesses. We'll become dependent — on faceless monopolies that dictate price, quality, and availability. The same companies that undercut prices to win customers can later raise them without consequence. And the worst part? We'll have no alternatives.

This is why the strike matters.

It is not a rebellion against development. It is a demand for fairness. A plea to honour the dignity of Ladakhi entrepreneurs who have quietly powered the region for generations. It's a call to keep wealth within our region, to support diversity — not just in goods, but in the lived experiences that make our markets meaningful.

Ladakh doesn't need unbridled capitalism. It needs balanced growth — growth that uplifts everyone, not just those with the deepest pockets. This strike is more than a moment. It is a mirror — urging each of us to reflect:

What kind of Ladakh do we want to build?

Do we want a place where only the cheapest option wins? Or a region where people matter, culture thrives, and the marketplace reflects our shared values?

The answer lies in how we respond — now.

About the Author:

Tsewang Nurbu holds a B.Sc in Agriculture from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu (SKUAST). He currently owns and manages a hotel in Hunder, Nubra. You can reach him at: nurbulaychotness@gmail.com

Kargil Vijay Diwas observed with solemn tribute in Leh

the legacy of those who laid down their lives for its future.

Among the distinguished attendees were Former MP Thupstan Chhewang, Administrative Secretary (Tourism & Culture) Sanjit Rodrigues, DC Leh Romil Singh Donk, SSP Leh Shrutu Arora, Former CECs Rigzin Spalbar and Gyal P Wangyal, BJP State President Tashi Gyalson Khachu, BJP District President Stanzin Choshpel, AAP Convener Tsering Phuntsog (Retd. IG), District Congress President Rigzin Namgyal, Col. Sonam Wangchuk (MVC), ADT Leh Padma Angmo, Dr. Abdul Qayoom, President of Anjuman Moin-Ul Islam, P.T. Kunzang, President of ALTA, and several senior officers, all gathered to pay heartfelt homage to the heroes of the 1999 Kargil War.

Monastic representatives from 16 major monasteries across Ladakh were joined by Padma Shri Morup Namgyal, goba members, and a large gathering of devotees, adding to the spiritual and communal significance of the occasion.

CEC Tashi Gyalson, speaking on behalf of the people of Ladakh, congratulated H.E. Rinpoche, calling the enthronement "a moment of pride not only for the Drikung lineage but for all of Ladakh." He highlighted Rinpoche's commitment to education and social welfare, particularly in supporting institutions like Ratnashri School, which provides quality education and hostel facilities to children from remote areas. He assured continued support from LAHDC Leh in future endeavours aligned with Rinpoche's vision.

Ven. Konchok Tsepel, Nominated Sanga Councillor, called the day "truly historic," noting that H.E. Rangdol Rinpoche is the first Ladakhi among three Khanchens appointed since 1959. Ven. Dorje Stanzin, President of the Ladakh Gonpa Association, offered his congratulations on behalf of Ladakh's monastic community, affirming unity and deep reverence.

As the ceremony concluded, the enthronement of H.E. Khanchen Konchok Rangdol Rinpoche stood not only as a spiritual milestone but also as a call for unity, cultural preservation, and shared responsibility for Ladakh's future.

DC Leh chairs meeting on welfare of persons with disabilities

Reviews UDID implementation, screening camps, and inclusive outreach initiatives



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Deputy Commissioner Leh, Romil Singh Donk (IAS), chaired a review meeting on July 21 to assess the implementation of various schemes and targeted initiatives for the welfare of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The meeting was held at the VC Room of the DC Office, Leh.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Leh, Dr. Dolma Chuskit, presented a detailed overview of the Unique Disability ID (UDID) project. She informed the committee that the disability certification process has transitioned to an online platform, with a dedicated medical board responsible for assessment and certification. As of now, 1,260

disability certificates have been issued through the UDID portal.

Responding to queries from the DC regarding Community Health Centre (CHC)-level screenings and outreach efforts, the CMO reported that recent screening camps have been conducted at Kharmakling, with previous camps held in KHALTSE. Outreach activities are ongoing in both schools and community settings.

Chief Education Officer Leh informed that a comprehensive awareness schedule has been developed, and school-based campaigns will resume post-vacation.

DC Donk stressed the importance of expanding disability screening beyond schools to ensure greater accessibility and timely intervention. He instructed concerned officials to share detailed campaign schedules with his office for better coordination and monitoring. The meeting also discussed a proposal under the Accessible India Campaign, focusing on creating barrier-free infrastructure and promoting inclusivity in public spaces.

Indus river clean-up begins: UT Administration and LAHDC Leh mobilize forces

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, chaired a high-level meeting on July 29 to launch a comprehensive clean-up campaign along the Indus River, stretching from Upshi to Phey.

The meeting, held in collaboration with the Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, emphasized a mission-mode approach toward achieving "Zero Tolerance Against Pollution" in the sacred and vital Indus River.

The campaign was initiated following a proposal from the CEC, who had recently called for a high-level administrative meeting to enforce legal mechanisms in safeguarding the river. Dr. Kotwal underscored the collective responsibility of civilians, defense personnel, tourists, and local communities in maintaining the sanctity and cleanliness of the Indus, which serves as the lifeline of Ladakh. He stressed that this campaign should not be symbolic but should bring about measurable impact and lasting behavioural change.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized the urgent need to restrict the use of small plastic water bottles, advocating for a minimum 2-litre bottle standard to minimize waste generation. He directed that comprehensive awareness materials, including boards, advertisements, and pamphlets, be created to educate the public about the harmful effects of polluting the Indus. Noting the religious significance of the river, he suggested that religious leaders be engaged to influence and inspire the masses, as people often respond more readily to faith-based appeals.

Dr. Kotwal also emphasized the need for a strong legal framework to penalize those who pollute the river. He called upon paramilitary forces, the Indian Army, BRO, ITBP and the Indian Air Force to ensure the cleanliness of infrastructure areas along the riverbanks. Highlighting the importance of unity, he stated that success in any mission requires integrated and collaborative efforts.

The Chief Secretary instructed the Housing Secretary to deeply examine the functioning of treatment plants managed by the Air Force and civilian agencies and to prepare a detailed action plan for the campaign. He assured that all necessary equipment and machinery would be provided to concerned departments, if required, to strengthen enforcement and implementation.

Furthermore, Dr. Kotwal directed the Principal Secretary and Health Secretary to review hospital waste man-

agement systems to ensure that medical waste does not pollute the river ecosystem. He also stressed the importance of reviewing waste disposal practices followed by Army units, Air Force bases, ITBP camps, and BRO agencies across the district.

Deputy Commissioner Leh, Romil Singh Donk, elaborated on the two-week-long mission, mentioning that the campaign had already been discussed in a meeting chaired by the CEC with Goba and Nambardars from across the district. The mission will not only target the Indus but also focus on its tributaries like Zanskar, Singhey Lalok, and the Sham Valley. He added that the campaign will be a coordinated effort across all villages in the Leh district.

In his remarks, CEC Tashi Gyalson recalled spiritual appeals made in 2022 by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and, more recently, by Skyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche, urging Ladakhis to keep the Indus clean. He stressed that the Indus is not merely a water body but a sacred site and a lifeline to countless lives in the region. The CEC noted that a large public awareness campaign will be led by Nambardars of different villages and highlighted the exemplary work of Project Tsangda, which has been actively managing waste in many areas.

CEC Gyalson raised specific concerns such as chicken sellers in Choglam-sar dumping waste directly into the river and emphasized the urgent need for proper waste disposal facilities. He also highlighted instances of open defecation by workers associated with road projects like HIMANK and called upon the administration to ensure adequate sanitation facilities for them.

The CEC proposed the engagement of local entrepreneurs for plastic waste recycling to reduce dependence on external entities and encouraged strict action against wholesalers who fail to comply with environmental norms, including potential bans on their operations in Leh-Ladakh. He stressed the psychological and financial accountability of polluters and called for a robust enforcement mechanism.

As a major step forward, he announced that August 12th will be observed as a district-wide "Safai Andolan", involving all schools and villages, to reinforce the importance of cleanliness and environmental responsibility.

