

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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Brief News

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Leh girls win JKSSC Youth Football League

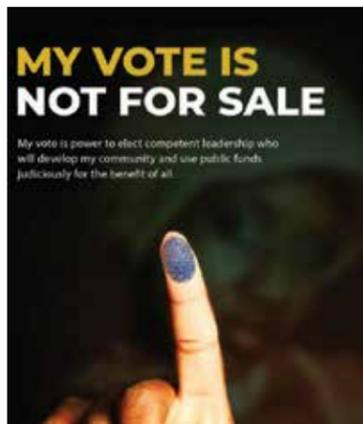
SRINAGAR: State Football Academy, Leh girls team won the JKSSC Youth Football League with 2-0 goals on April 25 at Turf Stadium Srinagar.

The final match was played between SFA Leh and SFA Jammu.

The tournament was organised by State Football Academy under the supervision of J&K State Sports Council and supported by J&K Football Association.

Six teams of girls representing, Jammu, Badgam, Srinagar, Bandipora, Leh and Kathua participated. The tournament was started on April 20.

Jigmet Chunzin was awarded as the top scorer.



Correction and clarification

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

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

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7 arrested in boy's murder case in Leh

One accused undergoing treatment at SNM Hospital

Rinchen Angmo Chumikchan & Stanzin Dasal

LEH: The District Police, Leh, have arrested seven persons in connection with the murder of a boy in the main market on April 21. One accused is undergoing treatment at SNM Hospital.

An FIR under Section 302, 307, 324, 506, 34 RPC has been registered at Police Station Leh.

Section 302: Punishment for murder

Section 307: Attempt to murder

Section 324: Voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapon or means

Section 506; Punishment for criminal intimidation

Section 34: Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention



Condemning the murder incident, market remained closed for one day.

companions and two others of the rival party. When the deceased fell down, the accused fled from the spot leaving the injured, who were later shifted to SNM Hospital by a friend of the victim."

Presently, seven accused are on police remand and one accused is under treatment at SNM Hospital.

A press conference was convened by Sargun Shukla, SSP Leh, on April 22, when she said, "The key accused of the murder case is arrested and on his disclosure the weapon of offence has been recovered. All the accused has been arrested, except one which is still under treatment at SNM hospital."

She informed that the investigation as per legal provision is underway. The doctors have addressed the medico-legal part and have also informed that a special forensic team is there to take care of forensic aspect.

"We are very hopeful that the investigation will be completed very shortly", she added.

When asked about the circulation of gory images on social media platforms, she said that it was not only inhuman but also unethical and everyone should discourage it.

Sargun Shukla said, "The police will not spare anybody whoever tries to spoil the peaceful atmosphere of the district and those who try to violate the law will be taken to task."

She informed that the boys were between 20-25 years. She requested the parents to be little more aware and involved in the parenting of their children. Monitoring and early intervention from the family is needed when they know that their children are into alcohol and drugs. Early intervention is the best thing and will be more effective if it comes from society rather than police.

Condemning the incident, all religious organizations convened a press conference on April 23 at the Press Club, Leh. The religious heads alleged that the law enforcing agencies had failed to maintain law and order in the town and stressed on keeping a check on the restaurants and cafes that served alcohol illegally. They also wanted restrictions on the timings of bar and wine shops.

All the commercial set-ups remained closed for one day in Leh on April 23.

A press conference was also organised on April 25 by the Chief Representative Officer, Tseten Wangchuk, and he said, "We strongly condemn the incident and express my condolences to the deceased family. The incident was unfortunate and it has nothing to do with the two communities. The two communities have been living in peace and harmony. It is a social responsibility to stop

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Health for All: An objective that leaves none behind



Dawa Dolma

LEH: Universal health coverage (UHC) as a movement towards achieving health for all is one of the most prominent health goals set by the United Nations to achieve quality access to health care, free medical finance, proper immunization, and preventive care.

This, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), all member states of the United Nations consented to achieve universal health coverage by 2030. Similarly, this year, World Health Day is celebrated under the theme "Universal Health Coverage" to ensure health for everyone and everywhere. Health experts believe that emphasis should definitely be on the primary health sectors

in reaching every nook and corner of the world.

In Leh, according to Chief Medical Office data, there are 158 health centres working as a referral mechanism. These include district hospital (SNM), sub-district hospitals in Nubra and Khaltse, 18 Primary health centres, and the rest are sub-centres located in all inhabitant villages.

Leh has a fairly good record of providing basic health care and essential medical access to its people says Dr Motup Dorje, Chief Medical Officer. "We target towards achieving zero maternal death this year and mother and children receive all vaccination. The infant mortality rate

...Continues on Page 2

District Congress Committee, Leh releases poll manifesto

It reflects people's aspirations, and we promise to give 100 percent result, says Rigzin Spalbar



Stanzin Dasal

LEH: District Congress Committee, Leh released its poll manifesto titled 'Congress Will Deliver' on April 25 for the upcoming 2019 Lok Sabha election.

Rigzin Spalbar, MP candidate/ Former CEC said, "The manifesto reflects voices and aspiration of the people. We are committed to work for the development of the region and promise to give our best in achieving what has been promised."

