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In Conversation with
Deachen Chamga President, All Ladakh
Moravian Christian Association

In Focus:
Trend of AI Music in Ladakh: Convenience or Cultural
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Thousands welcome His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in Leh



Photo Caption: Artists and people gather along the roadside to welcome His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Thousands of devotees accorded a warm welcome to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama upon his arrival in Leh on June 28. His Holiness is scheduled to stay in Ladakh for around two months.

Among those who received His Holiness were President of the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) Chering Dorjay; Vice President of the Ladakh Gonpa Association Geshe Lobzang Tashi; Rinpoches; monks and nuns from various monastic communities; leaders of different religious communities; and hundreds of other dignitaries.

LBA President Chering Dorjay said that Ladakh feels blessed by the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He informed that during his two-month stay in the region, His Holiness will primarily rest and recuperate following his recent knee surgery.

Chering Dorjay further stated that the schedule for His Holiness's public teachings has not yet been finalized. The dates will be announced once they are confirmed by the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Meanwhile, preparations are underway for the grand celebration of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's 91st birthday on July 6 at the Jivetsal Teaching Ground in Leh. Since His Holiness is currently in Ladakh, this year's celebrations are expected to be particularly significant.

Vice President of the Ladakh Gonpa Association, Geshe Lobzang Tashi, appreciated the people who gathered along the roadside from the airport to Choglamsar to welcome His Holiness. He said that the people of Ladakh are fortunate to receive the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama every year.

Leh observes Youm-e-Ashura with solemnity and reverence



By Dechen Dolker

LEH: Youm-e-Ashura, the 10th day of the Islamic month of Muharram, was observed with solemnity and reverence in Leh on June 26, commemorating the supreme sacrifice of Imam Hussain and his companions in the Battle of Karbala.

Thousands of mourners participated in the Youm-e-Ashura procession, gathering to grieve and pay tribute to the sacrifice of Imam Hussain and his companions. The mourning was expressed through recitations of lamentations, chest beating, and prayers, honouring Imam Hussain's stand against cruelty and his commitment to truth, justice, and the preservation of humanity. Speakers at the gathering highlighted that the message of Karbala extends beyond mourning and grief, serving as a reminder of the moral responsibility of individuals and the collective duty to resist injustice and cruelty.

Sheikh Zain-ul-Abidin, President of Majlis-e-Uluma, emphasised that the sacrifice of Imam Hussain was made to uphold humanity and elevate the moral con-

science of society. Quoting the importance of moral responsibility, he said, "Whichever community one may belong to, without the presence of an individual's moral conscience, the community cannot stand tall for long. Thus, the lessons of Karbala encourage people to stand against injustice, irrespective of religion."

He stressed that the message of Ashura remains relevant in promoting unity and harmony among communities.

On the occasion, Alamdar Health Services once again continued its humanitarian initiative by successfully organising its annual blood donation camp, a practice it has maintained since the 2000s, inspired by the teachings of Imam Hussain.

Members of the organisation informed that several other welfare projects are also underway. Speakers and officials present at the event appreciated the efforts of blood donors and volunteers, stating that blood donation reflects the spirit of selfless service and sacrifice associated with the

teachings of Imam Hussain.

The guests and officials acknowledged the contribution of Alamdar Health Services in supporting patients and responding swiftly to emergency blood requirements across Ladakh. In a geographically challenging region like Ladakh, they emphasised the importance of maintaining adequate blood reserves and recognised the organisation's role in encouraging voluntary blood donation.

More than 50 units of blood were donated during this year's camp. Several regular blood donors were also awarded and felicitated with mementos in recognition of their continued efforts and contribution to society.

Concluding the event, speakers reiterated that the true message of Karbala lies in unity, brotherhood, service to humanity, and maintaining a strong moral commitment to justice. They stressed the need to carry forward the values of Imam Hussain and his companions, who stood united for compassion and resisted inhumanity.

Ladakh cracks down on illegal off-roading in wildlife areas, ₹2 lakh penalty imposed on four tourists



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Taking stringent action against illegal off-roading and irresponsible tourist activities in ecologically sensitive areas, the Ladakh Administration, on the directions of Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, has for the first time initiated prosecution and imposed hefty penalties on offenders violating wildlife protection laws.

On June 26, the Wildlife Department of Ladakh imposed a penalty of ₹50,000 each on four vehicle owners found violating provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act. The offenders, from Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh, were penalised for illegally driving their vehicles into Pangong Lake and other protected wildlife areas in Changthang and Nubra.

A total penalty of ₹2 lakh was recovered from the four offenders, reaffirming the Administration's commitment to protecting Ladakh's fragile ecosystem, wildlife habitats, and natural heritage. Cases of illegal off-roading, stunts, and

reckless driving in sensitive landscapes have increased in recent times. However, this marks the first instance where strict penalties have been imposed against such violations. All four vehicles were seized after investigation and released only after the offenders deposited the penalty amount.

The action followed violations detected by wildlife officials during routine patrolling and through social media monitoring. The cases were reported from four locations under the Leh Wildlife Division—Merak and Lukung along the sensitive shores of Pangong Lake, Nurboo La in Hanle, and Sumur in Nubra Valley.

Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena reiterated that Ladakh welcomes visitors from across the country and the world but urged tourists to act responsibly and remain environmentally conscious. He cautioned that entering protected wildlife habitats not only disturbs endangered species and damages fragile ecosystems but also threatens the ecological balance and sanctity of these destinations.

In the latest incident on June 23, wildlife officials detected a Mahindra Thar (PB 11DD 7773) being driven into the waters of Pangong Lake near Merak for stunt purposes. The vehicle was seized after the driver was found prima facie guilty under the Wildlife (Protection) Act.

...continues on page 2

Union Ministers Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Sanjay Seth highlights youth power, border development during visit to Phobrang



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

PHOBHRANG: Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and Labour & Employment, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, along with Minister of State for Defence, Sanjay Seth, visited Phobrang village in Changthang district of Ladakh on June 27 and interacted with participants of the Viksit Vibrant Village Programme (VVVP).

The programme was organised at the Community Hall, Phobrang, in the presence of State Director, MY Bharat Ladakh, Tajam-ul Ara; Deputy Commissioner, Changthang, Nitish Rajora; officials from MY Bharat, Indian Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), civil administration, local representatives and villagers.

The programme commenced with the rendition of Vande

Mataram, followed by the National Anthem, setting a patriotic tone for the event.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya reiterated the commitment of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports towards achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. He stated that the youth of India are the nation's greatest strength and will play a decisive role in transforming India into a developed nation by the centenary year of Independence.

Highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, Dr. Mandaviya said efforts are underway to nurture one lakh young leaders from non-political backgrounds who can drive positive social transformation through service, innovation and community participation.

He encouraged young citizens to register on the MY Bharat Portal and actively contribute to nation-building initiatives. He informed that over 3.20 crore youth have already joined the platform and are participating in volunteering, leadership development and community service activities.

The Minister urged participants to become ambassadors of positive change by promoting cleanliness, environmental conservation, social harmony, innovation and active citizenship in their respective regions. He said programmes like VVVP strengthen emotional integration by connecting youth with India's border communities and fostering a sense of national pride and responsibility.

Dr. Mandaviya also encouraged participants to carry forward the experiences gained during the programme and inspire other young people to contribute towards the goal of a developed India.

Addressing the gathering, Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth appreciated the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for conceptualising initiatives like the Viksit Vibrant Village Programme. He stated that India's border villages are not the last villages of the country but its first villages, representing India's strength, courage and identity.

Seth said that exposure to frontier

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Union Ministers Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Sanjay Seth highlights youth power, border development during visit to Phobrang

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regions helps youth understand the sacrifices and resilience of local communities and armed forces personnel who safeguarded the nation's borders under challenging conditions. He urged participants to carry the message of national unity, patriotism and service to their respective states and encourage more youth to contribute towards the development of border areas.

The Ministers also interacted with villagers and ITBP personnel, appreciating their dedication, resilience and contribution towards safeguarding the nation's borders while preserving the unique cultural heritage of the region.

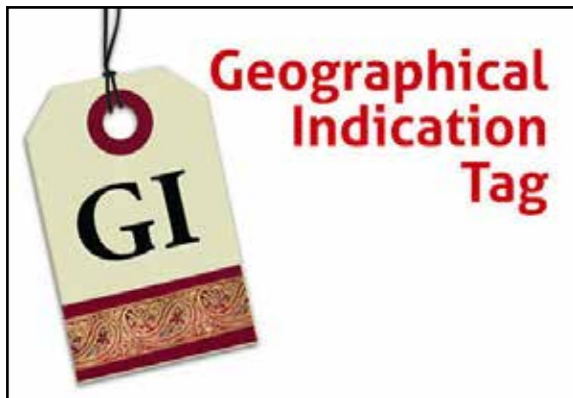
Earlier, delivering the welcome address, Deputy Commissioner Changthang Nitish Rajora highlighted the significance of VVVP in promoting national integration by connecting youth from across the country with India's vibrant border villages.

Participants shared their experiences of living and interacting with the local communities of Phobrang. They expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and MY Bharat for providing them an opportunity to understand the strategic, cultural and social importance of border villages. They described the programme as a transformative experience that strengthened their sense of patriotism, national unity and commitment towards nation-building.