Deputy Chairman of LAHDC Leh also voiced concerns about the negligence of certain BRO contractors who leave behind construction debris and fail to dispose of waste from labour camps. He emphasized the need for immediate corrective measures in such areas.

...Continuity of page 1

Fortnightly News

LG Kavinder Gupta makes first visit to Kargil, pledges holistic development



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: On his maiden visit to Kargil, Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, interacted with various public delegations at Bodh Kharbu, Mulbekh, Shargole, and Pashkum, assessing development activities and gathering local feedback.

At Bodh Kharbu, the LG was warmly received by Chairman/CEC LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo, along with Executive Councillors Kacho Mohd Feroz and Zakir Hussain; Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar; SSP Shree Raam R; and other senior district officials.

Addressing the gathering, the LG expressed his delight at visiting Kargil and assured immediate relief for families affected by the recent cloudburst. A survey team has been formed to assess damages and initiate timely compensation.

Stressing holistic and inclusive develop-

ment, the LG called for active coordination among LAHDC, district administration, and civil society, with a focus on promoting tourism and youth livelihood opportunities. He assured that demands related to road upgrades, healthcare, education, lift irrigation, and other civic amenities would be carefully reviewed for resolution.

At Shargole, the LG announced the upgrade of the Primary Health Centre to a Community Health Centre and the establishment of a public administration complex to strengthen local governance. At Bodh Kharbu's Photang, he committed to supporting the construction of a guest house to accommodate visitors and dignitaries.

During a stop at the 8th-century Maitreya Buddha statue in Mulbekh, the LG received a warm welcome with traditional khataks, folk songs, and cultural performances. Local villagers requested his support for the conservation of the heritage site and development of the monastery premises. The LG assured necessary steps would be taken.

Chairman Dr. Jaffer Akhoo expressed optimism about equitable progress in both Leh and Kargil under the LG's leadership, stating that his visit signals a new era of inclusive growth and collaborative development in Ladakh.

Chief Secretary chairs review meeting on draft commercial rooftop solar policy for Ladakh



Photo Caption: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, chaired a high-level meeting on July 24 to discuss the draft Commercial Rooftop Solar Policy under the UT's Commercial Solar Scheme. The meeting aimed to formulate effective strategies to promote decentralized and clean energy generation through rooftop and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in Ladakh's commercial sector.

The concerned department gave a detailed presentation outlining the core features of the draft policy. The proposed scheme focuses on extending financial and operational support to commercial category consumers for adopting grid-connected solar PV systems.

Key components presented included the policy's objectives, consumer segmentation, system capacity limits, energy accounting, eligibility criteria, projected consumer growth, and subsidy allocation trends. It also covered important details on metering mechanisms, a generation guarantee clause, required documentation for subsidy claims, and system commissioning procedures.

During discussions, Dr. Kotwal stressed the need for a streamlined and inclusive

framework to maximize solar energy adoption. He proposed a "first come, first served" approach for beneficiary selection, rather than rigid eligibility conditions that may hinder participation.

He also recommended aligning the policy with national initiatives like PM Surya Ghar; Muft Bijli Yojana and emphasized onboarding only verified and serious applicants. Addressing procurement concerns, Dr. Kotwal questioned whether the policy mandates the use of Made-in-India solar panels and advocated for vendors with ALMM (Approved List of Models and Manufacturers) certification and proven performance records.

Highlighting the evolving nature of renewable energy systems and policies, he urged the department to incorporate flexibility without compromising implementation standards. He further directed officials to prioritize functional rooftops and genuine commercial entities, simplify application and verification processes, and promote carbon neutrality in the region.

Dr. Kotwal underscored that the initiative should benefit both the people and the environment, aligning with Ladakh's broader sustainable development goals.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner/Secretary Finance, Shri Lalinkhuma Franklin; IAS Administrative Secretary, Power Development Department & NRE, Shri Vikram Singh Malik; Chief Engineer (Generation), UT Ladakh; Superintending and Executive Engineers from PDD; Project Directors of LREDA and KREDA; Presidents of ALGHA (Leh) and AKTTA (Kargil); and other senior officials from relevant departments.

L-G Kavinder Gupta holds introductory meet with Councillors and HoDs in Kargil



Photo Caption: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, holding an introductory meeting with the Councillors of LAHDC Kargil.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, held an introductory meeting with the Councillors of LAHDC Kargil on July 27 at the Conference Hall, followed by a meeting with Heads of Departments (HoDs) of various departments in Kargil district.

Emphasising his commitment to fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to him by the Prime Minister, LG Gupta called for collective efforts by all stakeholders and the UT Administration to ensure the welfare and progress of the people of Ladakh. He stressed the need for effective implementation of centrally-sponsored schemes, including Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, to foster an inclusive and educated society.

Chairman/CEC Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo raised several key demands, including the granting of district status to Sankoo and Shakar-Chiktan, making Hill Council funds non-lapsable, the extension and resumption of civilian flights from Kargil Airport, and fast-tracking recruitment to address rising unemployment.

Councillor Silmoo and former CEC Feroz Ahmed Khan emphasised strengthening LAHDC as an institution and implementing a robust tourism policy. Executive Councillor Phunsok Tashi called for an increased Capex budget and the swift operationalisation of the Engineering College in Kargil.

During the HoD meeting, Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar (IAS), presented a detailed overview of ongoing development projects in the district. SSP Kargil, Shree Raam R (IPS), also shared a presentation on the achievements and initiatives of the Ladakh Police.

NHM Leh hosts training on psychosocial disaster preparedness for health professionals



Photo Caption: During the five-day capacity-building workshop on Psychosocial Care in Disaster Management – Health Sector Disaster Preparedness and Response.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A five-day capacity-building workshop on Psychosocial Care in Disaster Management – Health Sector Disaster Preparedness and Response commenced at the Conference Hall of the Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM) Leh on July 21. The workshop is being held under the Central Sector Scheme on Health Sector Disaster Preparedness and Response and is implemented by the Department of Psychosocial Support in Disaster Management (DPSSDM), NIMHANS, Bengaluru.

The initiative aims to enhance the capacity of health professionals—psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, counsellors, and medical officers—to effectively address the psychosocial needs of disaster survivors.

The inaugural session was presided over by Tushar Anand, Mission Director,

NHM Ladakh, who attended as the Chief Guest. He lauded the initiative for equipping Ladakh's health workforce with crucial knowledge and skills to manage the psychosocial dimensions of disaster response.

Day One featured technical sessions led by eminent experts in disaster mental health, including Dr. K. Sekar, Consultant, DPSSDM, and Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Manikappa, Principal Investigator and Associate Professor, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.

In his address, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar emphasized the need for strong mental health support mechanisms at all stages of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. He referenced global frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, highlighting their significance in building resilient, people-centric health sys-

tems.

Quoting the World Risk Report 2020, Dr. Sanjeev pointed out the rising frequency and intensity of global disasters—with 416 natural disasters recorded in a single year, resulting in over two million deaths. He also stressed the role of climate change in intensifying disaster risks and called for the integration of psychosocial care and disaster education into public health systems.

Participants were introduced to real-world case studies—including the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, pandemics, terrorist attacks, and civil unrest—while exploring vulnerabilities that amplify the impact of disasters, including psychological, social, economic, and environmental factors.

With this initiative, Ladakh becomes the 21st State/UT in India to implement such a program, marking a significant step in enhancing regional disaster resilience. A hands-on session led by Dr. Sanjeev featured live demonstrations of response techniques, offering frontline workers practical guidance on rapid and effective psychosocial interventions during emergencies.

The workshop will continue over the coming days, aiming to empower Ladakh's healthcare professionals to design, communicate, and implement timely psychosocial responses—thereby strengthening the region's disaster management and public health preparedness.

World's highest ultra-marathon successfully held at Umlingla Top



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Ladakh Umlingla Challenge 2025, part of the Summit or Surrender high-altitude race series, concluded successfully on July 21, bringing together elite endurance athletes from across India and Nepal to compete on the world's highest motorable road — Umlingla Top, at an altitude of 5,799 meters (19,024 ft), surpassing even the height of Everest Base Camp.

The ultra-marathon was flagged off at 7:00 AM on July 20 by Assistant Commandant Dr. Suraj of the 21st Battalion, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) at Umlingla Top. Runners competed in a range of categories — 70K, 50K, 42K, 21K, and 10K — all of which now rank among the highest-altitude road races in the world.