Highlighting the long pending demands of the people, Congress party promised to strive for Union Territory status, inclusion of Bhoti language in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution and Kailash Mansarovar route via Chushul, Demchok, and Chumur.

Ahead of the polls, some of the key promises made by the party are to address issues related to unemployment with special focus on women, creation of new parliamentary constituency and to bridge the gaps between Leh and Kargil, adequate political

representation of the minorities in the LAHDC, opening of Turtuk Khapulu road as well as Hanu Turtuk road, early award of contract and fast execution of work on Zojila tunnel, Leh Padum Darcha road, Khardongla tunnel, Parangla tunnel to connect Kiber and Korzok, creation of Changthang Development Authority under tourism sector and commission of the Nubra Development authority.

Highlighting the party priority set on

...Continues on Page 3

Mini marathon 'Leh Runs Leh Votes' held in Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A mini marathon themed, 'Leh Runs Leh Votes' was flagged off by Sana Dua, Former Miss India and brand ambassador of J&K Lok Sabha elections 2019 on April 27 from NDS sports stadium.

The marathon culminated at the main market where a number of programs related to voters awareness like street play, mock-poll, signature campaign, demonstration and hands-on training on EVM/VVPAT, flash

mob, and pop-up music were showcased.

Avny Lavasa, District Election Officer, Leh urged the electorates to exercise their right to vote sensibly on May 6 without fear and influence.

She appealed the students to become ambassadors of this voter awareness campaign and spread maximum awareness among their friends, families, and neighbours.

Sana Dua expressed her grati-

tude to District Election Officer, Leh for organising the event and appealed everyone to ensure maximum voting on May 6.

Alkesh Kumar, General Observer for Lok Sabha Elections, Sargun Shukla, SSP, Leh, Sachin Kumar, ADC/ARO, Tashi Dolma, Joint Director for Education/Nodal officer for SVEEP, Stanzin Gya, Filmmaker & Election icon of Leh district, District officers, heads of religious and social organisations, students and youth of Leh district participated.

Symbols allotted for candidates in Ladakh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In presence of General Observer for Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency, Alkesh Kumar Sharma, Returning Officer Ladakh Avny Lavasa allotted party symbols to the four candidates for the Ladakh Parliamentary seat in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election to be held on May 6 in both the districts of Leh and Kargil on April 22.

The symbols assigned to each candidate were Rigzin Spalbar, Indian National Congress party symbol, Jamyang Tsering Namgial was allotted national party symbol of Bhartiya Janta Party, Asgar Ali Karbalai, Independent candidate was assigned the symbol of Cup & Saucer and Sajjad Hussain Kargili, Independent candidate was assigned with the symbol of Battery Torch.

Later, the second round randomization of EVMs of Leh, Nubra, Kargil and Zaskar Assembly segments was also done in presence of General Observer and the representatives of contesting candidates. The printed reports of randomization of EVMs of all the four Assembly segments were provided to the representatives of the contesting candidates.

7 arrested in boy's murder case in Leh

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these kinds of crime in future".

Reacting on the lyrics circulated on social media, he said, "Insulting lyrics of a rap song aiming at instigating communal disharmony had been circulated by social media users. We suspect the content creator is a Chinese spy or aims to create instability between the two communities. We strongly con-

demn such provocative content and request to be responsible social media users by instantly deleting and not forwarding the same. We will take strict action against such social media user in future."

To prevent such crimes in future, Wangchuk said that it was the responsibility of everyone to advice the youngsters and adolescent not to get involved in such crimes. And that there was a need to engage them in various activities to bring peace and harmony in the society.

BUILDING FOR RENT



A three-storey building having twelve (12) double bedrooms with attached bathrooms and a big hall is available for rent basis in the centre of the town at Eidgah Kargil.

The building is suitable for corporate office/big business units/banks guest house etc.

Interested parties/individuals may please contact at phone no. 9419179195, 9622231398, 9419886484 for negotiations.

Health for All: An objective that leaves none behind

...Continued from Page 1

has reduced to a single digit i.e. 8 per cent clearly indicates that Leh is moving forward in terms of health care. Such outcomes are truly making universal health coverage a reality", he adds.

He also mentions that all the villages of Leh have access to basic health care needs like mother-child health care, immunization, and essential medicines are provided under the supervision of pharmacists and nurses. However, the main challenge is that we have a shortage of medical officers and specialists in Leh. Even the local graduated medical students and doctors prefer to work in other parts of the country.

Primary health care is the foundation of a healthy community and negligence towards establishing a functional primary health centre is the core reason behind the rapid growth of chronic ailments. Yet, many local health experts believe that the present concern is a non-communicable disease rather than primary health care.

Tsering Sandup, Executive Councilor for Health, LAHDC says, "Primary health centre plays a crucial role in implementing universal health coverage by bringing patients to the first point of medical aids in remote villages and providing trained professionals to diagnose and further referral for on-going treatment."

Talking about the challenges, he informs, "Most of the primary health care centres in Leh are understaffed and underfunded. To overcome the challenges, an effort has been made by Hill Council to seek funds under various government schemes. We have already identified specific villages that face accessibility challenges and we are going to establish more Sub-centres so that every person within a 5 km radius can have access to primary health care.