A colourful cultural performance by a local Ladakhi troupe showcased the region's rich heritage, traditions and folk culture, which was appreciated by dignitaries and participants.

A plantation drive under the nationwide "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign was also organised outside the Community Hall, where Ministers, dignitaries, participants and local residents planted saplings, reaffirming their commitment towards environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Eight traditional Ladakhi products receive GI Tag, boosting cultural heritage and artisan economy



expressions while enhancing their visibility in national and international markets. A Geographical Indication tag provides legal protection to products associated with a particular region and acknowledges their unique qualities, reputation, and cultural significance linked to their place of origin.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, said the conferment of GI status on these traditional products was a matter of immense pride for the people of Ladakh.

"These recognitions are not merely certifications; they are a tribute to the centuries-old craftsmanship, artistry, and cultural heritage of our people. Each product reflects the creativity of our artisans and the unique identity of Ladakh," he said.

He added that the GI tag would provide global recognition, authenticity, and protection to artisans while creating economic opportunities and helping safeguard Ladakh's distinctive traditions.

The newly recognized products represent diverse aspects of Ladakhi culture, lifestyle, and craftsmanship. The Lieutenant Governor lauded the dedication and skills of artisans, cooperatives, and cultural custodians whose efforts contributed to achieving this milestone.

The latest registrations add to Ladakh's growing portfolio of GI-tagged products. Earlier, Raktsey Karpo Apricot, Ladakh Pashmina, and Shing-Tsak had received GI recognition, highlighting the exceptional quality and uniqueness of Ladakh's agricultural and artisanal products.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a significant milestone for the preservation and promotion of Ladakh's rich cultural and artisanal heritage, eight traditional handicraft products from the Union Territory have been granted the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The recognition further strengthens Ladakh's identity as a repository of indigenous knowledge, craftsmanship, and centuries-old traditions.

The newly registered GI-tagged products include Ladakh Challi Textiles, Ladakh Thigma, Ladakh Painting, Pabu of Ladakh, Ladakh Nambu Textile, Ladakh Pashmina Textile, Ladakh Chilling Metal Work, and Ladakh Likir Pottery.

The GI recognition marks a major achievement in safeguarding Ladakh's traditional crafts and artistic

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan visits Ladakh, pays tribute to armed forces and highlights heritage



Photo Caption: At the Hall of Fame War Memorial in Leh, the Vice-President paying homage to the brave soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Vice-President of India, C. P. Radhakrishnan, on June 20 visited the Hall of Fame War Memorial, Sindhu Ghat, Pashmina Goat Farm at Upshi and the first rock check dam on the Sindhu River during the second day of his official visit to the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, accompanied the Vice-President during the visits.

At the Hall of Fame War Memorial in Leh, the Vice-President paid homage to the brave soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces and lauded their unwavering commitment to the nation. He said the spirit of "Nation First: Always and Every Time" displayed by the armed forces inspires every citizen with a deep sense of patriotism and gratitude.

The Vice-President appreciated the Indian Army for establishing and maintaining the memorial, which preserves the legacy of courage, valour and sacrifice of India's soldiers. He also visited galleries depicting military operations during the Indo-Pak and Indo-China wars and noted that they stand as enduring reminders of the dedication and heroism of the Armed Forces.

Later, the Vice-President visited the sacred Sindhu Ghat near Leh and offered prayers on the banks of the River Sindhu. He observed that the Sindhu River remains a timeless symbol of India's civilizational heritage and cultural unity, inspiring generations through its enduring legacy.

During his visit to the Pashmina Goat Farm at Upshi, the Vice-President was briefed on initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting Ladakh's unique Pashmina heritage. Appreciating the efforts of the institution, he said that Changthangi goats and the world-renowned Pashmina produced from them represent the rich traditions, skills and ingenuity of the people of Ladakh.

He commended the farm's contribution towards sustainable livestock management and socio-economic empowerment of local communities, particularly women engaged in Pashmina production and allied activities. The Vice-President appreciated the efforts of scientists, staff and local stakeholders in strengthening rural livelihoods, enhancing women's economic participation and preserving this valuable heritage for future generations.

During his visit to Upshi, the Vice-President also inspected the first rock check dam on the Sindhu River, constructed under the Sindhu Jal Samridhi Abhiyan. Appreciating the eco-friendly and cost-effective initiative, he described it as an innovative and locally suited solution to address Ladakh's recurring water challenges.

The Vice-President lauded the vision and leadership of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena for conceptualising and spearheading the initiative. He noted that the project helps augment water levels in shallow stretches of the Sindhu River, enabling farmers to irrigate fields during the crucial sowing season.

He observed that such sustainable interventions can significantly enhance water security, support agricultural livelihoods and contribute to the long-term development of Ladakh.

Later in the day, the Vice-President interacted with personnel of the 5th Battalion of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in Ladakh. He lauded their professionalism, dedication and commitment towards safeguarding the nation's frontiers under some of the most challenging conditions.

The Vice-President is on a three-day official visit to Ladakh from June 19 to 21, 2026. During the visit, he will participate in the International Day of Yoga celebrations on June 21, 2026.

Ladakh cracks down on illegal off-roading in wildlife areas, ₹2 lakh penalty imposed on four tourists

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Similarly, on June 21, a Hyundai Creta (UP 81DD 4592) was intercepted and impounded after a video surfaced showing it being driven off-road near Lukung along Pangong Lake within the Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary.

Earlier, on June 20, a Mahindra Thar (PB-65BL-8698) was found driving through a stream inside the Karakoram (Nubra-Shayok) Wildlife Sanctuary. The vehicle was later traced and seized at Kharu on June 21.

Another case involved a Toyota Fortuner (HP 37H 7888), which was seen in a viral video being driven off-road near Nurboo La inside the Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary on June 17. The vehicle was traced with the help of police and seized from Hanle on June 18.

Following due proceedings, all four offenders paid the penalty of ₹50,000 each and their vehicles were released. The Lieutenant Governor emphasized that off-road driving within or near protected areas is a punishable offence under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and warned that strict action will continue against violators.

L-G Saxena marks 100 days in office with inauguration of water reservoir under project Him Sarovar

Reaffirms commitment to water security, sustainable development and people-centric governance in Ladakh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, marked the completion of 100 days in office by inaugurating a newly created water reservoir under Project Him Sarovar at Spituk Pharka in Leh on June 21. The initiative is expected to revive agricultural activities in the area and strengthen water security in the high-altitude region.

The reservoir is the first of four water bodies being developed at the site under Project Him Sarovar. The remaining three water bodies are nearing completion and are expected to be operational soon.

Soon after assuming charge as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh on March 13, Saxena adopted a mission-mode approach to address the region's water scarcity challenges and enhance long-term water sustainability. As part of this vision, Project Him Sarovar was conceptualised and launched on April 10.

The newly completed reservoir at Spituk Pharka, located at an altitude of 11,500 feet, was completed within 60 days. Measuring 60 metres by 40 metres and two metres deep, the water body has a storage capacity of nearly 60 lakh litres and is expected to provide irrigation support to ag-

ricultural fields in the Spituk area, which remained barren for decades due to water shortages.

Local residents, led by the Numberdar (village head), expressed gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor, stating that the initiative was unprecedented in Ladakh and would significantly contribute towards water security, agricultural development and sustainable livelihoods in high-altitude villages.

Addressing the gathering, LG Saxena described Project Him Sarovar as a historic initiative aimed at efficient water management, climate resilience and the overall prosperity of the people of Ladakh. He said the project represents a scientific and practical solution to one of the region's most pressing challenges water availability.

Saxena appreciated the efforts of engineers, field staff and local communities for completing the reservoir ahead of schedule. He noted that the project, initially planned for completion in 90 days, was completed in just 60 days, reflecting the commitment and dedication of all stakeholders.

The Lieutenant Governor said the

inauguration of the reservoir on the completion of his 100 days in office symbolised the Administration's focus on converting vision into action and delivering tangible benefits to people within a time-bound framework.

Highlighting the importance of public participation, Saxena said that the true strength of Ladakh lies in its people and that sustainable development can only be achieved through community involvement and collective ownership.

Speaking about key achievements of the Administration, he highlighted the Sindhu Jal Samridhi Abhiyan, under which Ladakh's first Himalayan Rock Check Dam has been constructed to improve water and agricultural sustainability. Four more check dams are planned under the initiative. He also mentioned the revival of the 43-kilometre Igoo-Phey Canal and the 2.1-kilometre Mahey Canal, which are expected to boost irrigation and agricultural productivity in high-altitude areas.

Reiterating his commitment towards environmental protection, LG Saxena said that preserving Ladakh's fragile ecology remains a priority of the Administration. He informed that more than 35,000 saplings have been planted in the first 100 days, contributing towards a greener and more climate-resilient Ladakh.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted initiatives undertaken to promote tourism, strengthen livelihoods and accelerate economic growth, including simplified licensing procedures for hotels and tour operators, digital integration of 23 government services across 13 departments under Ease of Doing Business reforms, agreements for export of Ladakhi apricots, livelihood support for border villages, development of Chumur under the Vibrant Village Programme and preparation of Ladakh's first-ever Master Plan.

