

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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Brief News

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CEC, LAHDC, Leh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal in strongest term condemned the gruesome unfortunate rape of a minor in Sumbal, Bandipora. Terming the incident as gruesome attack on the innocence of child and humanity, he urged upon the authorities for fast track disposal of the case along with stringent deterrent punishment to the culprit. On behalf of LAHDC, Leh and people of Leh District expressed solidarity with the family.

On May 10, complaints were received from contesting candidates Sajjad Husain and Asgar Ali Karbalai, the independent candidates regarding postal ballot to be cast by service personnel. So far no specific instances have been mentioned in the complaints. However, these have been brought to the notice of the army authorities who have been requested for sensitising the concerned officers about the procedures prescribed in this regard by the election commission.

Market checking at Choglamsar and Leh market four Food and Business Operators were file from various section of food safety act. Fine of ₹ 38000 was imposed by ADC.

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. You can contact at 9858394403 or email at editor@reachladakh.com. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone numbers.

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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BJP violates model code of conduct; an attempt to bribe Leh press club members



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Some members of Press Leh accused BJP for violating Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in an attempt to bribe them during BJP press conference at Hotel Singee Palace on May 2.

Morup Stanzin, President PCL said, "It was when we were wrapping up the press conference, I overheard a pandemonium near the table and asked my fellow journalists, then they told me that BJP leaders handed over ₹ 500 notes in envelopes."

"Right away, I told Vikram Randhawa, BJP Member of Legislative Council that it is highly an immoral act and such practice is beyond our culture. To this Vikram replied that it is commonly practiced in other parts of the country and take it as a 'token of love'."

Stanzin further added that the connotation of 'token of love' during election is to

indirectly influence media even though they did not mention to favor them.

Leh police on May 8 formally registered a First Information Report (FIR) against some BJP leaders including State President Ravender Raina and MLC Vikram Randhawa for their alleged attempt to bribe the media persons to project party's point of view and influence outcome of the parliamentary elections in Ladakh parliamentary constituency.

The FIR was registered on the direction of the Chief Judicial Magistrate Leh, after Court took cognizance of the complaint filed by the journalists of Leh and Congress Candidate Rigzin Spalbar with the Returning Officer Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency.

The PCL lodged a complaint in regard to the violation of model code of conduct with the District Election Office/

...Continues on Page 2

Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency records 71.10% turnout for LS Election



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In the fifth phase of Lok Sabha Elections, 71.10% voter turnout in Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency including both Leh and Kargil.

According to the District Election Office, Leh district has recorded 62.76% polling with Leh assembly segment getting 61.84% votes cast and Nubra assembly segment with a higher turnout of polling percentage of 67.49%. On the other hand, Kargil district has recorded a total turnout of 79.49% polling with Kargil recording 78.62% and Zaskar 81.98%.

DEO, Leh Avny Lavasa also used her voting right and cast a vote in Leh at 81-Polling Station, Chanspa on May 6. She

informed that polling in Leh district has been conducted in a free and fair manner with no reports of any kind of inconvenient incidents and any technical fault with the voting equipment including EVM and VVPAT.

She said that there were 49 polling stations in Leh district with all women polling staffs and appreciated them for contributing smooth and efficient conduct of the election. She also added that women lack nowhere in terms of capability and it's all about giving them the opportunity.

Due to cold weather conditions, some batteries of voting machines had to be changed as per the procedure without disturbing the voting process.

Lok Sabha Election 2019-Ladakh polling details

Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency	Voter turnout is calculated by dividing the number of valid votes by the number of electors registered to vote.	Highest voters Shenam, Leh = 1301
Total voters = 1,74,618	54699 electorates in Leh	Lowest voters Gaik, 48- Leh assembly = 7
Male voters = 86,752	68890 electorates in Kargil	Washi, 47-Nubra assembly = 7
Female voters = 85,064	Total electorates = 1,23,589	
Service voters = 2,799		

Nono Stanzin Thinless Shunu

We all convey our best wishes and congratulations to you on obtaining 94.75% in your 12th CBSE Board exams. May the days to come bring lots and lots of successes and prosperity in your future.