Progress is being made in the matter of understaffed and shortage of specialized doctors, and health

councillors. We requested the state government to fill these vacancies. In February 2019, an additional thirty-three doctors were recruited for Leh district."

Furthermore, the ongoing demand for Medical College would offer students and doctors to be able to undergo training and placement. At the same time, Hill Council plans to invest by seeking funds in strengthening health systems.

Conducting awareness camps and programs is crucial in letting people know about their health status and medical care. Tashi Anghuk, President of Medical Social Service Association, Leh states that "The district CMO and SNM hospital have been organizing awareness camps but failed to reach secluded areas with limited population. In order to reach awareness in those areas, the involvement of the community leader (Goba), health workers, and villagers are a must."

He also identifies that people of Leh are relatively irresponsible when it comes to examining their health status and medical condition. Therefore, preventive care is an individual task, to identify one's health condition by taking into account one's dietary habits, lifestyle and personal hygiene.

Health for all is possible when there is no financial restraint. The treatments in all district hospitals and health care centres are free of charge excluding diagnostic charges and medicines. Medical expenses are very minimal in the district and the charged money goes to the hospital developmental fund, which is used to upgrade its infrastructural and developmental needs.

Strong and sustainable primary health care is the bedrock of universal health coverage, and the best defence against outbreaks and other health emergencies as Dr Tedros, Director of World Health Organization rightly said on World Health Day 2019.

To sum up, Leh still has a long way to go in making universal health coverage a reality and it is achievable when the people, health workers, government institutions and health sectors work collectively.

Congress organises poll rally in Leh

BJP has failed to fulfil the promises made during last election, says Jora



Public gathered during the Congress mega rally at Pologround, Leh

Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Congress leaders slammed BJP government for not meeting the expectation of the people of Ladakh during a mega public rally organised by District Congress Committee, Leh on April 16 at Pologround.

Nawang Rigzin Jora, Former MLA said, "Congress party believes in giving equal opportunity to every section of the society whereas, the BJP plays divisive politics creating a threat to the minorities. The ideology of the saffron party is very narrow and it is one among the prime reason behind the resignation of Thupstan Chhewang, Former MP".

"Congress party unites the whole nation into one and on the other hand BJP party who claims 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas' divides people in the name of religion, region and culture", he added.

He said that the government has terribly failed in keeping up the main promises made during the election.

Highlighting the developmental work carried out by the Congress party, Rigzin Jora said that the major developmental work and projects in the region which BJP takes the credit are actually initiated by the Congress party.

Talking about the promises to

get UT status for the region, he said, "BJP government fooled people every time in the name of UT and when they are unable to keep up the promises they lured people in the name of divisional status which is granted in a hurried manner."

Appraising the MP candidate Rigzin Spalbar for the upcoming Lok Sabha election, Jora said that Rigzin Spalbar has proved his caliber by serving the people for many years at different capacities. He said that Spalbar is an experienced and deserving candidate in the party to stand for MP and serve the region.

Appealing people for the support in the upcoming Lok Sabha election, Rigzin Spalbar said, "Given a chance, I will work for the development of the region as a whole without playing narrow and dividing politics in the name of Leh and Kargil."

Deldan Namgail, Former MLA Nubra, Gurmet Dorjay, Councillor Korzok, Tsering Samphel, Former President DCC, Leh and other senior leaders also spoke on the occasion.

Ladakh PDP President, along with other members, joins BJP



Vikram Randhawa, MLC welcoming Advocate Tashi Gyalson along with the core members of PDP in BJP.

Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Citing BJP party progressive mindset and a dedication to work for the overall development of the region, Advocate Tashi Gyalson, President, PDP, Leh along with other members

joined BJP on April 16.

The PDP party executive members including Rinchen Lhamo, PDP Women Wing president also a Nominated Councillor, Sangay Dorjey, General Secretary, Captain Phunstog, Zonal President

Nubra, and other core members joined BJP party in presence of Vikram Randhawa, MLC.

Tashi Gyalson said that the development made by the BJP party over the last few years is a practical implication of slogan 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas'.

He said, "BJP is the only party who will fulfil the Union Territory status demand. I feel proud to be part of the party again who actually thinks about the betterment of the region. Along with the dynamic and visionary leaders of BJP, we will work together for the development of the region."

Avinash Rai Khanna, Incharge J&K, Satish Sharma, Senior leader, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP candidate and other party leaders were present.

Gya-Miru students all set for France tour in May



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Students of Government Middle School Gya are all set to go for a month-long cultural exchange tour to France in May.

The tour was initiated by Stanzin Gya, filmmaker.

In this regard, a culture show highlighting the values of the age-old culture of Ladakh was presented by the students and teaching staff of Government Middle School Gya on April 25 at Lotsava auditorium, Cultural Academy Leh.

Ramon Magsaysay Awardee, Sonam Wangchuk was the chief guest.

Sonam Wangchuk termed the cultural exchange program to France as a big opportunity for the students of a Govt. school to learn many things and upgrade their knowledge in the field of education. He appreciated the efforts put by Stanzin Gya in accomplishing the tour for the students of a rural Govt. school.