Notable participants included Anurag Saini and Manoj Kumar Shah of Nepal, both of whom had recently completed the Everest Marathon (approx. 5,300 m). The Umlingla Challenge marked a new milestone in their endurance journey, taking them even higher. Among the inspiring stories, Retired Brigadier Sanjay Dikhit (aged 64) emerged as the oldest participant, while Sushmita Jha became the first and only female finisher, completing the grueling 50K race.

The event served as a remarkable testament to

human endurance and willpower. All participants completed their respective distances within the designated cut-off time. Notably, around 40% of the runners hailed from Ladakh, underscoring the region's growing interest and participation in high-altitude endurance sports.

Participant Highlights:

- Anurag Saini (70K)
- Manoj Kumar Shah (70K)
- Sonam Choeden (50K)
- Sushmita Jha (50K)
- Bilal Ahmed (42K)
- Retd. Brig. Sanjay Dikhit (21K)
- Benedict Halley Vasakaran (21K)
- Jaffar Ali (10K)
- Javed Ahmed (10K)

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (21st Battalion), Indian Army (14 Corps), and Border Roads Organisation (BRO) extended logistical and operational support, ensuring the safety and success of the event in this remote, high-altitude terrain.

The organizers, Sarmang Society, extended heartfelt gratitude to LAHDC Leh, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner Leh, Ladakh Tourism Department, Chief Medical Officer Leh, Department of Youth Services and Sports, Education Department Leh, Ladakh Police, Councillor Nyoma Constituency, and ALOTA (All Ladakh Tour

Operators Association) for their administrative and promotional support.

This edition of the Umlingla Challenge marks a proud chapter in India's growing high-altitude ultra-endurance movement.

It reinforces Sarmang Society's mission to position India as a global destination for extreme altitude racing while promoting eco-conscious, responsible tourism in the trans-Himalayan region.

The Summit or Surrender series is India's premier high-altitude racing initiative by Sarmang Society, showcasing ultra-endurance events in the Himalayas with a strong focus on border awareness, environmental stewardship, and Himalayan pride. Current races under this banner include the Ladakh Umlingla Challenge and the Uttarakhand Mana Pass Challenge — the two highest ultra-marathons in the world.

The entire race was conducted under the expert direction of RRCA-certified Race Director Anil Mohan, Secretary of Sarmang Society and founder of Sarmang Adventure Tours. Volunteer operations were led by Pragati Rawat and Shivangee Rana from Team Sarmang, ensuring smooth execution across the demanding high-altitude course.

SDM Khaltse chairs preparatory meeting for Indus river cleanliness drive



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHALTSE: Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Khaltse, Mohd Sharif, chaired a meeting to review preparations for the upcoming cleanliness drive along the Indus River, scheduled for August 1 at 8:00 AM.

The meeting focused on detailed planning, coordination, and responsibilities to ensure the successful execution of the drive. SDM Mohd Sharif directed all officers and officials of the sub-division to participate and coordinate effectively, emphasizing that their involvement is mandatory.

He also instructed the Nambardar of Khaltse to ensure active participation of villagers. The tributaries and gorges to be cleaned by sub-divisional employees will be identified by the Nambardar.

The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer PWD Khaltse, Thinles Zangpo; Executive Engineer PDC Khaltse, Manzoor Hussain; BMO Khaltse, Dr. Shamim Ahmad; CDPO Khaltse, Shakila Bano; SHO Khaltse, Jamyang Namgail; BVO Khaltse, Dr. Zakir Hussain; BSHO Khaltse, Dr. Tsewang Dolma; ZEO Khaltse, Nawang Namgail; ARC Khaltse, Tsering Murup; Forest Range Officer Khaltse, Deskyong Namgyal; TSO Khaltse, Afzal Khan; Numberdar Khaltse, Stanzin Phurboo; Panchayat Inspector RDD Khaltse, Rigzin Yangjor; AEO Khaltse, Rigzin Dolma; JE PHE, Asif Mirza; JE I&FC, Skalzung Nurboo; and representatives from the Information and Horticulture Departments.

SDM Mohd Sharif urged all stakeholders to work collectively and sincerely to make the cleanliness drive a significant step toward environmental sustainability and community hygiene.

'Netra Mitra' mobile eye van launched in Leh to offer free eye care



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, convened a meeting on July 25 at the Council Secretariat to inaugurate and formally flag off the Sri Sathya Sai Netra Mitra, a free mobile eye clinic van, in the presence of Deputy Chairman Tsering Angchuk, dignitaries, senior medical officials, and key stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena, Founder and President of the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre; Dr. Gopi Krishna Pidatala, National Incharge for Special Projects of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations; Lakshmikant Sharma, National Youth Coordinator; Director of Health Services UT Ladakh, Tashi Thinles; Chief Planning Officer Leh, Tsewang Gyalson; Chief Medical Officer Dr. Dolma Chuskit; Chief Controller of Finance Dr. Zulfiqar Ali; Medical Superintendent of SNM Hospital Dr. Rinchen Chosdol; Deputy Medical Superintendent Dr. Jigmet Wangchuk; Padma Shri awardee Morup Namgyal; and a team of 10 doctors and 29 volunteers from the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation.

Dr. Gopi Krishna Pidatala highlighted that the mobile eye clinic represents the organisation's commitment to selfless service, guided by the philosophy of "Love All, Serve All." As part of the centenary celebrations of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, he also announced that 1,000 free cardiac surgeries would be offered to patients from Ladakh. Screening camps will be organised locally, and selected patients will be referred to hospitals in Rajkot and Ahmedabad for completely free treatment.

Lakshmikant Sharma expressed gratitude to the CEC and Venerable Sanghasena for their continued support and emphasized the organisation's

deep-rooted commitment to compassion, love, and service.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena acknowledged the efforts of the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation and appreciated the collaborative support from LAHDC Leh and the Mahabodhi Karuna Charitable Hospital in delivering essential healthcare to the underserved communities of Ladakh.

CEC Tashi Gyalson extended heartfelt appreciation to the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation for initiating this crucial programme. He praised the advanced facilities of the mobile clinic and underscored its role in delivering eye care to Ladakh's remotest regions. He also announced that LAHDC Leh is working towards launching a mobile cancer diagnostic van, reaffirming the Council's commitment to inclusive and accessible healthcare. As a mark of gratitude, the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation presented mementoes to the CEC, Deputy Chairman, and senior medical officers.

The Sri Sathya Sai Netra Mitra van, launched in collaboration with the Mahabodhi Karuna Charitable Hospital, is equipped with advanced ophthalmological diagnostic and screening equipment. It aims to provide free and accessible eye care services to the remote and high-altitude villages of Ladakh.

Following the inauguration, CEC Tashi Gyalson, Deputy Chairman Tsering Angchuk, and senior officials inspected the van and reviewed its medical facilities. The van was officially flagged off by the CEC, Deputy Chairman, Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena, Dr. Pidatala, and Lakshmikant Sharma. The initiative is part of the national campaign "100 Years of Love and Service," commemorating the 100th birth anniversary of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

In Focus:

Ladakhi language -- a lost battle

By Nawang Tsering Shakspo



For a long time, I have been a solitary campaigner, tirelessly advocating for the recognition of Ladakhi as a state or regional language—a status it held since the enactment of the Jammu and Kashmir State Constitution in 1957, alongside Balti, another prominent language of the region. This continued until the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir in 2019. Regrettably, both Ladakhi and Balti have now been relegated to the status of native languages following the enactment of the Ladakh Official Language Regulation, 2025, which granted official language status instead to English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti, and Purgi.

It is important to highlight that Ladakhi and Balti have historically played a vital role in fostering a rich literary and cultural environment in the region. In particular, the Ladakhi language has seen the publication of a wide range of works—anthologies, poems, plays, essays, fiction, novels, and historical writings. Ladakhi has long been the primary language used in both spoken and written forms across households. Even today, FM radio broadcasts Ladakhi songs, commonly referred to as Ladakh-se lu-yangs, and hourly Ladakhi news bulletins continue to air on Akashvani Leh and Doordarshan Leh. A vast corpus of folk literature also exists in the Ladakhi language, including folk songs and tales. Notably, epics like Gyalam Gesar and many narratives drawn from the Jatakas—the stories of Lord Buddha's previous lives—form an integral part of Ladakhi literary heritage.