From ABILEY TASHI, ANEY ANGMO, ACHEY ACHIN, KAGA PHUNTSOG WANGCHUK, AGU NANA, MACHUNG EDZES, NONO KUNGYAL AND AJANG NEEMA.

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Are women of Leh really empowered?

Dawa Dolma & Rigzin Wangmo

LEH: Women's empowerment in recent times has become a surfacing topic in most regions of India. Currently, it is crucial to look at the status of such a movement in Leh. Sure enough, some examples are well known in the area due to media coverage like Ladakhi women team representing the country on the international level of Ice Hockey League, having women associations and women working as government officials to name a few. But does that really mean or signify that overall women in Leh have reached a status quo of sheer empowerment? May be not. In this news article, we will dwell into the subject of women empowerment in Leh by looking back to history, development of women status in the region and women de-empowerment.

It is widely believed that women of Leh are empowered to a great extent that they are enjoying far better opportunities by receiving equal educational opportunities and studying outside of Ladakh as compared to women elsewhere in the country. The need for such comparisons shouldn't have arisen in the first place, as women deserve equality and fair opportunities everywhere.

Women empowerment in Leh is highly ambiguous. Girls are receiving education from schools to colleges and yet not having equal representation in decision-making bodies, be it the Hill Council,

the Assembly or Parliament. Jigmet Sangyas, Assistant professor, J&K Department of Higher Education, believes that the increasing participation of women in the local body political institutions like Panchayati Raj is a good sign but it will still be like a mere appeasement if it remains confined to the local bodies.

In contrast, people in power assert that women are themselves responsible for not coming up into politics, and not coming forward at the authority level. But the reality is that women are often questioned when they try to assert for a bigger picture. Therefore, women coming in power should not be restricted only to women. A viable change is possible if the male members are ready to accept or acknowledge women's struggle for equality. After all, women are also members of the same society and they should have equal rights.

The stigmas attached to women back in the '90s still exist, and many of us presume that women are empowered by working in offices, driving cars, wearing western clothes, and attending colleges. The social perception of appropriating or confining women's capability to the local arena is highly prominent. Moreover, the household chores hold women back to come forward in playing a larger role at the societal level.

Going back to history, Ladakh used to be

...Continues on Page 2

Leh District Administration releases guidelines for establishing non-commercial tourism facilities on bandobasti land



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In response to demolished commercial building set-ups near Pangong Lake on April 10, the District Administration releases guidelines for establishing non-commercial tourism facilities on bandobasti land on May 9.

Non-commercial tourism facilities may be set upon bandobasti land in villages Spangmik, Maan, Merak subject to following conditions:

1. Only ten numbers of tents or one kanal space is to be used for this purpose by each individual

household.

2. It is mandatory to use solar lights.

3. Liquid and solid waste management is mandatory. Design and plans for the same will be provided by district administration.

4. Eco Development Committee as required by the Wildlife Department, has been constituted at the Panchayat level. This Eco Development Committee will give NOC's for the establishment of these camps with representatives from revenue and wildlife department mandatorily being a signatory.

Investiture-cum-Intramural oath ceremony held at Boys Higher Secondary School



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Under the title 'Talash', Investiture-cum-Intramural oath ceremony for the year of 2019-20 was celebrated at Boys Higher Secondary School, Leh on May 13.

Sachin Kumar, ADC, Leh was the chief guest on the occasion. He said that it's a growing time for the children in school and with given opportunities they have a promising way to go ahead in life.

He also expressed that the students are the future and urged them to walk on the right path and to choose their career with the motive to do something for their country. He shared his experience of student life and motivated the students to work hard making the best use of the facilities available to them.

He further assured support from Administration in the best of his capacity to support them. He gave his words to share, interact and guide the students in much detail when he will visit the school as the Mentor for BHS

School, Leh soon.

Tashi Dolma, JD Education, Ladakh said that the purpose of organizing this event is to search for talents in students in different sports and other co-curricular activities. She appreciated the efforts put in by Principal In-charge BHSS, Leh and the staff in successful conduct of the event and wished them a fruitful result of it.