He advised them to precisely observe and experience

each moment in France so that they could bring good things to Ladakh in exchange.

He further announced to create resources and opportunities for those students studying in other Govt schools of remote areas so that they could also see a similar dream of visiting European countries.

Tashi Dolma, Joint Director, Education Ladakh and Stanzin Gya gave detail summary about the projected France tour.

Meanwhile, the SVEEP team of Education Department organised an awareness drive for all the eligible voters for their maximum participation in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections on May 6.

Highly appreciating the efforts of Leh Election Authority for the awareness program, Sonam Wangchuk said that it will help in strengthening the democracy and overall growth of the country. He also appealed people to vote on May 6.

Election badges highlighting the importance of vote were also distributed among the audiences.

Observer inspects expenditure registers of candidates in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Expenditure Observer for Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency, Milan Ruchal conducted the first inspection of account details of contesting party candidates from Leh district for the Lok Sabha Election, 2019 at Leh on April 23.

Expenditure Observer did detail scrutiny of bills submitted by the party agents of their election expenditures so far. He instructed the Assistant Election Officer (AEO) and Nodal Officers of Election Expenditure Monitoring (EEM) to cross check all the accounts detail before the 2nd inspection ensuring transparency and validity of bills submitted.



He also directed them to maintain and cross check the account register with the party agents to ensure that their expenditure does not cross the limit fixed as per ECI guidelines.

It was informed during the meeting that the second inspection of account will be held on April 26. The third and final accounts inspection

will be held for both Leh and Kargil in Leh at DC Office on May 4.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Leh Moses Kunzang, AEO Dr. Zulfikar Ali, Nodal Officers Election Expenditure Monitoring Jigmet Namgyal and Stanzin Donsal, accounting team and agents of respective political parties.

SVEEP program held in Trans-Singhe villages



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Under SVEEP programme, Avny Lavasa, DC/District Election Officer visited villages of Trans-Singhe-la area for voter education and awareness on April 24.

Addressing the public gatherings at Fanjila, Hunufatta and Fotoksar, Avny Lavasa strongly urged upon all the eligible citizens to vote on May 6.

Highlighting the importance of exercising their voting franchise to choose a good government for better progress and development, she urged upon the people to ensure their larger participation in upcoming Lok Sabha elections. She said that this will not only help to strengthen the democratic system

of our country but would also ensure the overall improvement of public life.

Avny also visited educational institutions in the area and interacted with the students about their current state of education as well as the availability of basic infrastructural facilities and teaching staff.

The Master Trainers also conducted workshops and gave live demonstrations on the operating procedure of EVM and VV PAT.

On the second day, she visited the newly opened polling station at Hipti and took stock of the availability of Assured Minimum Facility such as road, drinking water, toilet, ramp and electricity at the polling station. The concerned officers were directed to ensure the basic facility for the convenience of the electorates.

She also visited Mangyu village and urged upon the voters to exercise their voting franchise. She said that each vote is important and decisive for forming a good government.

Detail information about the functioning of the newly introduced VVPAT machine was also imparted.

Tsering Motup, SDM Khatshi, Ex en. PWD Khatse and BDO Khatse were also present.

District Congress Committee Leh releases poll manifesto

...Continued from page 2

the education sector, Rigzin Spalbar said that in the national level manifesto, Indian National Congress has promised for 6% of the GDP on education which is only 3%. At the district level, the manifesto listed creation of Central University, Medical and Engineering colleges, the opening of more Navodaya and Kendriya Vidyalayas in Ladakh on need basis and Sainik School. Special package from the Ministry of Culture and Languages for the creation of Bhoti and Arabic language teachers for all the schools in Ladakh and to make CIBS deemed to University fully functional in letter and spirit are also promised.

Promises for early completion of the power transmission line between Phyang and Nubra, explore and tap the potential of Geothermal energy from

the Puga hot springs, water conservation project, multipurpose hydel projects on Siachen and Shayok rivers, steps for a new airport for Zaskar at Padum and expansion/ upgradation of Kargil airport for the operation of medium capacity civilian flights, issues pertaining to defense such as procurement of labour, preference to local candidates during the recruitment in Ladakh scouts, paramilitary forces and other regiments of the Indian Army were made.

Also, to take up issues of curtailment of ration quota, escalation of LPG rate, fuel prices, enhancing the central allocation of funds for Ladakh in the tourism sector, promoting agriculture sector, development of standard international standard infrastructure in Ladakh to promote sports are some other points highlighted in the document.

PLOT FOR SALE

Plot for sale in Karzoo Stakpa behind Kailash Guest House.

Plot Size: 1.5 Kanal. For inquiries contact: 9622967479/9906979300

EXPERT TALK

Protect our species

By Dawa Dolma



Dr. Tsewang Namgail, Director of Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust: Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLC-IT) came into existence in the year of 2003, mostly in response to the growing conflict between snow leopards and humans. The conflict is largely in the form of snow leopard getting into livestock pens and killing a large number of domestic animals like sheep and goats. The organization is working not only for snow leopard conservation but also for the welfare of the overall mountain ecosystem of Ladakh.