Parliamentary Committee led by Dr. Shashi Tharoor visits Kargil, pays tribute at War Memorial



Photo Caption: Member of Parliament Dr. Shashi Tharoor paying tribute at the war memorial.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: A Parliamentary Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs, headed by Member of Parliament Dr. Shashi Tharoor, arrived in Kargil on June 24 as part of a study tour.

The delegation comprised Dr. Shashi Tharoor, MP; Arvind Ganpat Sawant, MP; Praniti Sushil, MP; Arun Govil, MP; Shangreiso Zimik; Dr. Smita Singh; Shivani; Jagdish Kumar; B.S. Mubarak; Rishi Angra; Lt. Col. Mandeep Kaur; and Manish Kumar.

The committee received a traditional welcome at Hotel The Kargil by Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Haji Hanifa Jan; Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar; and Senior Superintendent of Police, Nitin Yadav. Cultural troupes representing Kargil's diverse ethnic communities, along with Self Help Groups, also participated in the welcome programme.

Earlier, the delegation was received at Zero Point, Drass, with a traditional welcome by Deputy Commis-

sioner Drass, Imteez Kacho; Senior Superintendent of Police, Ishtiyaq Kacho; and Sub-Divisional Magistrate Drass, Vishal Atri.

During their visit, the committee paid homage at the Kargil War Memorial, Drass, and laid floral tributes to the brave soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in the defence of the nation. Army officials also briefed the delegation about key strategic locations and areas associated with the Kargil War.

Fortnightly News

Leh concludes Nasha Mukht Bharat Saptah, focus on youth awareness and de-addiction efforts



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), Leh, under the Social & Tribal Welfare Department, Administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh, concluded Nasha Mukht Bharat Saptah 2026 with a programme held at the DC Conference Hall, Leh, on June 27 to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The concluding programme marked the culmination of a week-long awareness campaign organised under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, aimed at spreading awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse, promoting preventive measures and encouraging collective responsibility towards creating a drug-free society.

District Social Welfare Officer, Mohd Safdar Bhat (JKAS), spoke about the causes, prevention and consequences of drug abuse on individuals, families and society. He highlighted various government initiatives aimed at addressing substance abuse and stressed the need for coordinated efforts from all stakeholders.

He urged students to become ambassadors of the anti-drug movement by actively participating in awareness cam-

aigns and promoting healthy lifestyles among their peers.

Manager-cum-Incharge, District De-Addiction Centre, Leh, Nilza Angmo, briefed the gathering about the week-long awareness activities conducted across the Changthang region, including awareness programmes for parents and children.

She informed that the District De-Addiction Centre has been shifted from Heart Foundation to Mahabodhi Hospital, Leh, to improve accessibility and enhance treatment facilities.

Sharing the centre's progress, Nilza Angmo said that 31 drug dependence cases have been registered during the current year. Of these, 28 beneficiaries have successfully completed treatment and have been discharged, while three are currently undergoing treatment. She added that regular follow-up counselling and medical check-ups are being conducted weekly or within a gap of ten days to support sustained recovery.

She also appreciated the participation of students from various schools, who are members of the YATO Club, in spreading awareness against drug abuse.

Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr. Padma Angmo of SNM Hospital, Leh, shared her experiences in dealing with addiction cases and expressed concern over the increasing trend of substance abuse among youth. She called for greater public dialogue and stronger preventive measures. Dr. Angmo emphasised the collective responsibility of families, parents and society in protecting future generations.

She encouraged parents to maintain open communication with their children and strengthen family bonds to reduce gaps in understanding.

She also appreciated the efforts of the District De-Addiction Centre and its team in addressing the issue of substance abuse.

President, Anjuman Moin-ul-Islam, Advocate Mohammad Shafi Lassu, congratulated the organisers for conducting the awareness programme successfully.

He stressed the importance of educating parents about avoiding tobacco use in front of children and discouraging alcohol and tobacco consumption during social gatherings.

He also explained provisions under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, including commercial and intermediate quantities, and briefed participants about legal procedures related to bail in drug-related cases. He further advocated stronger vehicle checking mechanisms at entry points and checkpoints to curb drug trafficking.

President, Ladakh Buddhist Association Youth Wing, Jigmat Rabstan, highlighted that several awareness campaigns have been conducted throughout the year through joint efforts of various departments. He stressed that effective implementation of awareness initiatives is equally important and called for greater sensitisation of single parents regarding child safety and well-being.

He encouraged students to share the knowledge gained through the programme with their peers and communities and suggested strengthening district-level de-addiction facilities for better prevention and rehabilitation.

Representatives of various religious organisations, including Nasreen Maryam, President, Women's Wing of Anjuman Imamia, Leh, and Deachen Chamba, President of the Christian Community, also shared their views on the importance of collective community efforts in combating drug abuse.

During the interaction, staff members of the District De-Addiction Centre raised the issue of pending salaries for the past seven months. Responding to the matter, Advocate Mohammad Shafi Lassu and other religious leaders assured their support and recommended that concerned authorities ensure timely release of salaries.

The programme also featured speech and painting competitions for students from various educational institutions.

In the Speech Competition, the first prize was jointly secured by Jigmat Chozen of Ladakh Model Government High School, Stok, and Stanzin Norzin of Delhi Public School, Leh. Stanzin Angmo of Ladakh Rigjung Public School secured the second prize, while Mohd Shayad of Boys Higher Secondary School, Leh, won the third prize.

In the Painting Competition, Jigmat Chosnor of Ladakh Model Government High School, Stok, bagged the first prize, followed by Urygan Tundup of Ladakh Rigjung Public School in second place. Jigmat Wangstob of Delhi Public School, Leh, secured the third prize, while Stanzin Namdon of Boys Higher Secondary School, Leh, received the fourth prize.

Chief Secretary reviews compliance with Supreme Court directions on Solid Waste Management in Ladakh



Photo Caption: Chief Secretary, Ashish Kundra, chairing a review meeting on implementation of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules and adoption of scientific waste management practices across Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, chaired a high-level review meeting on June 25 to assess compliance with the directions issued by the Supreme Court regarding the implementation of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules and adoption of scientific waste management practices across Ladakh.

The review meeting was held in connection with the Supreme Court's directions in Civil Appeal No. 6174 of 2023, pursuant to its order dated May 5, 2026.

Mandeep Mittal, IFS, Regional Director and Member Secretary, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee (LPCC), delivered a detailed presentation outlining the responsibilities assigned to District Collectors, Urban Local Bodies, Municipal Committees, UT Administrative Departments and Local Self-Government Institutions for effective implementation of the court's directions.

The presentation highlighted the responsibilities of various stakeholders, including overall monitoring and coordination by the UT Administration, filling of manpower and technical vacancies, mobilisation of financial resources, capacity-building initiatives, timely compliance and dissemination of Supreme Court directives related to waste management.

District Collectors were directed to establish district-level special cells, conduct regular inspections of dumping sites and waste management facilities, submit periodic progress reports, ensure authorised transportation and disposal of solid waste, and oversee implementation of SWM Rules within their respective jurisdictions.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the status of unauthorised dumping sites, garbage vulnerable points (GVPs) and illegal waste disposal locations across Leh, Kargil and newly created districts. Waste management challenges in areas including Nubra, Zaskar, Sham, Drass and Changthang were also discussed.

Deputy Commissioners from various districts, who participated through video conferencing, presented updates on identification and remediation of unauthorised dumping sites and GVPs in their respective areas.

While reviewing the registration and monitoring of Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs), Kundra sought detailed district-wise information on registered establishments, including hotels, hospitals, educational institutions, commercial buildings and other major waste-generating entities. He reviewed compliance with mandatory waste segregation, wet waste composting, dry waste management and other requirements under the SWM Rules.

The President of the All Ladakh Hotel and Guest House Association (ALHGHA) was asked to provide details regarding compliance by hotels and tourism establishments.

The Chief Secretary

stressed the need for a standardised reporting mechanism and directed all stakeholders, including government offices, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, defence establishments and the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), to strictly follow waste management norms and the Lieutenant Governor's directions regarding elimination of single-use plastics.

Discussing enforcement measures, Kundra directed that extensive awareness campaigns be conducted across all districts before imposing penalties for littering and violations of waste management rules. He emphasised involving Nambardars, religious leaders, market associations and civil society organisations to promote responsible waste disposal practices.

Special attention was given to cleanliness at tourist destinations and environmentally sensitive areas.

The Chief Secretary instructed concerned agencies to install dustbins at major tourist halt points, tea stops and public gathering areas within one week. He also directed installation of adequate signage at important locations to discourage littering and inform visitors about applicable penalties.

The meeting also reviewed requirements for strengthening waste management infrastructure, including café-cum-toilet facilities at major tourist destinations, improved parking management in coordination with taxi associations and enhanced sanitation facilities at popular locations such as Pangong.

Kundra further directed strict action against illegal off-roading activities in wildlife habitats and ecologically sensitive zones, stating that violations must be dealt with firmly under applicable environmental laws.