Recognizing Ladakhi as a vibrant and rich language, the then Government of Jammu and Kashmir established a branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages in Ladakh in 1970. This move mir-

rored the setup of sub-offices in the twin capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar. Since its inception, the Academy has actively supported the publication and circulation of literary journals, anthologies, and books. By the time the Union Territory of Ladakh was formed, hundreds of titles had been published—both by the Academy and by individual Ladakhi writers. Within a relatively short period, several contributors to modern Ladakhi literature were honored with state literary awards by the J&K Academy. A milestone in this journey was the first-ever All-Ladakhi Language Writers' Conference, held in 1982 at Tagore Hall in Srinagar, which saw the participation of over a hundred Ladakhi writers and cultural workers.

Recognizing the rich potential of Ladakhi language and literature, the Sahitya Akademi—India's National Academy of Letters—also stepped forward to support it. Several Ladakhi writers were honored with the prestigious Bhasha Samman, acknowledging their contributions to the growth of the language. Additionally, the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore, undertook extensive socio-linguistic studies on Ladakhi for decades, engaging local writers and scholars in the process. This brief overview reflects the strong literary tradition and academic interest in the Ladakhi language that continued until the enactment of the new Official Language Regulation for the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2025.

In this context, I would like to highlight my own contributions toward the development of the Ladakhi language into a recognized and respected state and national-level language. I began my journey as a Research Assistant (Ladakhi) at the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and went on to serve as Assistant Editor, Editor (Ladakhi), and ultimately as Chief Editor (Ladakhi), dedicating thirty-three years to literary service beginning in 1975. During this time, through consistent effort and advocacy, I was able to persuade then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi—during a public address in 1989 alongside J&K Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah—to announce that Ladakhi would be introduced as a compulsory subject up to the 5th standard. A year earlier, in 1988, the Sahitya Akademi had already agreed in principle to grant Indian language status to Lada-

khi and subsequently nominated Ladakhi writers to its General Council. For a more detailed account of these efforts, I encourage readers to refer to my autobiography, *Autobiography of a Ladakhi*, published by the Centre for Research on Ladakh.

Under such circumstances, the Ladakhi language and identity—which I, along with a few dedicated writers and scholars, nurtured over the decades—was well on its way to meeting all the fundamental criteria for inclusion in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Drawing inspiration from the recognition granted to Dogri and Kashmiri—two regional languages of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, to which Ladakh belonged for over seventy years—we worked tirelessly to elevate Ladakhi to a similar status. However, the effort was ultimately undermined by internal divisions and shortsighted politics among certain Ladakhi writers. Instead of uniting behind the legitimate and historically rooted name Ladakhi, some began promoting the term Bhoti, a vague and linguistically ambiguous label with no formal recognition. This diversion diluted the movement and weakened our case. Had we rallied behind the authentic name without prejudice or confusion, Ladakhi could very well have achieved recognition as a state language and possibly been included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that a significant day-long seminar was held on July 22, 2023, at the historic Mausoleum of rGyalbibi in Karchey Khar, organized by the Purig Cultural and Literary Society, Kargil. The event saw active participation from a wide cross-section of society, including BDC Barsoo, Councillor Barsoo, Councillor Thusgam, along with numerous writers, poets, sarpanches, and panches from across Kargil. Prominent literary figures such as Kacho Isfynder Khan and senior bureaucrat Imtiaz Kacho were also in attendance. The seminar was held under the chairmanship of Feroz Khan, the then Chief Executive Councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Kargil. In his presidential address, Feroz Khan strongly advocated for “developing a consensus on

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From Ice to Fire: Ladakh's alarming rise in temperature

By Mahreen Khan



Ladakh, once aptly described as a cold desert, is a high-altitude Himalayan region known for its extremely low temperatures and scarce precipitation. However, with the rising temperatures across the Himalayas, that definition no longer seems fitting. The Land of High Passes is heating up—both literally and alarmingly.

Over the past few decades, Ladakh has witnessed a steady and concerning rise in temperatures. What was once considered a harsh, frozen landscape is now experiencing an unprecedented warming trend. Each summer, temperatures soar to levels previously unheard of, posing challenges not just to the local population but also to tourists drawn by Ladakh's unique climate.

This change is not merely anecdotal. Data collected over the past decade shows a consistent increase in average summer temperatures. Traditionally, Leh's summers ranged between 15°C to 25°C. In recent years, however, June and July frequently record highs of 30°C. On July 28, 2024, Chushot recorded an all-time high of 39.9°C, while Kargil touched 37.5°C. In June this year, temperatures peaked in the 40s—an anomaly in a region where frozen peaks, barren plateaus, and rugged terrain used to define the climate.

This scorching heat is affecting everyday life. Fans and air conditioners, once alien to the land of Maryul, have now become summer essentials. But the consequences go far beyond discomfort. Rapid glacier melt, drying streams, erratic rainfall, and an increase in flash floods are just a few of the environmental impacts. As glaciers retreat, they jeopardize water sources, agriculture, and hydroelectric power—lifelines for the region.

The rising heat is also impacting the socio-cultural fabric of Ladakh. Traditional architecture, designed to trap warmth during harsh winters, is now turning homes into thermal chambers. Buildings made with dhungmas (wood logs) and wooden floors, once an advantage, have become liabilities. Agriculture cycles are shifting, with crops like apricots particularly vulnerable. Even religious festivals and cultural routines are being disrupted due to changing weather patterns.

Tourism, a major economic pillar, is also bearing the brunt. Visitors who once sought relief in Ladakh's crisp mountain air are now met with heatwaves. The fragile ecosystem is under pressure, and health concerns like heat strokes and dehydration are rising among both locals and tourists.

Raising awareness within local communities is crucial. Ladakhis, who have lived in harmony with nature for centuries, hold traditional knowledge that can help build resilience. Integrating this wisdom with modern scientific approaches can lead to more sustainable, culturally sensitive climate solutions.

Global warming, rising carbon emissions, vehicular traffic to glacial zones, and unchecked greenhouse gases are driving this climatic crisis. Without urgent intervention, Ladakh risks losing not only its identity but also its ability to sustain life.

In conclusion, Ladakh stands at a critical juncture. A place once admired for its desolate, serene beauty is now on the brink of ecological disaster. The need of the hour is urgent, informed, and inclusive action. For if Ladakh burns, it's not just the Himalayas we lose—it's a blow to all of humanity.

(You can send your views and comments at mahreenkhan2004@gmail.com)

SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

You and the quality of life



We have but one life, and that is most precious. Therefore, it is important that we consider ourselves among the luckiest ones to have got human lives. As such, it is now our duty to give life the characteristics of a great quality that makes it shine, and we are happy to live it.

When we try to think deep into the essence of life, we find that the quality of life is a 'phenomenon' that is created by our own conscious, and maybe unconscious at times, efforts to make it better and more meaningful. Serious planning

on a conscious level is involved, and one has no way but to put in one's full might and resolve.

In the process of making life shine, you have to put yourself on a 'thinking track' so that the best of ideas and the best of solutions come your way; and by implementing them, you have the best of life. So, the need to make the process work efficiently and relatively quickly is of immense importance. You must know and understand that it is a 'do or die' situation, and that there has to be a little improvement in the quality of life or in the process of thinking.

At times, one 'falls into a low ebb'. That is but natural for most of us. What is needed is to realise this as a temporary phase as if it had come to test you and your resolve. You stand again and see what is it that can put you back on the track to an efficient life of quality. Time management could be one of such factors. You have to be your own manager of your time and deeds. Efficiency in doing the management system work well will bring in good results.

And, if you can keep your self-esteem high, that will work as a catalyst in your effort to do things of great wonder. This process involves several elements of improvement like self-confidence, self-efficacy and a sense of excitement to march ahead.

And, finally, one cannot but say that a good quality of life involves finding a welcome balance between your work, family and friends and others around you.