The non-profit organization operates several conservation programs; workshops/awareness programs to educate people about eco-system services provided by wildlife and the role of wildlife in maintaining an ecological balance in the region, research to understand the population and ecology of various wild animals by using cutting edge methods like camera traps, global positioning system, remote sensing, etc. The livelihood improvement programs include the award-winning Himalayan Home-stay giving income generation opportunities to people living in the remotest parts of Ladakh, empowering women and providing job opportunities to unemployed youths and school drop-outs, handicraft developmental program, eco-friendly initiatives such as eco-cafes and eco shower facilities that help in promoting eco-tourism in Ladakh.

Geographically, Ladakh is a very isolated area with low primary productivity, but surprisingly, it has a very diverse group of wild flora and fauna including some of the most threatened and charismatic species like snow leopard and wild yak. Despite the thin air and high aridity, Ladakh has more than 34 species of mammals, more than 320 species of birds and over 10 species of reptiles. There are over 1000 vascular plants, most of which have medicinal values.

Unprecedented human developmental activities, resulting in climate change and global warming have an adverse effect on nature, wildlife and ecology of Ladakh. The extinction rate of flora and fauna is rising all over the world. In Ladakh, various mammals and birds are under the threat of local extinction. Tibetan antelope, Wild Yak, Ladakh ural, Tibetan argali, and Tibetan gazelle to name a few are on the verge of local extinction. Birds in Ladakh are mostly migratory in nature as they move seasonally between their breeding and wintering areas. Black-necked Crane is an elegant bird and is the state

bird of Jammu and Kashmir, but its population is declining fast. There are several other highly threatened birds such as Egyptian vulture, a raptor visiting Ladakh in limited numbers, is listed as an endangered species on International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

The causes of the declining numbers of wild animals in Ladakh haven't been research adequately. Overgrazing and competition with domestic sheep and goats have been implicated as the primary reason for the declining population of several wild animals like Tibetan gazelle, Tibetan argali and Tibetan antelope. The nomadic herders in the eastern part of Ladakh have been increasing the number of Pashmina goats in response to the growing demand for the fiber. If the current rate of population growth of domestic livestock continues, then the entire grazing system in the region might collapse, leading to desertification.

There are several other threats to wild animals in Ladakh. The biggest of them all is free-ranging dogs. The populations of these dogs have been growing exponentially over the last decade or so. There are organizations working to reduce the menace of stray dogs, although they focus primarily on sterilization, considered by them to be the most effective solution. Well, sterilization can control the population of these canines but only when we spay and neuter over 80% of the dog population. The long-term solution is the management of wet waste engendered by the rapid growth of mass tourism.

Unregulated tourism is threatening wildlife in an unprecedented way. Tourism has both direct and indirect impact on wildlife. Everyone knows about the menace of feeding wild animals by thoughtless and insensitive tourists. Feeding of wild animals can make the critters fat and prone to diseases as their digestive system is not designed to digest modern human food characterized by high fat and sugar content. Trashing of wildlife habitat with plastic and other pollutants is rampant. These wastes will ultimately harm wild animals as these pollutants contaminate water. Air pollution also harms wild animals in various ways.

Solution

- Having a proper wet waste management system in places of stray dogs. SLC-IT is currently developing a prototype of a biogas digester, which can help in managing the kitchen waste and producing gas for the kitchen.
- Reviving and revitalizing our rich value system characterized by compassion and deep respect for Mother Nature.
- Putting a cap on our aspirations and letting economic well-being translate into human well-being.
- Responding to moral and social incentives in addition to economic incentives.

- Introducing wildlife conservation and ecotourism in the school curriculum so that children can develop conservation and travel ethics early on in their lives.



Dr. Pankaj Chandan, Team Leader of WWF-Leh: World Wide Fund for Nature is an international organization working for nature conservation by condensing degradation of the planet's natural environment and building a future in which humans' lives in harmony with nature. WWF - India works with varied groups of individuals and institutions across different sections of society to take forward the agenda of environmental protection.

The organization has created its mission to conserve the world's biological diversity, to ensure the use of renewable natural resources in a sustainable way, and to promote the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

Ladakh is famous not only in India but across the globe for its unique wildlife and its Trans-Himalayan landscape. So far WWF has recorded more than 30 species of mammals and about 280 species of birds of Ladakh, and are recorded through field surveys using various wildlife census techniques. They include the iconic mammal species like snow leopard, Eurasian otter, lynx, Himalayan brown bear and Asiatic ibex. The wetlands of Ladakh are also for known breeding grounds of the iconic species like Black-necked Crane and Bar-headed Goose. Other bird species are found in Ladakh such as upland buzzard and Saker falcon.

Since Ladakh is part of the Trans-Himalayan region which is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. However, currently, there is no data to conclude that certain wildlife of Ladakh is facing the threat of extinction as a result of climate change. Yet, the aquatic animals are of higher risk from emerging threat of climate change like Black-necked crane and Eurasian otters. To avoid such risk, it is crucial to protect each and every nesting site of cranes in Ladakh.

Unplanned and unregulated developmental activities not only in Ladakh but across the globe are the main causes of climate change. Such impacts are now becoming more visible in Ladakh especially when there was limited rangeland in the pastures last year due to extreme drought. Sudden heavy snowfall in Changthang killed a large number of Pashmina goats at Tsokar and nearby areas in March 2019.