The meeting deliberated on challenges related to rural and urban waste collection systems, including the requirement for additional waste collection vehicles and drivers. The need for around 70 additional vehicles to strengthen waste collection and transportation services was highlighted.

Other issues discussed included legacy waste bioremediation, installation of waste bins at petrol pumps, waste management awareness announcements by airlines, and challenges faced by contractors and market associations engaged in waste management operations.

The meeting was attended by Lalinthakuma Franklin, Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department; Nidhi Malik, Secretary, Rural Development Department; Bhanu Prabha, Secretary, School Education Department; Baser-ul-Haq Choudhary; Sanjeet Rodrigues, Secretary, Tourism Department; Mandeep Mittal, IFS, Regional Director and Member Secretary, LPCC; Deputy Commissioner Leh Romil Singh Donk; representatives of Merchant Association, All Ladakh Hotel and Guest House Association (ALGHA), contractors' associations and senior officers from concerned departments.

L-G VK Saxena approves constitution of Ladakh Pashmina Development Board to transform value chain and empower pastoral communities

The board aims to position Ladakh as global hub of authentic Pashmina products



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In line with his commitment to strengthen one of Ladakh's most valuable natural and cultural assets - Pashmina, Lieutenant Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena, has approved the setting up of "Ladakh Pashmina Development Board (LPDB)". The Board is the country's first dedicated body to promote Ladakhi Pashmina globally, thereby transforming the Pashmina value chain and empowering the pastoral communities.

The establishment of the Board marks a significant milestone in the UT Administration's efforts to build a robust and

sustainable ecosystem around Ladakh Pashmina, renowned globally as one of the world's finest and most luxurious natural fibres.

Ladakh is estimated to have nearly 2 lakh Pashmina goats. Establishment of the Board is also aimed at increasing the number of Pashmina goats, thereby enhancing the income of the pastoral communities. It will also create new employment opportunities in the textile and handicrafts sector, increase value addition within Ladakh and reduce dependence on intermediaries.

"Ladakh Pashmina is not merely a fibre; it is an enduring symbol of Ladakh's cultural heritage, pastoral traditions and resilience. The constitution of the Ladakh Pashmina Development Board is a historic step towards ensuring that our nomadic communities receive the benefits they rightfully deserve and that Ladakh emerges as the global hub of authentic and premium Pashmina products. Our goal is to create an integrated, sustainable and globally competitive Pashmina ecosystem that safeguards livelihoods while preserving Ladakh's unique identity," said L-G Shri Saxena.

Recognising the need for an overarching institutional mechanism to strengthen the entire Pashmina value chain and create sustainable market linkages, the Board has been envisaged to guide, supervise and augment available resources for the holistic development of the Pashmina sector in Ladakh.

The Board will work to transform raw Ladakhi Pashmina into a premium, high-value product, improve market returns, and maximise benefits for all stakeholders, particularly the nomadic Changpa herders, who face some of the harshest living conditions and are the primary producers of raw Pashmina.

The newly constituted Board comprises two principal bodies - the Governing Body, chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, and the Executive Committee, chaired by the Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh. The Governing Body will provide overall strategic direction for the development of the Pashmina sector, approve long-term vision documents, policies, major projects and infrastructure initiatives, and facilitate convergence among government departments, financial institutions and industry stakeholders. It will also guide global branding, certification, export promotion and sustainability initiatives for the sector.

As part of its programme architecture, the Board will implement the Ladakh Pashmina Mission with a focus on improving the productivity and genetic quality of Changthangi goats, strengthening high-altitude rangelands through climate adaptation strategies, establishing local processing infrastructure, promoting artisan clusters and positioning Ladakh Pashmina as a premium luxury fibre in global markets through certification systems, digital traceability mechanisms and participation in international trade fairs.

Strategic power projects in Ladakh set for completion by September

Nubra, Zaskar and Siachen Base camp to get first-time grid connectivity, strengthening border infrastructure



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Ladakh is set to witness a major transformation in its power sector, with three key power transmission projects expected to be completed by September this year. The projects will connect strategically important regions, including Zaskar, Nubra and the Siachen Base Camp, to the national power grid for the first time.

Being implemented under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP), the projects aim to provide uninterrupted electricity supply to remote and border areas, reduce dependence on diesel generators and contribute to the

vision of a carbon-neutral Ladakh. Once completed, six of the seven districts of Ladakh, barring Changthang, will be connected to the power grid.

The status of these major power infrastructure projects was reviewed recently by Lieutenant Governor Vijay Kumar Saxena, who was briefed by senior officials, including the Chairman and Managing Director of REC Limited and the Joint Secretary (Transmission), Ministry of Power, Government of India.

The projects include the construction of a 189-kilometre-long 220 KV trans-

mission line from Drass to Padum and a 79-kilometre-long 220 KV transmission line from Phyang to Disket. Both projects, with a sanctioned cost of Rs 1,925 crore, are targeted for completion by September 2026.

The new transmission network will ensure round-the-clock electricity supply to remote and strategically important locations such as Siachen and Padum, significantly improving power connectivity in border areas.

At present, several strategically important regions, including Nubra, Changthang and Zaskar, are not connected to the national grid and rely on limited local generation sources, resulting in restricted and intermittent power availability. The upcoming projects are expected to substantially expand power infrastructure across Ladakh's remote regions.

In Zaskar, four substations will be established to ensure electricity reaches all parts of the valley. In Nubra, two substations at Siachen Base Camp and Partapur are planned. Meanwhile, Changthang will see the development of eight substations under the 66 KV transmission network at Durbuk, Phobrang, Chushul, Mudh-Nyoma, Korzok, Hanle, Koyul and Chumathang, improving electricity access across the high-altitude plateau.

Highlighting the importance of reliable power supply, L-G Saxena said uninterrupted electricity is essential not only for infrastructure development but also for education, healthcare, livelihoods, tourism, digital connectivity and economic growth.

"Connecting areas like Nubra and Zaskar to the grid for the first time will mark a historic milestone in Ladakh's development journey. These projects are of immense strategic and developmental significance and will benefit every household and village in Ladakh through reliable, round-the-clock electricity supply," he said.

Emphasising the strategic importance of the projects, the Lieutenant Governor noted that the new transmission lines and substations would strengthen border infrastructure, improve living conditions for local communities and support inclusive development in Ladakh's remotest regions.

He directed all implementing agencies to maintain close coordination and ensure timely completion so that residents, especially those in remote and border areas, can access dependable power supply at the earliest.

In Focus:

Trend of AI Music in Ladakh: Convenience or Cultural Challenge?

By Dechen Dolker



The last spring of apricot blossoms brought a wave of new beginnings and attracted admirers from across the world to witness Ladakh's iconic white and pink blooms. Alongside this seasonal celebration came something unusual—a bright spring song, “Chuli Mentok.” While it appeared to be a traditional summer-themed Ladakhi song celebrating the beauty of spring, it soon drew public attention after being identified as an AI-generated composition, with its vocals and melody created entirely through prompts.

While some listeners remained unaware of its origins, others reacted with mixed feelings. Recently, a growing wave of AI-generated music has emerged in Ladakh, with some being entirely new creations while many others appearing as covers or reimagined versions of popular Ladakhi classics.

Supporters argue that AI serves as a convenient tool for musical experimentation and creativity. The technology's ability to produce accurate La-

dakhi pronunciation has impressed many, but it has also raised concerns. The ability of AI systems to replicate such a niche language suggests that these tools may have been trained on existing works of Ladakhi artists or similar datasets, often without clear acknowledgment or compensation to the original creators.

The rise of AI-generated music in Ladakh highlights broader ethical questions surrounding authenticity, ownership, and cultural preservation. Across the world, AI-generated art and music have sparked debates about the role of technology in creative fields that are deeply connected to human emotions, experiences, and identity.

The reality of the present era is that AI is here to stay. From healthcare and education to search engines and entertainment, artificial intelligence has become deeply integrated into daily life. The debate is no longer about whether AI should exist, but rather how society chooses to engage with it.

Although AI offers significant advantages, it also presents challenges. The central question remains whether music created through prompts and existing datasets can truly capture the emotional depth of human-created art. Music is not merely a combination of beats and melodies; it often reflects personal experiences, struggles, memories, and emotions. For many listeners, a song connects them to the artist's journey and the human story behind its creation.

Critics view AI-generated art as a threat to authenticity, while supporters consider it another tool that can expand creativity and make artistic expression more accessible.

Historically, several technological advancements faced similar criticism. When photography was introduced, many feared it would replace paintings and hand-drawn portraits. However, photography eventually became another medium of artistic expression. Supporters of AI believe it may follow a similar path. However, they also acknowledge a key difference—the journey behind creation. Traditional artistic tools evolved over decades through human effort, experimentation, and perseverance, whereas AI has entered creative spaces rapidly within a few years.

Understanding the perspective of artists themselves is essential in this discussion. Quoting Vishnu N. Agarwal, a passionate miniature painting artist, “when I paint, I add a part of myself into it.” He believes that an artist's patience, dedication, and personal journey are fundamental aspects of creativity. The struggles, inspirations, and experiences behind an artwork eventually transform into stories expressed through paintings, music, films, and literature. This sentiment resonates with many artists in Ladakh and beyond.