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

Fortnightly News

In Conversation with Abbas Nordakh, National Coach

Q. What initially inspired you to become a coach, and how has that journey shaped the way you lead today?

My journey began as a hockey player. I played hockey at the national level with minimal resources—we didn't even have certified coaches back then. It was sheer zeal and passion that drove me forward. Later, I became involved in the Mission Olympic Archery program. Around the same time, I had the opportunity to enroll at REC Kashmir as an engineering student, but I held onto a dream—to become the first Olympian from Ladakh. I chose to follow that dream.

With support from our local sports association, I began training in archery at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium (JNU), where I had access to top coaches. A few senior Ladakhis were already training there, and six of us from Ladakh joined as a new batch. After just three months of rigorous training, I won a silver medal at the national level in archery. Unfortunately, due to physical limitations, I had to pause my archery career. My coaches, recognizing my potential, guided me toward target shooting, and within a few months, I became the All-India Champion, winning again at the National Games in Bombay. However, due to a lack of proper equipment, my progress came to a halt.

I returned to Leh and resumed ice hockey recreationally. With the skills I had acquired, I competed at the national level once again. However, I realized that ice hockey was being actively played in only a few states and had limited scope in India, mostly restricted to the Army. I had a broader vision. I wanted to build something sustainable for future generations. So, I decided to become a coach.

Taking initiative, I went to Finland voluntarily to specialize in international ice hockey coaching. Upon returning to Leh, I announced a coaching camp on local radio, which was to be held at Kazoo Zing. For the first time, we trained 70 children using proper techniques. From that batch, I formed both men's and women's teams. With support from the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), we began international exposure tours to countries like Thailand and Taiwan. Gradually, our players began to improve.

The Canadian High Commission team often visited Leh and brought a film crew along. They made a documentary on me, highlighting that a certified Himalayan ice hockey coach exists. This documentary was shown to the Canadian National Ice Hockey Team. Eventually, word of mouth reached the coach of the LA Kings in the US, who expressed interest in visiting Ladakh to see my work.

Interviewed by Mahreen Khan



MESSAGE TO THE READERS
“Channel your child’s energy into something meaningful—like sports. It builds discipline, confidence, and resilience. While academics are important, holistic growth matters too. Sports improve mental and physical health, reduce stress, and teach life skills. Let’s stop seeing sports as optional and start treating them as essential to a child’s future.”

When he came to Leh, I requested that he bring some second-hand gear, as such equipment is scarce here. We hosted a 10-day camp, and with his help and the new gear, our players' skills noticeably improved. We also established a cultural exchange program, enabling eight of our players—including two girls—to travel to the US and train with his team. That trip was eye-opening. We realized how far behind we were—not just in skill, but in access to strength and conditioning programs, physiotherapy, gym support, and professional coaching infrastructure. It gave us a completely new vision for the game.

While in the US, I also taught yoga—a skill I had cultivated over the years. The fusion of yoga and ice hockey intrigued many. Recognizing its value, I was offered a job. I accepted, as ice hockey in Ladakh is seasonal and lasts only 2–3 months each year. During my time in the US, I completed coaching certifications from USA Hockey, progressing from Level 1 to Level 4 and becoming a certified national-level coach.

I spent 10 years in the US, but my story started on the ice of Ladakh. My dream has always been to inspire others and ignite that same passion I once felt. Today, as a coach, that dream continues to shape how I lead—with vision, resilience, and the commitment to building something greater for the next generation.

Q. Could you walk us through your professional journey as a coach in ice skating, including where you have offered your coaching expertise and the competitive platforms your students have participated in under your mentorship?

Before my departure to the US, I began incorporating ice runs into my players' training—not just to boost stamina for ice hockey, but also to introduce them to the fundamentals of speed skating. Our efforts soon paid off: two female and two male players excelled at the national level, leading to a historic milestone. For the first time, athletes from Ladakh earned the opportunity to represent India internationally at the Junior Championship in Romania in 2005. The following year, in 2006, two of our junior boys represented India at the Asian Championship in Taiwan in speed skating.

After returning from the US in 2017, I observed that while ice hockey had made considerable progress in Ladakh, speed skating remained underdeveloped. Determined to change that, I began working at the grassroots level to lay a strong foundation in the sport.

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Fortnight Highlights



A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for the launch of Project “Odzer,” a collaborative initiative to provide free and quality spectacles to school students across Leh district. The project is a joint venture of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh; Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Leh; Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust, Mumbai; and ONESIGHT Essilor Luxottica Foundation, Mumbai.



The 4th edition of the CEC Cup Polo Tournament concluded on July 20 at the historic Shagaran Polo Ground in Chuchot, with the Ladakh Scouts securing a thrilling victory in the final match.



Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the 1999 Kargil War on the occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas at the Drass War Memorial.



The Shakti Yatra ‘Wheels of Valour’ Bike Rider Team, comprising 30 passionate riders- 22 women and 8 men, riding from Jammu to Rezagla in Eastern Ladakh, met Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, at Raj Niwas, Leh.



SECMOL defeated the Ladakh Women Polo Association with a final score of 5–1 at Polo Ground, Shagaran, Chuchot, Leh, as part of the 4th CEC Cup Polo Tournament 2025.



As part of the month-long observance, the Department of Youth Services and Sports distributed food to stray dogs—stretching from the office premises to Shey village—underscoring a strong commitment to animal welfare.



Kavinder Gupta sworn in as the third Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh on July 18 at the Durbar Hall of the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat. The oath was administered by Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.



CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun, met with the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Omar Abdullah and submitted a comprehensive memorandum highlighting pressing public welfare concerns of the people of Kargil district.

Fortnightly News

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In Conversation with Abbas Nordakh, National

Our first participation in the National Speed Skating Championship in Gurgaon didn't bring home any medals, but it laid the groundwork. The following year, we earned our first medal. By our third appearance, we proudly secured three medals—marking steady progress and demonstrating the growing potential of Ladakhi athletes in speed skating.

Parallel to this, we participated in the Khelo India Winter Games held annually in Gulmarg. We won medals every year, and during the fourth edition—hosted in Leh—we made a significant leap by clinching 13 medals. In the fifth edition, Ladakh topped the leaderboard among 13 participating states, which was a remarkable achievement in such a short span of time.

At the international level, one of my players made it to the Indian team and won a gold medal at the Asia Cup held in Jakarta. Another major highlight was the Southeast Asia (SEA) Trophy held in the Philippines, where I had the honour of leading Team India as Head Coach. Out of the 25 players representing India, seven were from Ladakh—a proud moment that showcased the rising talent from our region. Team India won a total of 30 medals at the event, 10 of which were earned by Ladakhi athletes (3 gold, 3 silver, and 4 bronze).

Our most recent milestone came at the 20th National Ice Skating Championship, held at the Olympic-sized ice rink in Dehradun. With participation from 21 states and over 450 skaters, it was one of the most competitive editions to date. Despite the tough competition, Ladakh emerged strong, winning 13 medals and finishing third overall in the national rankings.

The current President of the Indian Ice Skating Association, who is also the former Vice President of the Asian Skating Union and a member of the Indian Olympic Association, has taken note of the rapid progress. With his support and the rising performance of our athletes, we have high hopes for Ladakhi representation in the upcoming Asian Games in the field of speed skating.

Q. Kudos to you and your students who have managed to clinch 13 medals with such limited resources. As we know that Leh has a narrow window of just 2 to 3 months for ice skating, what were the major challenges you faced as a coach, and what measures can be introduced for upcoming competitions?

Thank you. Yes, the journey has been incredibly challenging but equally rewarding.

In 2020, I conducted a talent hunt at Gupuks and began an ice skating camp at the individual level—without any equipment. We didn't have proper figure skating gear, so we started our journey using ice hockey equipment. It's important to understand that the three major ice sports—Speed Skating, Figure Skating, and Ice Hockey—each require different gear and differently designed rinks. Despite these significant limitations, we pushed forward.

One of our major challenges was that many competitions wouldn't allow us to participate without regulation-specific gear, which we simply didn't have. This has been a constant barrier. Unfortunately, government support has been minimal. In terms of equipment, we've received zero aid, even though our students have consistently brought home medals at both national and international levels. These kids—national gold medalists and international champions—are progressing solely through the dedication of their families and their own love for the sport.