Solution

- The only way to protect our unique species is to work together

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IN FOCUS

Ambedkar Jayanti: The missing focus

Stanzin Stamdin

Like mainland India, Leh too celebrated recently the 128th birth anniversary of Dr. B R Ambedkar with great zeal and fervour. The event was organized by the Ladakh Buddhist Association, and it is to be acknowledged that the LBA has been regularly organizing events to eliminate the evil practice of caste system in Ladakh by commemorating B R Ambedkar's birthday.

However, what baffles one is the turning of this event into a mere conformity, with a lot of colorful and irrelevant cultural shows, and thus forgetting to highlight and root out the prevalent practice of caste system in contemporary Ladakh. Speeches by various resource persons are mere rhetoric, narrating the struggle of Ambedkar's childhood, and how he achieved success by overcoming a sea of hurdles. Surprisingly, nobody condemns the evil practice of caste system in Ladakh.

Ambedkar Jayanti is a great opportunity, where, we are supposed to relate Ambedkar's ideology regarding the caste system and his embracing of Buddhism to the contemporary Ladakhi society. Everyone knows that Ambedkar was a great social reformer besides being a great statesman and the architect of India's Constitution. After a life long struggle against the evil practice of the caste system in Hindu society, along with millions of Dalits, he finally converted to Buddhism. He embraced Buddhism because the then Hindu society practised caste system brazenly. For instance, a person of lower caste could not dine with upper caste people; inter-caste marriage was strictly prohibited, caste practice was defended on



the biological ground, etc. On the whole, a person of lower caste was almost treated as sub-human.

Today, as we celebrate Babasaheb's birth anniversary with great pomp and splendour, do we see Ladakh as a society that Dr. Ambedkar had envisioned in Buddhism? Is Ladakhi society a caste-free society? The answer is a big NO, as we Ladakhis too are casteist and do practice casteism brazenly. There are tribes of people in Ladakh called Mon, Beda, and Gara, or even those called blacksmith or goldsmiths, who are treated as lower castes in Ladakhi society. The treatment meted out to them, even in the 21st century Ladakh, is unimaginable in the light of Babasaheb's idea of Buddhism. Just like Ambedkar and other Dalits were/humiliated by the upper caste people, the so-called lower caste people in Ladakh are

also humiliated and harassed in their daily life by other people. Lower caste people are made to sit at the back in specific seating arrangements for functions, events, and religious gatherings, irrespective of their age and social status.

People from upper caste don't share a cup with them. An inter-caste marriage is not allowed. The hierarchal system that was/is prevalent in Hindu society is prevalent in Ladakhi society too, be it a Buddhist or a Muslim community. In the Buddhist society, there is Kaga/Shema/Royal at the top, Tongpa at the middle, and Gara/Mon/Beda at the lowest. In the case of Muslims, there is Agha/Sheikh/Royal at the top, tongpa at the middle and Beda at the lowest. These are the crude facts of our society, and no matter how much we try to suppress that, it is going to haunt us every now and then as Dr. Ambedkar rightly notes: "You cannot build anything on the foundations of caste. You cannot build up a nation, you cannot build up morality. Anything that you will build on the foundation of caste will crack and will never be a whole" (Annihilation of Caste by Ambedkar).

These facts should have been highlighted at Babasaheb's birth anniversary event so that a holistic step towards eliminating the caste practice would have been kicked off. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that the LBA and other religious organizations would take up Ambedkar's Jayanti towards more fruitful and productive outcome next year and would not restrict it to a mere political show.

The writer is a research scholar at Department of English in Central University of Jammu, J&K.

SoulSpeak

P. P. Wangchuk

Belief in fate is the outcome of our poor understanding of facts



Fate is the end-result of what we make of your thoughts and how we go about doing things. Once we start relying on fate, we start coming to the end of the road, so to say. That is because we stop chasing goals that are good and meaningful in life. Fate involves the idea that we have a predestined life and that will surely materialise whether or not we act. Nothing can be more dangerous than such a thought.

Swedish statesman Dag Hammarskjold had said that for peace and progress "we need the qualities of perseverance and patience, a firm grip on realities, careful but imaginative planning, and a clear understanding that fate is what we make." That means clearly that we are the masters of our own fate, and that to take solace in our 'fate' is a grave misunderstanding as a result of our poor ability to see the reality of factors that bind us.

It is indeed true that one who understands that fate+action is the sure way to succeed is a person who will succeed. Fate, for such a person, turns into hope and possibility, and his action, passion and hard-work take him to the heights of success. He gets into a mode of belief that compels him to repeat the affirmative mantra, day in and day out: I can, I will.

Studies done in recent times have revealed that those who have a fiery passion for great things in life find their task difficult but enjoyable. For them, it is a challenge that becomes their sole life mission, one at a time. And it also true that successive challenges become easier to tackle and made best use of.

Courtesy: Hindustan Times

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

In Conversation with Tashi Namgyal, Commandant, ITBP

Interviewed by Rigzin Wangmo

Q. Brief us about yourself.

I did my elementary schooling from Government Primary School Taru and studied in Vishesh Kendriya Vidyalaya, Delhi till matriculation. After which I returned to Leh. I completed my graduation through correspondence courses from Delhi University.