Beyond cultural concerns, AI also raises environmental questions. Despite existing in a digital space, artificial intelligence requires significant resources. Data centres supporting AI systems consume large amounts of electricity and water for cooling purposes. In a fragile ecosystem like Ladakh, which depends heavily on limited water resources and is committed to sustainability, critics argue that the environmental impact of rapidly expanding AI technology deserves attention.

While AI is not the sole cause of resource depletion, the increasing dependence on technology and its environmental footprint cannot be overlooked. Ultimately, AI is an unavoidable part of the future and offers several benefits. However, its use in creative fields requires careful consideration of cultural, environmental, and social consequences. The question is not simply whether AI can create music, but whether society is willing to embrace machine-generated creativity while preserving the human emotions, struggles, and cultural identities that make art meaningful.

The World of

Juniors

World Asteroid Day 2026, also known as International Asteroid Day observed on June 30. The day is dedicated to raising public awareness about asteroids, near-Earth objects, asteroid impact hazards, space research, and planetary defence.

The World Asteroid Day 2026 theme is “Planetary Defence and Asteroid Impact Hazards.” This theme highlights the need for global cooperation in asteroid detection, scientific research, crisis communication, and safety planning to protect Earth from possible asteroid-related risks.

World Asteroid Day is a global awareness day observed every year on June 30. It aims to educate people about the hazards of asteroid impacts and the importance of detecting and tracking near-Earth objects.

The day also promotes awareness about crisis communication actions that may be needed if a credible asteroid threat is detected. Through expert talks, science exhibitions, school workshops, public events,



and online campaigns, Asteroid Day encourages people to learn about space science and planetary safety.

An asteroid is a small rocky object that orbits the Sun. Like planets, asteroids move around the Sun, but they are much smaller. Most asteroids are considered leftovers from the formation of the solar system. Asteroids can vary greatly in size. Some may be only a few metres wide, while others can be hundreds of kilometres across. Many asteroids are found in the asteroid belt, a region located between Mars and Jupiter.

Courtesy: Vedantu

SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

You and your life's objectives



The primary objective of life for any human being is to be happily progressive. In anybody's life, a purposeful progress can't happen without being happy. Life gets wasted in the absence of happiness, and it shines only when happiness lights it up.

That forces us to raise a question: What are we here for? Of course, to make life good and purposeful with objectives that become universally relevant and useful.

The Dalai Lama's most often quoted saying is: “The purpose of life is to seek happiness.” The idea behind such a stand is that there can't be anything good that one can carry out without being happy. So, first be happy, and then march on to oblige yourself and others in making life more enjoyable and progressive. In other words, we are here to work hard and sincerely to bring about some difference that makes this world more beautiful and worth-living in. And that necessarily requires bonding with all sentient beings with love, compassion, sympathy and empathy.

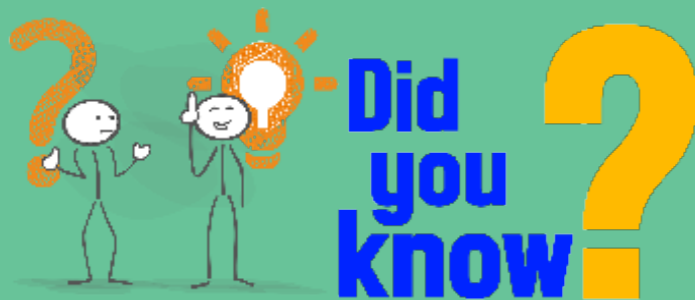
This reminds me of what Albert Einstein had said: “Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.” What he meant was that you need to live the best of life because you can't think of service to others until you are fully taken care of. That is why you also have the famous proverb: “Charity begins at home.” I never forget this saying because it was written, among others, on the walls of my primary school in a remote sub-Himalayan region.

Coming to the more precise ways of the objectives of life, it is not difficult to be a responsible and yet daring. Daring because, at times, the normal ways of giving a solution to the problems of life do not work. You need to give your mindset a free rein so that the unworkable things get to work wonderfully well.

As said earlier in this column, love, compassion, learning and contribution in the form of service are some of the other primary objectives of life. I would also like to put in the case of self-growth promotion all the time so that your output gets better every day. That is the only proof that you are living for a purpose, and not for mere existence. That also makes it sure that the noble objectives of your life fulfilled, you never go unrewarded. The punchline: Meeting your life's objectives alone can ensure you a good life, and a good death too!

Courtesy: WongWorld

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



• The average person's left hand does 56% of the typing (when using the proper position of the hands on the keyboard; Hunting and pecking doesn't count!).

• The “sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick” is believed to be the toughest tongue twister in the English language.

• If you sneeze too hard, you could fracture a rib.

• Wearing headphones for just an hour could increase the bacteria in your ear by 700 times.

• In the course of an average lifetime, while sleeping you might eat around 70 assorted insects and 10 spiders, or more.

• The characters Bert and Ernie on Sesame Street were named after

Bert the cop and Ernie the taxi driver in Frank Capra's “It's a Wonderful Life.”

• Cat urine glows under a black-light.

• Like fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different.

• Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.

• There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar.

• “Dreamt” is the only English word that ends in the letters “mt”.

• Almonds are a member of the peach family.

• Maine is the only state that has a one-syllable name.

• There are only four words in the English language which end in “dous”: tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous.

• Los Angeles' full name is “El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula”

Fortnightly News

**In Conversation with
Deachen Chamga President, All Ladakh Moravian Christian Association**

Q. Tell us about the Moravian Christians of Ladakh, their origin, arrival, and contributions to the region.

The Moravians are a historic Christian community with roots in Central Europe. Their history goes back to the 15th century in Bohemia and Moravia (present-day Czech Republic), where they emerged from the reform movement of Jan Hus. They were known as the Unity of the Brethren and emphasized faith in Jesus Christ, the importance of the Bible, community life, education, and service to humanity. Due to religious persecution, many Moravians were forced to leave their homeland, but they preserved their faith and traditions. In the 18th century, they established a new centre at Herrnhut in Saxony, Germany, from where the modern Moravian missionary movement expanded across the world.

The Moravians played an important role in the history of Christian missions. They travelled to some of the most challenging and remote regions of the world, including Greenland, the Caribbean, Africa, and other parts of Asia. Their mission was not only to spread Christianity but also to provide education, healthcare, and social service to local communities.

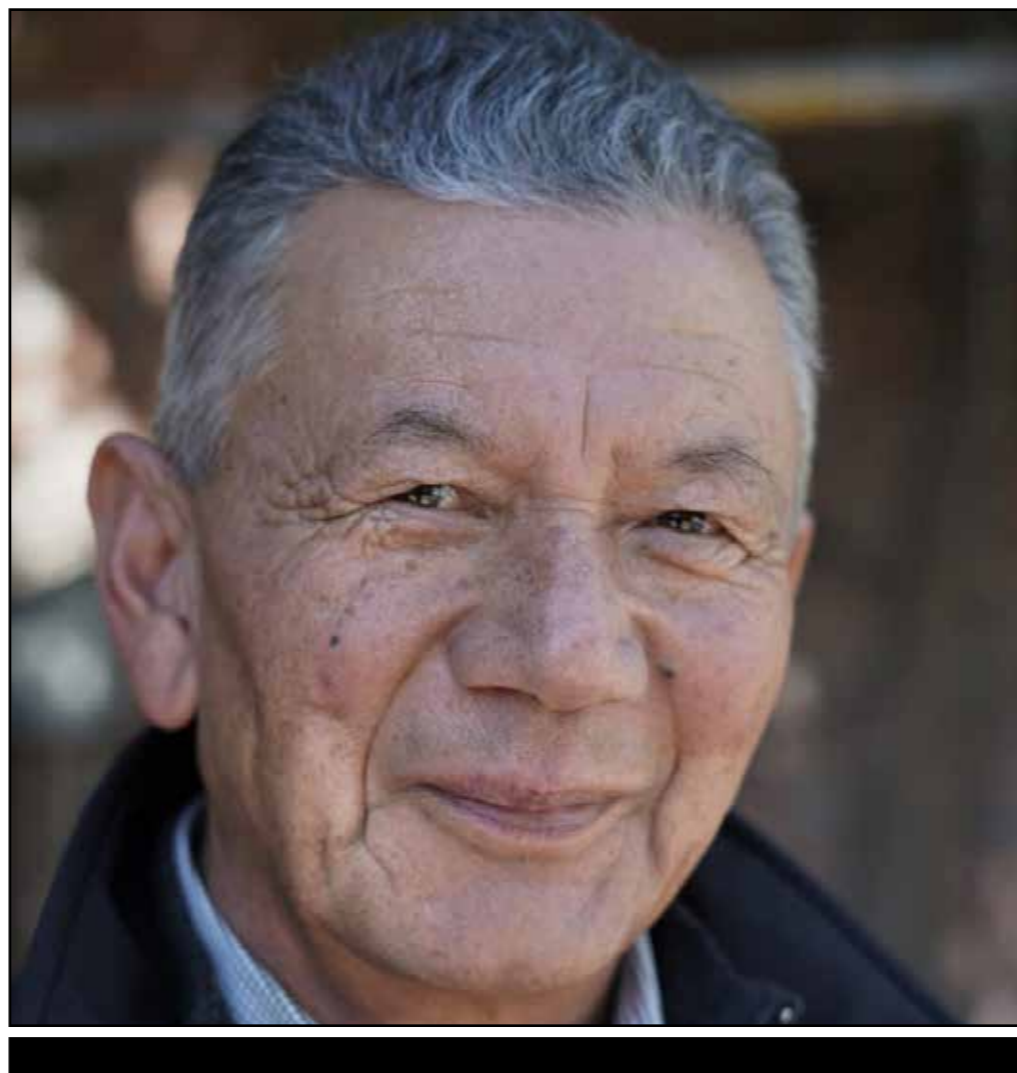
The arrival of the Moravians was also connected with the broader history of Christianity. The Great Reformation of 1517, led by Martin Luther, became a significant turning point in Christian history. It encouraged the translation of the Bible and Christian writings into local languages, allowing more people to access religious texts. Before this period, the Bible was mainly available in Latin, which limited understanding among ordinary people. The Reformation led to the growth of different Christian traditions, including Protestant churches.