I am deeply committed to their journey. I see their dreams as my own and have never charged a single rupee in coaching fees. While the government does reimburse a portion of our travel expenses—about 60–70%—the rest we cover ourselves. A major issue is that during road travel, many small restaurants and dhabas where we stop don't provide GST-compliant bills, which makes reimbursement difficult. That's where most of our out-of-pocket expenses go.

I have also raised this concern with the Member of Parliament, requesting the formation of a Sports Association for UT Ladakh. My suggestion was to allocate a dedicated budget for each sport played in the region. From such a budget, we could manage equipment procurement, refreshments, training camps, and more to improve performance standards. However, there has been little progress or concrete initiative on that front so far.

Given the limited 2–3 month ice window in Leh, we utilize off-season camps for strength and conditioning. These sessions are designed to train our athletes holistically, ensuring their practice rhythm and physical momentum continue year-round. Even without ice, we prepare them as athletes so they're ready to perform when the season returns.

In Focus: Ladakhi language -- a lost battle

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adopting Ladakhi as the state language," echoing the suggestions made by scholars from Leh like Nawang Tsering Shakspo and Khenpo Konchok Phandey.

Unfortunately, over time, our collective efforts to establish Ladakhi as the state language lost momentum, as proponents of the term "Bhoti" succeeded in influencing key political and religious institutions. Leaders of the BJP Ladakh unit, along with organizations such as the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), Ladakh Gonpa Association (LGA), and numerous literary bodies and individuals, were swayed by the Bhoti campaign. Further support came from the then Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brig. B.D. Mishra, who had previously served as the Lt. Governor of Arunachal Pradesh and was seemingly influenced by the longstanding demand for Bhoti language recognition by Himalayan Buddhist communities outside Ladakh. Aligning with that perspective, he backed the initiative of BJP's former Lok Sabha MP, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, who introduced a private member's bill in Parliament seeking the inclusion of Bhoti in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

Despite these developments, I did not abandon my struggle. Taking the legal route, I filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court. In the petition, I challenged the unilateral decision of the LAHDC and relevant government departments to rename school textbooks—originally titled Tibetan Reader, Pot-Yig, or Ladakhi Reader—as Bhoti Textbooks. In a significant development, the Chief Justice acknowledged the merit of my plea and issued a show-cause notice to LAHDC Leh, directing them to justify the name change within one month.

Maybe the LAHDC, Leh, responded to the court notice but I was not granted a chance to show my position in reference to the LAHDC, Leh. The Chief Justice later issued a letter to me on 07.03-2025 stating that the petition (application) does not warrant to be registered as Public Interest Litigation.

Following that dramatic turn of events, the President of India, through an official notification, granted state language status to Bhoti and Purgi, effectively replacing Ladakhi and Balti. Ironically, the original demand by the campaigners was for Bhoti to be included in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution, but it was ultimately accorded only a district-level language status. In many ways, the outcome was akin to the proverbial saying: "Khoda pahad, nikla chuha"—a mountain was dug, only to yield a mouse.

What was even more telling was the complete absence of celebration across Ladakh. There were no signs of jubilation, no spontaneous public joy. That silence, more than anything else, speaks volumes and leaves one with much to reflect upon—and much to question.

NOTICE

I, Namgyal Dorje S/o Tashi Rigzen R/o Skurbuchan, Leh UT Ladakh do hereby notify that my name has been wrongly recorded as Namgyal Dorjei instead of correct and actual name Namgyal Dorje in my ST Certificate duly issued by Khaltse Tehsil Office, Leh UT Ladakh with Registration No. 445-448/ BCG/ ST/ K/ 2019 and Dated on 30 -10-2019. Now, I'm applying for changes in my ST Certificate and objection, if any may be conveyed to Khaltse Tehsil Office, Leh UT Ladakh within 07 days from the date of publication.

NOTICE

Whereas, Shahida Bano D/o Vilayt Ali R/o Horzey, Leh has claimed that her father's name has been wrongly recorded as Vilayt Ali instead of the correct name which is Vilayt Ali in her Ladakh Resident Certificate duly issued by Tehsil Office, Leh-Ladakh. Now, I am applying for the correction in my Ladakh Resident Certificate. Objection, if any may be conveyed to Tehsil Office, Leh within 07 days from the date of publication.

NOTICE

Whereas Tsering Angdus S/o Rigzin Wangtak, Date of Birth 22-05-1967 R/o Skara, District Leh UT Ladakh, has claimed that his father's name has been wrongly entered as Phunchok Tsering instead of actual and correct name which is Rigzin Wangtak in my passport bearing Number K5585658 and I'm applying for the correction in the passport. Objection, if any may be conveyed to Regional Passport office, Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication.

NOTICE

I, Tsering Chorol D/o Tsetan Dorje & Padma Tsomo R/o Lamayuru, Leh UT Ladakh claim that my father's name has been wrong recorded as Chhetan Dorje instead of correct and actual name Tsetan Dorje in my 10th Marks card duly issued by Central Board of Secondary Education through Army Public School Leh under Roll 2261108 with Registration No. C113/04469/0004 and Session Annual 2011-2013. Now I am applying for the correction in my 10th marks card. Objection if any may be sent to the CBSE Regional Office, Sector 5 Panchkula-134109 (Haryana) within 7 days from date of publication of this notice.

In the face of all these challenges, our passion remains unshaken. With proper institutional support, Ladakh can become a powerhouse for winter sports in India.

Q. Ice hockey has long been in the spotlight in Leh, but ice skating is now gaining recognition with notable achievements. What are your thoughts on this shift, and how might it impact the future of winter sports in the region?

In 2005 and 2006, we proudly represented India in the World Championship and Asian Games in ice skating—and even brought home medals. Yet, not a single word of appreciation came from either the government or the public. I even approached the Information Department to help share our achievement, but there was no acknowledgment.

Today, however, I see a gradual shift, and I'm working actively to ensure that our players get the recognition they deserve. I've reached out to FM stations and media platforms, requesting them to highlight the accomplishments of these athletes. This visibility not only honours their efforts but also inspires other young kids who are passionate about winter sports.

One of the key distinctions between ice hockey and ice skating lies in the structure of the sport. In ice hockey, success depends on the collective performance of the entire team. In contrast, ice skating is an individual sport where a single athlete can potentially win up to four medals across different events. This makes ice skating a highly promising discipline in terms of medal prospects.

Another encouraging development is the growing support from parents. More families are beginning to allow their children to explore and pursue their interests in winter sports. I believe that as Ladakhis, we've long taken our natural ice and environment for granted. It's time we recognize it as a blessing and an opportunity.

With the right support, training, and exposure, Ladakh has the potential to become a powerhouse in winter sports—especially in international platforms like the Asian Games and the Olympics. The shift toward ice skating is not just timely—it's necessary for the broader growth of winter sports in the region.

Q. Has your coaching philosophy changed over time? Do you coach every player the same way, or adapt based on their personality?

My coaching philosophy has always been rooted in adaptability and genuine care. I believe that just because a player takes longer to grasp techniques doesn't make them any less capable than someone who learns quickly. Every athlete under my guidance receives equal opportunity, attention, and support.

Each child learns at their own pace—and that, I've found, is often a hidden strength. Those who take time to master a skill tend to internalize it more deeply, which benefits them when they move on to advanced techniques. Their foundation is strong, and that helps them progress faster in the long run.

To support continuous growth, I've also introduced regular summer camps that focus on both physical conditioning and mental preparedness. These camps, held every other month, have significantly improved the athletes' form, control, and confidence by the time they return to the ice in winter.

Q. What is your message to the parents?

My message to parents is simple: channel your child's energy wisely.

Many children are naturally active and full of energy. Instead of letting that energy go unmanaged, it's important to redirect it into something productive—like sports. Sports are not just about physical fitness; they build discipline, improve decision-making, foster resilience, and teach children how to handle pressure—skills that are vital in life, both on and off the field.

We're all aware of the growing risks of children being drawn toward unhealthy distractions. Rather than waiting for problems to surface, why not be proactive and involve them in structured, meaningful activities that contribute to their overall growth?

Today, many parents focus solely on academics and tuition, often overlooking the need for holistic development. Overburdening children with studies can lead to stress and burnout. In contrast, sports help improve physical health, mental well-being, daily routine, and even eating habits.