Girdari Lal, CEO, Leh said that this ceremony is a platform to explore the hidden capability of every student and channelize them in a guided direction to get to their goals. He said that along with academics, co-curricular activities are equally important for students and assured full support.

Likewise, District Zonal Phy. Edu. Officer, Leh Abid Ali, Wildlife Warden Dr. Pankaj, JK BOSE Asstt Secretary Tashi Tundup, Asstt Director Planning Education Tsering Angdu also spoke on the occasion.

Dr. Pankaj was appreciated for his generous support in funding the wall paintings drawn on the compound wall of BHSS, Leh

with the aim to create awareness among people to conserve and protect wildlife. Dr. Pankaj said that their department aims at extending similar contribution in conservation wildlife by extending it to other schools in Leh.

The major highlights of the event was parade by school students, presenting titles to the newly elected school captains and house captains, brief description about the school achievements by newly appointed school captain Padma Angmo, oath taking ceremony, dance performances by students, 100 meters race of boys/girls, archery competition and award ceremony. Endeavour of School NCC Mentor Tek Bahadur Pardhan was credited by presenting a gift.

Wildlife Warden Dr. Pankaj, JK BOSE Asstt Secretary Tashi Tundup, Asstt Director Planning Education Tsering Angdu, Principal Girls Higher Sec School, Leh Deldan Angmo, Principal in-charge Boys Higher Sec School, Leh Tsering Yangdol, school faculty and students were present on the occasion.

BJP violates model code of conduct; an attempt to bribe Leh press club members

...Continued from Page 1

RO 4-Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency and the police.

CCTV footage that became viral on social media substantiated the allegations made by Leh journalists as it clearly shows envelopes being distributed among journalists in a suspicious way at the venue.

On the other hand, BJP strongly denied the allegation at the press conference in Jammu. BJP state

leader Ravinder Raina said the party was giving invitation letters to local journalist to cover the poll rally of Defense Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman.

To stand in solidarity with Leh press club, District Congress party organised a rally on May 9 at Leh main bazaar. Press Club Kargil Ladakh expressed solidarity with Leh journalists for speaking up and expressed serious concerns against undemocratic and unethical acts. MP candidates like Rigzin Spalpar, Asgar Ali Karbalai and Sajjad Hussain has highly condemned such deeds.

Are women of Leh really empowered?



Singha Park

...Continued from Page 1

a gender-balanced society where women played a significant role not only in the households but also in the political arena, says Lhundup Gyalpo, a columnist at Stawa. During the reign of Singay Namgyal, every member of society played equally important role in shaping Ladakh as an egalitarian society.

The change in women discourse emerges from post-colonial Indianization in Ladakh. Empowering women is an idea brought from Northern India that is applicable according to the rituals and practices of Hinduism, which is highly problematic. Taking an example, "Women are seen as a commodity to be exchanged during a marriage where a worth of women is equivalent to a government job", says N. Angmo, an independent researcher on women's issues.

Jigmet Sangyas adds that factors behind preferring only a government job can be because of perceptions like government jobs are less hectic and have more concessions, and that she will get proper time to perform domestic tasks. And women in private sectors are more vulnerable towards risks of losing job. Such perceptions reflect an underestimation of women's capability and confining their capacity to their home circles.

Tsering Nordon, associated with "Stand with Nomoly" movement in Jammu, defines women empowerment as a movement in which women needs to play the central role in changing mindsets about the so-called patriarchy. The blatant reality of women being a subordinate class needs to be challenged by talking on labeled "taboos" such as menstruation, mental health, sexual identity and many other such things.

She further mentions that people in Leh barely raise

the issue of domestic violence because of the notion that "what remains in the house remains in the house", as it does not come within the domain of public sphere. Had it been a private matter, we wouldn't have the domestic violence Act in Indian Constitution.

Likewise, the so-called "Nangdik" (deliberation within the family) shuts the door for proper justice for the victim, and also discourages her from taking a strong stand against the culprit/s. Women aren't afforded the same protection at home.