The Moravians reached India in 1853 and later came to Ladakh in 1885. The first missionaries associated with the Ladakh mission included Wilhelm Heyde and Edward Pagell, who began their work in the Himalayan region. They established their mission in Leh and built the Moravian Church in 1885, which remains an important historical landmark.

In Ladakh, the Moravians contributed significantly in fields beyond religious activities. They established schools, provided medical services, studied local languages, and worked on translating Christian texts into Tibetan. Their educational and social initiatives played an important role in the development of the region. Although Christianity remained a small community in Ladakh, which has a predominantly Buddhist population, the Moravians gained respect for their service, dedication, and contribution to education and healthcare.

Today, Moravian churches and institutions continue their service

Interviewed by Stanzin Dasal



MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“Unity is the greatest strength of Ladakh. At this important time, we must set aside our differences and work together to protect the identity, culture, and future of our region. The decisions we make today are not only for us but for the generations to come.”

in places such as Leh, Shey, and Khalatse, carrying forward their tradition of faith, education, peaceful cooperation, and community service.

Q. How many Christians are there in Ladakh, and what is your view on the identity and challenges faced by the Moravian Christian community?

The Christian community in Ladakh is a small community. We are around 300 to 400 Christians in the region. I have heard statements from some political leaders claiming that there are around 3,000 to 4,000 Christians in Ladakh, but this figure is factually incorrect and creates a misleading impression about our community.

The Christian population in Ladakh is very small and can be counted on one's fingertips. Our long presence in Ladakh itself shows that we have always lived peacefully with other communities. The Moravian Christians have been in Ladakh for more than 140 years, and throughout this period we have maintained harmony, mutual respect, and cordial relations with people of all faiths. Our belief has never been about forcing or misleading anyone into becoming a Christian. We have always focused on faith, service, education, and peaceful coexistence.

The All Ladakh Moravian Christian Association was formed recently following certain internal issues within the community and an ongoing legal matter. Earlier, Christians in Ladakh were represented under the Christian Association of Ladakh, and the registration process of the All Ladakh Moravian Christian Association is currently underway.

There have been some differences regarding the administration and leadership of the Moravian Church in Leh. Earlier leadership decisions and the involvement of individuals from different Christian traditions created disagreements within the community. According to our understanding, certain practices and leadership arrangements were not in accordance with Moravian traditions, which led to concerns among local Moravian Christians. The matter is currently before the court.

We believe that the Moravian Church in Ladakh should continue to follow its original traditions and that the voices of the local Moravian Christian community should be respected. Our aim is to preserve our heritage, maintain unity among Christians, and continue the long tradition of peaceful service that the Moravians have followed in Ladakh for more than a century.

...continues on page 6

Fortnight Highlights



District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Leh, observed International Yoga Day on 21st June at the District Court Complex, Leh in compliance with the directions issued by the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.



In compliance with the directions issued by the UT Administration regarding the ban on Single-Use Plastic (SUP) and littering items, an awareness programme was conducted in Sub-Division Liker on June 20 2026, under the supervision of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Liker, Gurmeet Namgial. As part of the campaign, a surprise inspection and sensitization drive was also carried out in the Saspol area.



Participants of the Viksit Vibrant Village Programme (VVVP) 2026 from Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Assam continued their enriching journey in Ladakh with a blend of adventure and cultural exchange.



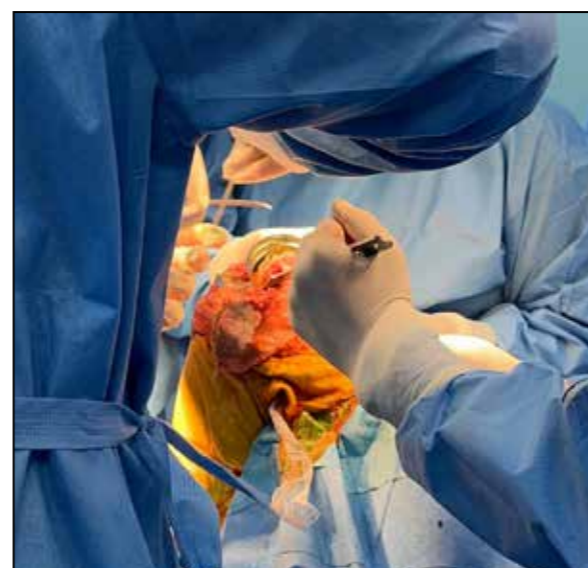
Lieutenant Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena inaugurated the Pratham Sindhu Kumbh on the banks of the sacred Indus River, marking a historic celebration of India's civilisational heritage, spiritual traditions and national unity.



As part of the build-up to International Yoga Day 2026, the Fire and Fury Corps conducted a Yoga Session and Medical Camp at Tia Village on 20 June, reinforcing its commitment towards holistic wellness and community welfare. The initiative brought together villagers, students and Army personnel in a collective endeavour to promote physical fitness, mental well-being and preventive healthcare.



In compliance with the directions issued by the UT Administration regarding the ban on Single-Use Plastic (SUP) and littering items in the Union Territory of Ladakh, an enforcement and inspection team conducted a market inspection at Khalatse.



The three-day Mega Total Knee Replacement (TKR) Camp organized by AL-REZA Health Care & Research Foundation (HC & RF), the health wing of Jamaat Ul Ulema Isna Ashriya Kargil, concluded successfully at QAAM Hospital, Kurbathang, Kargil.



Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, conducted a surprise inspection of Higher Secondary School Diskit on June 16 and reviewed the academic activities, attendance status, and overall teaching-learning process of the institution.

Fortnightly News

DC Changthang reviews development works and public welfare initiatives in Durbuk



Photo Caption: Deputy Commissioner inaugurating the Public Library at Tangtse along with the Station Commander, 114 HQ Tangtse.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Deputy Commissioner, Changthang, Nitish Rajora, visited Sub-Division Durbuk on June 25 and reviewed various developmental projects and public welfare initiatives being implemented in the area.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inaugurated the Public Library at Tangtse along with the Station Commander, 114 HQ Tangtse. The facility has been constructed by the Indian Army under Operation Sadbhavana.

Speaking on the occasion, the Station Commander highlighted the importance of utilising the library effective-

ly, particularly by students, for academic development and learning. The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the Indian Army for establishing the facility, which is equipped with over 1,000 books, a rest room, toilet facilities and heating arrangements.

Later, Rajora chaired a review meeting with officials of the Rural Development Department, Durbuk, and LREDA to assess the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Rules 2026, Viksit Bharat Gram Gram Panchayat Abhiyan (VBGGA) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to enhance public awareness regarding Single-Use Plastics (SUP) and directed officials to ensure strict enforcement of regulations, including penalties for violations. In a separate meeting, Rajora reviewed the functioning of the Health Department at PHC Tangtse. Officials presented details regarding healthcare infrastructure, patient care services, departmental activities and ongoing schemes.

The Deputy Commissioner directed officials to ensure saturation of target-based welfare schemes and instructed them to conduct fortnightly awareness camps on drug abuse prevention and mental health awareness.

During the visit, several delegations from Durbuk and Tangtse met the Deputy Commissioner and raised various local issues and concerns. Rajora assured them that all genuine grievances would be addressed on priority.

68 booths, 227 personnel deployed for successful Pulse Polio drive in Sham



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHALTSE: The Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme for children aged 0-5 years was successfully conducted across Sham district on June 28.

Deputy Commissioner, Sham, Kunzes Angmo (JKAS), along with Block Medical Officer (BMO) Khatse, Dr. Javed Ahmed, formally inaugurated the programme by administering polio drops to a child. They urged parents to ensure that every eligible child receives the vaccine to help maintain a polio-free society.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the dedicated

efforts of health workers, supervisors, volunteers, and supporting staff for their active participation and contribution towards the successful implementation of the campaign.

During the drive, 68 immunisation booths were established across the district to cover all eligible children. A total of 227 personnel were deployed for the smooth conduct of the programme, while 12 supervisors monitored the functioning of booths and overall implementation. Additionally, five mobile teams were assigned to reach remote and inaccessible areas to ensure that no child was left uncovered.

ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers from various Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) actively participated in the programme by mobilising parents and creating awareness about the importance of Pulse Polio Immunisation.

Health officials highlighted the significance of Pulse Polio Immunisation in protecting children from the crippling disease and appealed to the public to continue supporting health initiatives aimed at safeguarding children's health.

The programme concluded successfully with active cooperation from health officials, frontline workers, volunteers, and the general public.

Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary reviews progress of major road and bridge works in Nubra



Photo Caption: Administrative Secretary, Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary assessing the progress of ongoing road and bridge projects in Nubra.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: Administrative Secretary, Public Works Department (PWD), UT Ladakh, Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary, on June 29 chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of ongoing road and bridge projects being executed by the Roads & Buildings (R&B) wing in Nubra.

During the meeting, the Administrative Secretary reviewed the status of various projects and sought detailed updates on their physical and financial progress, completion timelines, upgradation works, pending liabilities, and key challenges affecting project execution.

Emphasizing the importance of timely and quality completion of works, Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary directed Executive Engineers to prepare comprehensive project-wise details of works being executed under the Central Road Infrastructure Fund (CRIF), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), State Development Plan (SDP), State Sector CAPEX, and other departmental schemes.

He further instructed officers and officials to proactively address project-related issues through close coordination with the Deputy Commissioner and Sub-Divisional Magistrate to ensure smooth implementation of ongoing works.

The Administrative Secretary stressed prioritizing projects on a component-wise basis, especially those benefiting habitation areas, and directed that all ongoing projects be completed within the stipulated timelines.

He also emphasized regular monitoring, effective coordination among field officers, and prompt resolution of site-specific challenges to accelerate project implementation.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, IAS; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Nubra, Jigmet Rabtan, JKAS; SE PMGSY Ladakh; Executive Engineers of PWD (R&B and PMGSY); Assistant Engineers; Junior Engineers; and other concerned officials.

Fire Safety and Emergency Response training conducted for SEOC staff



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: A Fire Safety and Emergency Response Training Programme was successfully conducted for the staff of the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC), Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRRR), UT Ladakh.

The training was conducted by SM Tsewang Mingur and his team from 4th Ladakh Scouts.

During the programme, Instructor Nk/Tsewang Namgyal delivered an informative presentation on fire safety, prevention, and emergency response procedures. The team also conducted practical fire drill demonstrations, providing participants with hands-on knowledge and skills to respond effectively during fire emergencies.

Dr. Stanzin Passang, Project Manager, DMRRR-SEOC, UT Ladakh, along with the staff of SEOC-DMRRR, was present on the occasion. He appreciated the efforts of the resource team and emphasized the importance of regular training, preparedness, and coordination in strengthening emergency response capacity.

The programme enhanced the participants' understanding of fire safety measures, emergency preparedness, and the effective use of firefighting techniques, contributing to a safer and more resilient workplace.

In Conversation with Deachen Changa President, All Ladakh Moravian Christian Association

...Continuity of page 5

Q. As a minority community in Ladakh, what challenges do Christians face in terms of social and political representation?

As Christians in Ladakh, we have generally not faced major challenges in our daily lives as a minority community. We have always lived peacefully and maintained good relations with people of all communities. However, like minority communities elsewhere, representation and recognition in matters of development and decision-making are important concerns.

Since the Christian population in Ladakh is very small and spread mainly across Leh, Shey, and Khalatse, our numbers do not create a significant impact in the political system. Because of this, we sometimes feel that our voices and concerns do not receive enough attention.

I believe that political representation also depends on the leadership of the community. A capable and responsible leader can help ensure that the concerns of a small community are heard and that its contributions and needs are recognized. Our aim is not only to seek representation but also to continue contributing positively to the social and cultural development of Ladakh while maintaining harmony with all communities.

Q. At a time when Ladakh is going through important changes, what message would you like to give regarding unity and the future of the region?

Unity in Ladakh is of utmost importance, especially at a time when the region is going through significant challenges and crossroads. For the past six years, we have been demanding safeguards for Ladakh to protect its identity, culture, environment, and future. During this period, we have witnessed many changes, developments, ups and downs.

At this crucial juncture, it is important for all communities to set aside differences and work together for the betterment of Ladakh. Our focus should be on the future of the region and the coming generations, not only on the concerns of today.

The decisions we make now will shape the Ladakh that our children and future generations will inherit. Therefore, unity, mutual respect, and collective responsibility are essential to protect and build a peaceful and prosperous future for Ladakh.

Awareness programme on drug abuse held at KGBV Hostel Nyoma



Photo Caption: During the awareness programme on the ill effects of drug abuse at the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) Hostel, Nyoma.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NYOMA: An awareness programme on the ill effects of drug abuse was organised on June 24 at the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) Hostel, Nyoma, with active participation from hostel students.

The programme was attended by members of the Block Level Drug Abuse Committee, the Hostel Warden, and all resident students. During the interactive session, resource persons sensitised students about the harmful consequences of substance abuse and its impact on physical and mental health, education, and overall well-being.

The speakers encouraged students to adopt a healthy and disciplined lifestyle, make informed choices, and contribute towards creating a drug-free society. They also highlighted the importance of awareness, peer support, and community participation in preventing drug abuse among youth.

31 farmers participate in sustainable agriculture awareness programme at Liktsey



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LIKTSEY: As part of the month-long Khet Bachao Abhiyan 2026, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Nyoma, in collaboration with the Agriculture Department, Nyoma Zone, organised a programme at Liktsey village on June 25 to promote sustainable farming practices and ensure timely access to government welfare schemes for the farming community.

Nawang Palkit, In-charge Agriculture Extension Officer, Nyoma, conducted an extensive awareness session for farmers on various government schemes and their benefits. She also delivered a practical demonstration on natural farming under the National Mission on Natural

Farming (NMNF) and the ATMA scheme, explaining methods, required inputs and advantages of adopting natural farming practices in the high-altitude cold arid conditions of Changthang.

During the programme, Soil Health Cards were distributed among 29 farmers.

Dr. Phuntsog Tundup, Head, KVK Nyoma, delivered a session on organic farming practices for sustainable agriculture. He explained the scientific basis for adopting organic and natural farming methods and highlighted their long-term benefits for soil health, crop quality and ecological balance.

Dr. Tashi Dolkar, Scientist, KVK Nyoma, briefed farmers about the objectives, vision and significance of the Khet Bachao Abhiyan programme, encouraging greater participation from the farming community.

Dr. Stanzin Diskit, Plant Pathologist, conducted an awareness session on disease and pest management under organic farming, equipping farmers with practical techniques to control crop diseases without relying on chemical inputs.

The programme witnessed active participation from 31 farmers of Liktsey village, who engaged in discussions and demonstrations aimed at strengthening sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

Nyoma administration conducts inspection of LAHDC Petrol pump, stresses quality and safety standards



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NYOMA: In compliance with the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Changthang, Nitish Rajora, IAS, the Naib Tehsildar, Nyoma, conducted a detailed inspection of the LAHDC Petrol Pump, Nyoma, on June 24 to assess adherence to quality, cleanliness, and safety standards.

During the inspection, the quality and purity of fuel being supplied to consumers were thoroughly verified. The washroom facilities were also inspected, and the management was directed to maintain proper cleanliness and hygiene at all times.

The availability and proper placement of dustbins across the premises were checked, with instructions issued to ensure regular cleanliness and sanitation. The management was further directed to strictly follow road safety measures by ensuring that fuel is not dispensed to two-wheeler riders without helmets.

The inspection reflects the Changthang District Administration's continued commitment towards ensuring quality public services, maintaining cleanliness, and promoting road safety for the welfare of the public.

Fortnightly News

DC Sham reviews enforcement measures against single-use plastic and littering



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHALTSE: Deputy Commissioner, Sham, Kunzes Angmo (JKAS), chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall of the DC Office, Sham, on June 27 to review and strengthen the implementation of the ban on Single-Use Plastic (SUP) and measures to curb littering across the district.

The meeting was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Likir; Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars of Sham District; Principals of Government Higher Secondary Schools; Headmasters of Government High Schools; Block Development Officers; Range Officer, Forest Department, Khamtsi; and other concerned officials.

Representatives from community organisations, including President, Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) Sham; President of the Namberdar Association along with Namberdars of Sham District; Vice President, Merchant Association, Khamtsi; and members of other associations involved in public awareness activities were also present.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for regular inspections, awareness campaigns and enforcement drives to prevent the use of banned plastic items and control littering in public places. She stated that strict action, including penalties, would be taken against those violating the

Single-Use Plastic ban.

She directed the R&B Division to ensure provision of separate toilet facilities for labourers at construction sites to maintain proper sanitation and hygiene standards.

The Deputy Commissioner also urged the Ladakh Buddhist Association, Namberdar Association, Merchant Association and other community organisations to actively spread awareness among villagers about the harmful impacts of single-use plastic, promote eco-friendly alternatives and support the administration in effective implementation of the ban.

She further called upon educational institutions, market associations, Panchayati Raj Institutions and the public to actively participate in maintaining a clean and plastic-free environment through responsible waste management practices and adoption of sustainable alternatives.