It's time we stop treating sports as optional. A strong foundation in sports can be just as valuable—if not more—than academic achievement in shaping confident, focused, and healthy individuals.

45 motorized tricycles distributed to differently abled beneficiaries in Leh



PHOTO CAPTION: DC Leh Romil Singh Donk (IAS) along with officials from PFC and ALIMCO distributing motorized tricycles to differently abled beneficiaries.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a significant step toward improving mobility and inclusion, the District Social & Tribal Welfare Department, Leh, in collaboration with the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Mohali, and the Power Finance Corporation (PFC), organized a Motorized Tricycles Distribution Camp at Nari Niketan, Ibex Colony, Leh.

The event was graced by Deputy Commissioner Leh, Romil Singh Donk (IAS) as the Chief Guest, with Ali Shah, Executive Director of PFC, serving as the Guest of Honour.

A total of 45 motorized tricycles were distributed to eligible beneficiaries aged 16 and above with over 60% disability. Each tricycle can travel approximately 42–45 km on a single charge, making them especially beneficial for navigating Ladakh's challenging terrain. The total value of the distributed tricycles amounted to ₹27 lakh.

In his address, DC Romil Singh Donk com-

mended the initiative and urged ALIMCO to ensure timely servicing and maintenance support for the beneficiaries. He encouraged recipients to reach out to the administration for any further assistance or support.

Suresh Kumar Naidu, General Chief Manager of PFC, highlighted the initiative as part of PFC's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts. He appreciated the groundwork done to identify deserving beneficiaries in Ladakh's remote and difficult environment.

Ishwinder Singh, ALIMCO representative, conducted a practical demonstration on the safe usage and maintenance of the tricycles, ensuring that the recipients are well-informed about their new mobility aids.

The event concluded with the formal handover of the tricycles, marking a meaningful step toward empowering persons with disabilities and promoting inclusive development in the region.

Fortnightly News

DC Kargil reviews development projects and education status in Zanskar division



Photo Caption: Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar, convening a comprehensive review meeting with Block Development Officers (BDOs) of the Zanskar Division.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ZANSKAR: Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar, convened a comprehensive review meeting with Block Development Officers (BDOs) of the Zanskar Division on July 23 to assess the progress of ongoing developmental works under various schemes including the Capex Budget, CCDA, MGN-REGA, and other state sector initiatives.

During the meeting, the DC directed concerned officers to submit a detailed inventory of all ongoing and proposed works, clearly categorized under respective schemes with their current status and expected timelines for completion. Special focus was given to the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), with the DC seeking updates on the availability and functionality of segregation vehicles and other sanitation infrastructure.

DC Rakesh Kumar emphasized the importance of reassessing

project estimates to ensure transparency, feasibility, and optimal fund utilization. He also stressed the need for quality execution and announced plans for on-site inspections and random verifications during his next visit to the region.

In regard to the education sector, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the Zonal Education Officer (ZEO), Zanskar, to prepare a comprehensive report covering key indicators such as the student-teacher ratio, school infrastructure status, dropout rates, academic performance, and areas needing targeted intervention.

The meeting was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zanskar Mohammad Hassan, ZEPO Education Tsegwang Dorjay, BDO Lungnak Tundup Dorjay, BDO Zanskar Mohd Ali, and AEE REW Samina Ali.

CEC Kargil engages with parents of specially abled children, assures inclusive infrastructure and support



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, held a meeting with parents and specially abled students at his office on July 21 to discuss issues related to educational access and inclusive facilities.

During the interaction, the delegation shared the challenges faced by differently abled children, particularly in accessing education and navigating the current school infrastructure. They emphasized the urgent need for inclusive and supportive systems within the educational framework.

Dr. Akhooon assured the parents that the concerns raised are a top priority for the Hill Council. Expressing his personal commitment, he promised that concrete steps would be taken to improve conditions and ensure equal opportunities for all children.

He informed the delegation about an ongoing construction project—a

dedicated hostel for specially abled students being built near the Council Secretariat. The facility, with an approved budget of ₹48.91 crore (₹4891.16 lakhs), is designed to provide barrier-free infrastructure and amenities tailored to the needs of differently abled children.

Additionally, Dr. Akhooon announced plans to introduce a special transport service for students, which will become operational upon the hostel's completion.

To further strengthen support mechanisms, the CEC revealed his intent to convene a high-level meeting involving the District Magistrate, Director of Social Welfare, Chief Medical Officer, and other key stakeholders. The goal is to explore and implement additional initiatives for the welfare of specially abled children across Kargil district.

CEC Kargil reviews land compensation and NH-301 road work



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, CEC, LAHDC Kargil on July 22 held a key meeting to review land compensation and infrastructure issues related to the NH-301 Kargil-Zanskar road project.

The meeting was attended by ED PRO Ladakh Rajendra Prasad, Additional Deputy Commissioner Imteaz Kachho, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Jahangeer Akhooon, SDM Sankoo, EXN SVD Sankoo, General Manager of NHIDCL, contractors from Top Line, and officials from the Revenue Department.

Officials from NHIDCL briefed the

CEC on the progress of the roadwork, which is ongoing at various locations.

Dr. Akhooon stressed that compensation should be given for the entire structure, even if it is only partially damaged, to ensure fairness. He said the full value of the house must be recorded in official documents.

He also instructed the ADC, ACR, and SDM Sankoo to ensure the remaining compensation is disbursed quickly.

The CEC asked NHIDCL to monitor site engineers and workers closely to avoid misinformation. He also appreciated NHIDCL's efforts in maintaining the quality of work and their commitment to the project.

Dr. Akhooon announced that a meeting with the Deputy Commissioner of Kargil will be held soon to resolve remaining issues at some project sites. He also requested ED PRO Rajendra Prasad to visit the sites and review the progress in person.

L-G Gupta launches ₹180 crore projects in Kargil, vows accelerated development



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The District Administration Kargil hosted a welcome event for Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on his maiden visit to the district at the Auditorium Hall on July 27. During the event, LG Gupta virtually laid foundation stones and e-inaugurated multiple infrastructure and irrigation projects worth ₹180.24 crore.

Among the major projects inaugurated or launched were:

- Construction of a 300-metre double-lane motorable bridge over the Suru River with pedestrian pathways (₹76.10 crore)
- A 25m span motorable bridge with a link road from Shakardo to Zungthang (₹5.29 crore)
- A 30m steel plate girder bridge at Brakfos Ayet Hagnis with approach roads (₹4.80 crore)
- A motorable bridge over the Lungnak River at Testa Lungnak (₹4.39 crore)
- Upgradation of the link road from NH-301 to Khows Namsuru (₹24.04 crore)
- Widening and upgradation of Namsuru-Tangole Road (₹38.42 crore)
- Construction of an irrigation canal from Paldar Takpo to Tashi Stongday (₹7.70 crore)
- Installation of 50 solar submersible pumps for irrigation purposes (₹19.50 crore)

Addressing the gathering, LG Gupta affirmed the Government of India and UT Administration's commitment to realizing the developmental aspirations of Kargil. He emphasized that

the projects launched demonstrate that Kargil is on the path of rapid development. He reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to the welfare of remote regions and highlighted the significance of the recent decision to designate five districts in Ladakh.

LG Gupta also shared insights from his interactions with delegations in Kargil and Drass, noting positive feedback on the ongoing developmental efforts. He highlighted road and air connectivity, including the opening of the Zoji La Tunnel, as critical priorities, calling it a future game-changer for year-round access. He also mentioned ongoing efforts with the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to facilitate the resumption of civilian flights from Kargil Airport.

On tourism, LG Gupta stressed the need to strengthen road infrastructure to boost Ladakh's tourism economy and generate livelihood opportunities for local youth.

Chairman/CEC LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, while appreciating LG Gupta's visit, stressed the need for District status for Sankoo and Shakar-Chiktan. Extension of the civil airport at Kargil, Establishment of an Agriculture University, Upgrading the District Hospital to a 200-bedded facility.

Member of Parliament from Ladakh, Mohamad Haneefa Jan, also welcomed LG Gupta and shared the people's optimism regarding inclusive development under his leadership. He reinforced demands for resuming civilian air services from Kargil.

Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar, apprised the LG of recent accolades earned by the Municipal Committee Kargil. SSP Kargil, Shree Raam R., IPS, delivered the vote of thanks.

The event witnessed participation from LAHDC Councillors, Executive Councillors, MP Ladakh, heads of religious and social organizations, civil society members, sectoral heads, HoDs, and cultural troupes from Kargil's diverse ethnic communities.

Five-day assessment camp for specially abled and senior citizens concludes in Kargil



Photo Caption: Beneficiaries undergo medical and technical evaluations during the five-day disability and senior citizen assessment camp at CHC Drass.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

DRASS: A five-day outreach and assessment camp aimed at empowering persons with disabilities (Divyangjans) and senior citizens concluded on July 21 at the Community Health Centre (CHC), Drass.

The camp was organised under the joint aegis of the District Social and Tribal Welfare Department and ALIMCO, Chandigarh in collaboration with the Health and Education Departments Kargil.

In a commendable effort

to ensure inclusivity and accessibility, the camp was held at five key locations across the district—Auditorium Hall Kargil, CHC Sankoo, PHC Barsoo, PHC Trespone, and CHC Drass. The multi-site approach ensured that individuals from even the most remote areas could benefit from the services without the burden of travel or logistical hardship.

Expert technical teams from the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Mohali, conducted com-

prehensive assessments of each beneficiary. These evaluations will guide the distribution of customised assistive aids, tailored to individual needs. At the final leg of the camp held at CHC Drass, approximately 25 individuals were assessed. In total, nearly 130 persons across the district received professional evaluations over the course of the five days.

The camp marks a significant step forward in extending dignity, mobility, and independence to individuals who often face barriers in daily life. The identified beneficiaries will soon receive a range of assistive devices—including wheelchairs, hearing aids, artificial limbs, motorised tricycles, walking sticks, and other essential aids—completely free of cost.

The officials highlighted that the distribution of these devices will commence shortly after procurement and processing are completed.

Free geriatric health camp held at Housing Colony, Leh

80 elderly patients benefit from AYUSH-led initiative



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Directorate of Ayush, under the National Ayush Mission, UT Ladakh, successfully conducted a Free Geriatric Health Camp at the Community Hall, Housing Colony, Leh, on July 24 and 25. The two-day camp aimed to promote holistic health and well-being among the elderly by offering free Homoeopathic consultations and medicines.

Around 80 senior citizens benefitted from the camp. Two Homoeopathy doctors from SNM Hospital, Dr. Rubina Jabin and Dr. Stanzin Noryang, provided dedicated consultations and individualized treatment plans.

On July 24, nearly 50 patients were treated for ailments such as joint pain, migraine, indiges-

tion, IBS, and vertigo. On July 25, about 30 patients sought help for issues like headaches, muscle pain, high blood pressure, and leg swelling. Free Homoeopathic medicines were distributed based on diagnosis.

The camp not only addressed immediate health needs but also raised awareness about the benefits of AYUSH, especially Homoeopathy in managing chronic and age-related illnesses. The initiative was well-received by the community and appreciated for its focus on elderly care and preventive health.

The Directorate of Ayush reiterated its commitment to accessible, community-based healthcare through such outreach programs.

20 NCC cadets embark on Siachen trekking expedition



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The maiden NCC trekking expedition to the Siachen Base Camp was flagged off on July 21 by Brigadier Deepak Sajjanhar, SM, Commander NCC Group Srinagar, from the iconic Hall of Fame War Memorial in Leh.

The expedition comprises 20 cadets—10 girls and 10 boys—from the NCC Directorate of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. The cadets underwent a four-day acclimatization program in Leh from July 17 to 21. During their stay, they visited various historical and heritage sites, gaining insights into the rich cultural legacy of Ladakh and the valor of Indian war

heroes.

As part of the expedition, the cadets will visit the Partapur Brigade, where they will interact with senior commanders and decorated war veterans. They will be the first NCC group to trek to the Siachen Base Camp, where they will receive training in rock craft and ice craft before undertaking the trek.

The expedition aims to provide the cadets with exposure to the highest battlefield in the world, instill mountaineering skills, and inspire them to consider careers in the Armed Forces.

CEC Kargil reviews ₹98-crore multi-level parking project near old taxi stand



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Chief Executive Councillor of LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, chaired a high-level meeting on July 24 to assess the feasibility of a ₹98-crore multi-level car parking facility proposed near the old taxi stand in Kargil town.

The meeting was attended by Executive Councillor Kachho Mohammad Feroz, Deputy Commissioner and CEO LAHDC Kargil Rakesh Kumar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Imteaz Kachho, Executive Engineer R&B, Executive Officer Municipal Committee, and representatives from GPS Green Building Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi—the consulting agency for the project.

A detailed presentation was given by the consulting firm, outlining the proposed design and amenities. The structure will comprise four levels, with the top floor dedicated to commercial use. The facility will also include green spaces, modern toilet facilities, and lift access. The project is to be executed in two phases: Phase I estimated at ₹56.79 crores and Phase II at ₹41.56 crores. Upon completion, the parking complex will accommo-

date around 300 vehicles.

CEC Dr. Akhooon appreciated the consultant and departments involved, stating that the facility will help ease chronic traffic congestion in Kargil's main market. He instructed the ADC to initiate the process for dismantling old structures currently occupying the proposed site to facilitate timely execution.

Dr. Akhooon further proposed installing an LED screen at the project site to display a 3D visual of the design and benefits, aimed at enhancing public awareness and transparency. He stressed the need to submit the Detailed Project Report (DPR) to the competent authority at the earliest to secure administrative approval and begin construction without delays. Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar suggested that the fourth floor be developed as a food court to attract the public, noting its potential as a scenic, elevated space. Technical discussions were also held to refine design features and ensure optimal public convenience and long-term functionality of the parking facility.

FORM VI
(See Sub-Rule 1 of rule 25 and Section 11(1) of the Act 30/2013)
Office of the Collector/Special Collector (LA) Preliminary Notification

No. LA-05/99/2025/2025 Date: 23-7-2025

Whereas it appears to the Administration that a total of 20 kanal 17 marla land is required in the Village Phyang/Tabal Leh District Leh for public purpose, namely to establish Interstate Transmission System for evacuation of Power from GW Renewable Energy Projects at Phyang Ladakh.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in the Village Phyang/Tabal Leh District Leh a piece of land measuring 20 kanal 17 marla whose detail description is as following is under acquisition

S. No.	Khasra No. (Survey No.)	Type of land	Area under Acquisition	Area under Revenue	Area under Forest	Area under Other	Area under Unutilized	Area under Vacant	Area under Other	Area under Unutilized	Area under Vacant	Area under Other	Area under Unutilized	Area under Vacant	Area under Other
1.	999000002	Private	02 08	02 08											
2.	999000003	Private	02 08	02 08											
3.	999000004	Private	02 08	02 08											
4.	999000005	Private	02 08	02 08											
5.	999000006	Private	02 08	02 08											
6.	999000007	Private	02 08	02 08											
7.	999000008	Private	02 08	02 08											
8.	999000009	Private	02 08	02 08											
9.	999000010	Private	02 08	02 08											
10.	999000011	Private	02 08	02 08											
			24 01	24 01											

This notification is made under the provisions of Section 11 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Act no. 30/2013), to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Collector on any working day during the working hours. The Administration authorizes SGM/Treasurer and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in section 12 of the Act.

Under sub-section (4) of section 11 of the Act, no person shall make any transaction of or in any land the subject of this notification, or create any encumbrance on such land from the date of publication of this notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objections to the acquisition, if any, may be filed by the person interested within 60 (Sixty days) from the date of publication of the notification as provided under section 15 of the Act before Collector.

Place: Leh
Date: 23/7/2025

Collector, Land Acquisition/
Assistant Commissioner (Rev), Leh

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The collage features several elements: a calendar for October 2024, a newspaper page with the title 'REACH LADAKH BULLETIN' and a photo of a person, a website screenshot with 'ADS' and 'ADVERTISMENT ON REACH LADAKH' text, a Havells advertisement with 'OFFER 20-40% off', a J&K Bank advertisement with a QR code, and a Euro Kids advertisement for 'Start your Child Early Education with The Pre-School Experience'. A central yellow box contains the contact information.