Along with my education, I was pursuing Archery, and represented India in International tournament and won medals for the country. I remained active with the Indian Archery team from 1988 to 1993 and then appeared in (Central Police Organisation) CPO's examination conducted by SSB, which is now being conducted by UPSC. I joined ITBP as an Assistant Commandant in October 1997.

My first posting was in Leh during which I mostly served in borders as Company Commander.

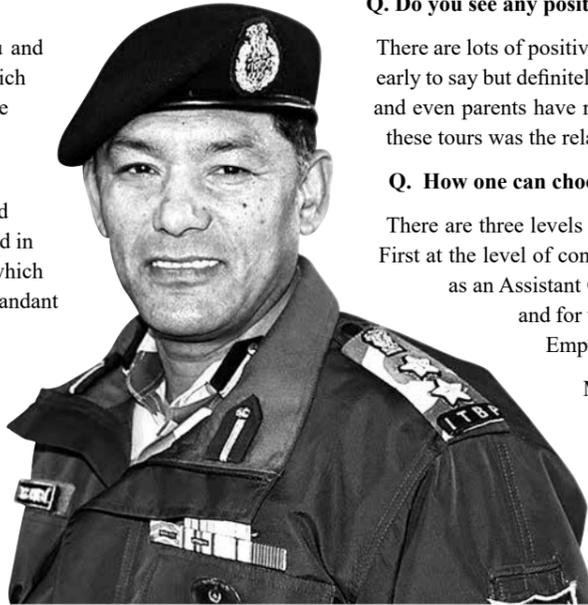
In 2001, I was transferred to Patiala and in 2005 transferred to Delhi as Deputy Commandant after which served with 5th Battalion ITBP, Leh from 2007 to 2010. I also served in Chhattisgarh on promotion as Second in Command, a unit in Chhattisgarh on Anti Naxal Operation. In November 2013, I was promoted as Commandant to 21 Battalion. ITBP at Srinagar Pantha Chowk and served till 2016. From April 2016 to February 2019 served 37 Battalion and recently transferred to Force Headquarters ITBP.

Q. Ladakh being a strategically important region, what are the roles and responsibility of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)?

ITBP was raised on 24 October 1962 and deployed on border guarding duties from Karakoram Pass in Ladakh to Jachep La in Arunachal Pradesh covering 3,488 km of Indo-China Border and manning Border Outposts on altitudes ranging from 9000 to 18,700 in the Western, Middle and Eastern sectors of the Indo-China Border.

Q. ITBP has been organising Bharat Darshan Tour for the students, especially of border areas. What is the objective of it?

Bharat Darshan tours are being organised under the civic action program of Government of India. The Ministry of Home Affairs allocates funds to various Central Armed Police Force for organising Civic Action Program. This year we emphasized on school children of remote



Q. Do you see any positive outcomes from these tours? Give us few examples?

There are lots of positive outcome from these tours such as the children gained confident, though it is early to say but definitely their horizon has increased with such exposure tours. The children, teachers and even parents have requested us to organise such tour in the future. The biggest take away from these tours was the relation which the children of the area developed with ITBP.

Q. How one can choose a career in paramilitary forces. What are the procedures?

There are three levels of direct entry in paramilitary forces like ITBP, CRPF, BSF, CISF and SSB. First at the level of constabulary, second at the level of Sub Inspector and the third at Officer Level as an Assistant Commandant. For the first two levels, exams are conducted annually by SSC and for the officer, the exam is conducted by UPSC, which are advertised regularly in Employment News and on the website of concern forces.

Minimum qualification for a constable is 10th pass and for Sub-inspector and Assistant Commandant minimum qualification required is graduation. Beside academic qualification, it also requires certain physical standards and the candidates need to undergo physical efficiency test.

Q. What are the challenges you have come across while being stationed in the tense borders?

Officers and men of ITBP are well trained for tackling any situation which they may come across while performing Border Guarding duties. However, the biggest challenge on the border in Ladakh particularly for non Ladakhi soldiers are not the adversary but weather, terrain, altitude and solitude. As an officer, it is a big challenge to keep these soldiers motivated.

Q. What do you have to say on the outrageous terror attacks in the valley? Do you think there is a solution to stop the disturbance?

My view is that there is a solution to every problem and Kashmir is not exceptional, it has to be holistic and not one-dimensional. Strong-arm tactics alone will not put an end to such troubles. The radicalization and indoctrination of the youth of the valley have to be stopped, and they are required to channelize into the mainstream.

Q. How would you define the feeling of serving the nation?

Every patriot serves his or her nation in some way or the other. I am fortunate enough to be in uniform forces which are visible and obvious too.

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“ Whatever career the young generation of Ladakh chooses or aspire to become, one should do it with conviction, sincerity, and thoroughness. Ladakhi's are known for their sincerity, humbleness, and honesty, the legacy should continue. ”

areas for the tour. The aim is to connect people and children of remote areas of Ladakh with the rest of India and to enrich the knowledge of Indian culture, heritage, and history. At the same time, to inculcate a sense of belongingness towards mainstream India and experiencing life in plains particularly the coastal areas.

FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



Avny Lavasa, DC, Leh with the school children of Middle School Fotoksar.



SVEEP team educating people about the voting rights and making them familiar with the EVM & VVPT machines.



Elderly woman of Nubra appealing to vote during the voter awareness campaign at Tangyar & Kyagar.



Mass awareness campaign themed, "Sweep under SVEEP" for voters participation along with inculcating the habit of cleanliness and waste segregation at Khree Sultan Chow Sports Stadium, Bemathang.



Shab-e-Barat, birth anniversary of Harzat-e-Imam Mehdi (A.S) celebration in Sankoo, Kargil.



Tip Top club lifted the 17th Kargil War Heroes Cup 2019 cricket tournament.



Avny Lavasa, DC/ District Election Officer during the Mini Marathon, 'Leh Runs Leh Votes'.

2nd phase training of Micro Observers held at Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Central government employees of Leh district who are appointed as Micro Observers were imparted the second phase of training for Lok Sabha election on April 25 at DC office conference hall.

Alkesh Kumar Sharma, General Observer for Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency chaired the meeting and Avny Lavasa, District Election Officer Leh was also present.

Imparting the training to the Micro Observers, Nodal Officers

EVM, Dr. Stanzin Rabgyas and Dr. Tundup Namgyal briefed about the function, responsibilities and duties of Micro Observers.

Alkesh Kumar Sharma advised the Micro Observers to observe the overall functioning at their respective polling stations on the poll day and urged them to ensure vote caste of even the last person in the queue on Election Day.

Sharing his phone number, he said that each one of them must understand their role as per guidelines of the ECI, and they can contact him on his number on the poll day for any query.

SVEEP team conducts voter awareness drive in Hemis

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: With an aim to ensure maximum voters participation, SVEEP team conducted a voter awareness drive and EVM/VVPAT workshop on April 15 at community hall, Hemis.

The team demonstrated the functioning of VVPAT to the people and discussed the importance of voting. Live demonstration on the mock poll was conducted to make the electorates fully understand the voting process on the polling day.



Meanwhile, SVEEP team also distributed Sankalp Patras to students of different schools in Leh. Sankalp Patra is an initiative

by Election Commission of India to intensify voter awareness through school children to enhance voter's participant.

Awareness on cleanliness, electoral participation held in Kargil



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Awareness programme to inculcate the habit of cleanliness and waste segregation among school going children was held on April 26 at Khree Sultan Chow Sports Stadium Bimathang.

The campaign was organised by the District Election Officer (DEO), Kargil. Around 10, 000 people participated.

Awareness on cleanliness and electoral participation was initiated under massive cleanliness drive 'Sweep under SVEEP' under SVEEP campaign.

S.K Singh, General Observer for

Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency was the chief guest.

S.K Singh appreciated the efforts of the DEO Kargil for the cleanliness campaign in the district. He said that this concept will prove instrumental in sensitizing masses about the importance of cleanliness for a healthy society along with the value of voting.

He further added that cleanliness is not a work that needs to be done forcefully but should come to us naturally considering its importance.

Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, DC/ District Election Officer (DEO) Kargil said that being clean and tidy is a good habit to lead a

healthy life and students need to be aware of the hygiene of their classrooms, playgrounds, toilets, canteens and other places of the school.

He said that children ought to understand the significance of neat and clean surroundings and ensure that garbage is disposed in dustbins instead of throwing it anywhere. Students need to be willing to follow these instructions so as to contribute actively towards a cleaner environment.

The speakers also highlighted the relevance of cleanliness and the importance of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in waste management. They also urged people to maintain a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene at all places and religiously follow segregation of waste at source as dry and wet by using separate dustbin for each.

Meanwhile, a signature campaign for pledge to vote was also organised.

On the third consecutive day, cleanliness drive was held at Degree College Kargil, ITI, Kargil Hospital Road Kargil and several other locations in and around Kargil town.

Avny Lavasa assures minimum facilities at all polling booths in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A meeting of all the Zonal and Sectoral magistrates to ascertain the preparedness following Assured Minimum Facilities at all the polling booths of Leh district was held on April 27 at DC Office conference hall.

The meeting was convened by Avny Lavasa, District Election Officer, Leh Avny Lavasa under the supervision of Alkesh Kumar Sharma, General Observer.

Alkesh Kumar Sharma expressed satisfaction over the preparedness at polling stations so far. However, he urged the Zonal and

Sectoral Magistrates to re-visit their allotted polling stations and look for improvements needed in the requisite facilities under AMF at its best.

He directed them to set up the polling booth and be present well in advance to ensure smooth conduct of polling process on the day of election.

He stressed upon the Zonal and Sectoral Magistrates to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of polling process so that if required they can provide assistance to the Presiding and Polling Officers as per guidelines of ECI. Also, instructed them to

remain vigilant of violation of MCC by any individual or political party.

Avny Lavasa informed about the departure, transportation and communication plans of the polling staff.

She said that one of the major role and responsibility of Zonal and Sectoral Magistrates is to provide elections progress report from time to time without fail to the election control room in Leh on the day of polling.

She further assured proper communication facilities at all the polling booths.

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