On the other hand, there are women in Leh who misuse women's rights by claiming unsubstantiated domestic harassment and penalising their spouses in the name of alimony. In other words, such women 'de-empower' women's empowerment!

The power relations of both men and women should be equal at every level of society and women need to participate more on developmental process such as building self-confidence, making independent decisions, taking risk and other such issues, says Angmo.

Though we have a few women organisations working for the so-called women's welfare, they lag behind to actually address women's issues in Leh with their outdated thoughts and approaches. Gyalpo mentions that young minds and faces should be promoted in such organisations. Establishing alternative women alliances like 'Phumo Tsogpa' (Girl Alliance) too might bring a wind of change.

In conclusion, we must broaden women's political, economic, social and cultural opportunities and independence. It is crucial to support the empowerment of women at the grass roots level and through affirmation action. For this, everybody will have to stand together in designing a gender-balanced society.

Academic Excellency in 10th CBSE



Tsewang Khasphel, Lamdon School, 93.6% - "I think is directly proportional to output. Input refers to the time, knowledge, idea, money etc. that one has to put wholeheartedly in order to produce desired result. The more the input the more satisfying is the output."



Seldon Angmo, JNV School, 93.6% - "You might encounter hurdles and might find yourself feeling discouraged but then just remember that you only need to stay in your element, be optimistic and stay determined."



Padma Angmo, JNV School, 93.6% - "Be passionate and study with high target. Be focused on what you want to achieve you would definitely hit the boundary."

Academic Excellency in 12th CBSE



Idzin Wangmo, Lamdon School, 96% - "Everybody has a unique way of studying and I think that the best way of achieving highest marks is by developing a method of studying that fulfils your needs. Listen to your teachers, the tips that they give is really productive."

MONOGRAPH

Melting peaks, shrinking cultures, and the narrowing of human possibility



Vitor da Salva

Dolma was 56 and she was the toughest, hard-working woman I probably will ever meet. With the young leaving to bigger cities in look for a 'better future', adults and elders are left behind with too much to bear. On the last day, as I packed my bag, a flashback of my last conversation with Phuntsok took over my mind. It was early afternoon and we were sat by the rabo. He was practicing his slingshot skills, while I cleaned a yak skull that I had found that morning. Phuntsok was waiting for his uncle horse-ride that would take him to town. It was mid-August and it was time for young Phuntsok to return to Punjab for another year of school. "So... how do you see the future of the Changpa? – I asked Phuntsok as he shot his last pebble. "Future? This is the last generation. In ten years, there will be no herders, no raybo, and no Changpa". As Snigdah and I begin our hike back to civilization, I could feel myself trapped in a nostalgic, half-remembered web of emotions and fragmented episodes of connection. As if the countdown to the disappearance of these people, from whom I had learned so much, had began.

One of the fundamental revelations of anthropology is that cultures are not ecstatic. The 5,000 different ways of organising human societies are fruit of a dynamic process of constant change and adaptation. Phuntsok's answer was indeed a hard one to digest, but did not come as a surprise. Having previously stayed in Leh – the capital of Ladakh – to get used to altitude and conduct preliminary research for this expedition, I was well familiar with the reasons that have led many to exchange the traditional way of life for a kind of half-baked modernity. The increased need of labour force in development projects was advertised through an irresistible, but one-dimensional, picture of modernity that obscured the psychological stress, drug addiction, pollution, and homelessness that soon became the reality of many. The Tibetan mani walls inscribed with prayers for the good of all sentient beings were now shadowed by billboards that enshrined new gender archetypes of the beautiful and the brave – too attractive not to be emulated. The images of luxury and power dictated people's priorities and desires by fuelling the need for external recognition – even if it meant to wear a watch one could not read.

My trip to the Capital Leh was a quest to predict and map the location of Changpa's semi nomadic herders for the coming months. The scarce data that I managed to find in the literature was no longer reliable due to recent year's change in weather patterns – a result of climate change.