The meeting concluded with a collective commitment from departments, community organisations and stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of government directives and make Sham District cleaner, greener and free from single-use plastic.

13,500 children targeted as Kargil successfully conducts Pulse Polio Programme



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The Health Department, Kargil, successfully conducted the Pulse Polio Programme on June 28 as part of its ongoing efforts to ensure complete immunization coverage and maintain the district's contribution to the country's polio-free status.

The programme was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Commissioner-cum-CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Rakesh Kumar, who attended the event as the Chief Guest. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Mohd Abass, health officials, frontline healthcare workers, and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar appreciated the dedicated efforts of the Health Department and field staff in ensuring the successful implementation of the programme. He stressed the importance of collective participation and public cooperation to ensure that every eligible child receives polio drops and that no child is left behind.

He reiterated the administration's commitment to strengthening healthcare services and ensuring a

healthy and secure future for children across the district.

Speaking to the media, the Deputy Commissioner informed that 387 polio booths had been established across Kargil district to administer Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) to approximately 13,500 children in the 0-5 years age group.

Addressing the gathering, CMO Dr. Mohd Abass highlighted that the Pulse Polio Programme is a flagship initiative aimed at protecting children against poliomyelitis (polio). Under the National Immunization Drive, all children aged 0-5 years are administered OPV, irrespective of their previous immunization status.

Considering Kargil's challenging geographical terrain, scattered population, migratory patterns, and remote locations, a comprehensive block-wise action plan covering all seven blocks of the district was prepared to ensure 100 percent coverage of eligible children.

The key objectives of the programme include achieving complete immunization coverage among children aged 0-5 years, reaching children in remote and high-risk areas, ensuring zero missed cases, strengthening surveillance and monitoring mechanisms, and enhancing community awareness through IEC/BCC activities.

Special booth teams comprising Community Health Officers (CHOs), Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), ASHA workers, MPH staff, and local volunteers were deployed across the district to ensure the effective implementation of the programme.

Oyster mushroom cultivation takes root in Kargil as Thasgam records successful trial



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

DRASS: In a significant step towards promoting sustainable livelihoods and rural entrepreneurship, the Himalayan Volunteer Tourism and Humus Upliftment Organisation, under the guidance of Chief Trainer Vijay Singh, successfully conducted an oyster mushroom cultivation trial at Thasgam in Drass, producing around 10 kilograms of fresh oyster mushrooms.

The initiative witnessed active participation from dedicated volunteers, including Diksha and Sanjini, along with Self-Help Group (SHG) members from Bhimbhat, Lomochan, Jugsong, Thasgam, Kukshow, Shargole, and several villages of Zanskar, covering nearly 15 villages across Kargil district.

The programme received strong support from the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)

Kargil team, including District Programme Manager (DPM) Muneer Ahmad Wani, Block Programme Manager (BPM) Khadim Hussain, and SHG leaders Aysiya Lone and Khalida Banoo of Thasgam.

The successful trial highlighted the potential of oyster mushroom cultivation as a sustainable source of income and nutrition for rural communities. The organisers expressed hope that the initiative would motivate more SHGs and farmers across Kargil to adopt mushroom cultivation as a viable livelihood opportunity.

The initiative marks an important step towards encouraging local entrepreneurship, strengthening community-based livelihoods, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

Ladakh plans global-scale Black-necked Crane Festival to boost conservation and community livelihoods



Photo Caption: During the review meeting of the proposal for organising the Black-necked Crane Festival 2026.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, on June 25 chaired a meeting to review the proposal for organising the Black-necked Crane Festival 2026, aimed at promoting wildlife conservation, strengthening community participation and encouraging nature-based livelihoods in the Changthang region of Ladakh.

The proposed festival, scheduled for the second half of August 2026, seeks to celebrate the iconic Black-necked Crane while showcasing the ecological, cultural and economic importance of Ladakh's high-altitude wetlands. The event is envisioned as a platform to enhance conservation awareness, promote sustainable tourism and create livelihood opportunities for local communities.

During the meeting, concerned officers gave a detailed presentation highlighting the rationale behind the festival and the global significance of the Changthang wetlands ecosystem. The presentation described the Black-necked Crane as a symbol of harmony between biodiversity, culture and spirituality in the Trans-Himalayan region. The discussion also covered the potential of bird tourism as a growing global sector, lessons from the successful Black-necked Crane Festival in Bhutan, projected tourism opportunities and the broader vision for Ladakh's proposed festival.

The proposed plan includes the development of five key crane destinations in

Changthang, along with birdwatching experiences, field visits, technical sessions, livelihood exhibitions, cultural programmes and strategies to establish Ladakh as a premier bird tourism destination. Budget requirements and promotional strategies were also discussed. During the deliberations, Chief Secretary Kundra highlighted the immense potential of bird tourism and stressed the need to leverage Ladakh's unique biodiversity assets through sustainable practices. He sought details on the proposed festival dates and suggested aligning the event with the most suitable period for crane sightings and visitor participation.

He also explored the possibility of adding an international dimension to the festival to attract researchers, conservationists, birdwatchers, photographers and nature enthusiasts from across India and abroad.

Kundra emphasised that the festival should remain deeply connected with the Changthang region, where the Black-necked Crane and its habitat are closely linked with local culture and livelihoods. He directed the organisers to ensure active participation of local communities, conservation organisations, birding groups, educational institutions and tourism stakeholders in planning and execution.

Highlighting the importance of community-led conservation, the Chief Secretary stressed that local residents should be the primary beneficiaries of the initiative. He proposed developing trained

local nature guides and birding interpreters from Changthang villages, particularly among unemployed youth, to support visitors exploring the region's landscapes and wildlife habitats.

He noted that such initiatives would enhance visitor experiences while creating sustainable livelihood opportunities and inspiring future conservation leaders through greater awareness of Ladakh's fragile wetland ecosystems.

Infrastructure and visitor facilities were also reviewed during the meeting. Kundra stressed the need for developing bird observation points, interpretation centres, improved visitor amenities, eco-friendly accommodation facilities and designated wildlife viewing sites.

He directed concerned departments to explore possibilities for upgrading existing facilities at Nyoma, Hanle and other important locations to support nature tourism and research activities.

To strengthen outreach, the Chief Secretary directed the development of a dedicated and professionally designed website for the Black-necked Crane Festival on a fast-track basis within one week. The platform will provide information for visitors, researchers, photographers, tour operators and conservation enthusiasts, including festival activities, travel details, birdwatching opportunities and community-based tourism experiences.

He further instructed the Tourism Department to prominently integrate bird tourism and Black-necked Crane-related content into Ladakh's tourism promotion platforms.

The Chief Secretary advised the organisers to revise the festival concept note and presentation with greater focus on conservation-linked livelihoods, community participation and sustainable tourism opportunities before placing it before the Lieutenant Governor for further consideration and planning of the inauguration.

The meeting was attended by Mandeepp Mittal, IFS; Rajesh, IFS; Sanjeet Rodrigues, Secretary, Tourism Department; and senior officers from concerned departments and organisations.

IN THE COURT OF CHIEF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE, LEH

Challan No. 3A of 2022

CNR No. LDLH030001792019

Date of Institution: 27/11/2019

Date of Transfer: 23/02/2022

In the case:

State through SHO PS Leh

versus

1. Rigzin Dorje S/O Tsewang Dorjay R/O Anlay Matho
2. Tashi Dolma W/O Tundup Tashi R/O TR. Camp no. 04 Choglamsar
3. Skarma Sonam S/O Sonam Wangail R/O TR. Camp 04 Choglamsar
4. Punchok Tsering S/O Semon Yangkaf R/O TR. Camp No. 2 Agliing
5. Lobzang Tsering S/O Skarma Chotar R/O TR. Camp no. 09 Agliing
6. Tundup Tashi H/O Tashi Dolma R/O TR. No. Camp 04 Choglamsar
7. Skarma Gurmet S/O Sonam Wangail R/O TR no. Camp 04 Choglamsar

(Accused Persons)

FIR No. 153/2009 PS Leh u/Ss. 6, 15/16 Forest Act, u/Ss. 3, 7/55 Bio Diversity Act, u/Ss. 60/60A Wild Life Act

PROCLAMATION

Whereas challan has been presented before me that accused persons mentioned above have committed the offence under FIR no. 153/2009 of PS Leh, punishable u/Ss. 6, 15/16 Forest Act, u/Ss. 3, 7/55 Bio Diversity Act, u/Ss. 60/60A Wild Life Act of the Ranbir Penal Code, and it has been returned to a general warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the accused no. 7 **Skarma Gurmet** cannot be found and whereas, it has been shown to my satisfaction that said accused person has absconded.

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person namely Skarma Gurmet S/O Sonam Wangail R/O TR no. Camp 04, Choglamsar is required to appear before this Court to answer in the said case on the 13/07/2026.

Issued under my hand and seal of the Court today on 08/06/2026

Chief Judicial Magistrate

Leh

Copy of the proclamation be forwarded to SHO PS Leh through Prosecution for publication in newspaper having wide circulation in the area of residence of the above mentioned accused person.

NO - UML/8/2026/516
Dt - 8/6/26.

Chief Judicial Magistrate

Leh

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