One morning, as I walked out the usual narrow dusty road that connected my home-stay with Leh's main road, I spotted a group of men sat on the floor near the intersection. They were selling turquoise gemstones – an ornament of great importance to the Changpa, and which was carried by the women who proudly displayed their ancestral collection on a majestic headdress – typically worn on special events. Turquoise is for the Changpa a symbol of cultural heritage, wealth, and also reflected neatly the high status that women held within the community. Traditionally, the turquoise stones were passed down from mother to daughter during an important rite of passage. On that intersection, a family's ancient inheritance was being reduced to weight using a measure unit invented by some distant culture, as these men tried to scratch a living from a cash-based economy.

Before I started firing them with questions about the Changpa, I tried to establish some rapport by showing my genuine appreciation for the stones they were selling. The encrusted marbling on those turquoise suggested that they were very old formations. "Those stones are beautiful" – I told one of the men, which remained in silent. "Where did you get them from?" – I tried again. But he looked in the opposite direction this time and seemed to have ignored me, once again. "Maybe they don't understand English" – I thought. I got up, patted the dust off my knees and without much hope for an answer I opened my map wide and tried one last time "I'm looking for the Changpa. Do you know where I can find them?" The men stopped what they were doing and looked up at me with a wide-eyed and unvarnished expression. They signaled with their hands for me to sit down and bring the map closer.

The men talked among themselves while attentively looking at the map, before one of them candidly extended his arm and with his finger traced a trajectory around the Changthang region, near TsoMoriri Lake. That was the piece of the puzzle I needed. I was exhilarated, but couldn't help but notice their resentment every time I pronounced the word "Changpa". Their in-depth knowledge about the nomadic-patterns suggested that they had been Changpa herders themselves, but now appeared to be seeking liberation from it. Those trading the village life for a quasi-modern paradigm were destined to blindly embrace a western model that taught them to have contempt for, and feel ashamed about their own roots and traditions. Looking back in retrospective, the local people I had met in Leh – in juxtaposition with the semi-nomadic Changpa – were not only divided from one another, but also from themselves.

In comparison to the small region of Korzok, Leh was undoubtedly much more organised, yet it felt less orderly. Although the modern capital provided a closer physical proximity to each other, people

seemed to be more and more disconnected from one another. This phenomena reminds me of the place I come from. Now living in London, I share an apartment with 450 other people but only know about 10 of them. As long as I pay my bills, I don't need to talk to anybody. I don't even need to cook my own food; I can just get it delivered by a stranger. I also don't have to remember anything anymore, I can just have my phone to nudge and my memory is instantly refreshed. My university provides workshops on 'how to save time', and on 'how to become more productive'. In today's modern society, we keep one thousand things that save us time, but also own two thousand more commitments requiring our attention. Similarly, people in Korzok kept telling me about all the time saving commodities their relatives acquired after migrating to Leh: gas cookers, electricity, telephone, and some even had a jeep. But they also told me about how scarce their time had become: "I used to travel 210 km every month to visit my cousin, but now he doesn't have time to talk to me". The western model of development that found its way to the remote region of Ladakh is based on the false promise that those who follow it will achieve the same quality of life enjoyed by a few western nations. The social, cultural and spiritual poverty I saw in Leh was the result of a slow, but surely destructive process of disintegration from one's roots and traditions.

While still in the capital doing my pre-fieldwork research, I had the opportunity to visit a local school. I was impressed with their infrastructures, and the teachers seemed very articulate. They taught about a great variety of things and the children seemed to know a lot about faraway facts. But the universal knowledge they were acquiring seemed to be of little application to their environment and broader living context. In comparison to the holistic, life-long, experiential and communally-based learning ways of the Changpa, education in the capital was subject-specific, short-term, theoretical, and based on individually learned ways of memorizing information. These new ways of passing down knowledge have of course not been developed in Ladakh. They were brought from us, thanks to our ethno-centric-driven propaganda that continues to depict the western paradigm as the apex of human potential. A unique way of life is being eroded, and their knowledge and traditions ways of knowing replaced under the promises that they too can 'become like us'. Those who have their culture stripped down, the celebration of rites of passage denied, their elders replaced by professors and ancient wisdom by fragmented literacy, have too – like many other indigenous group around the world – come to a place of nihilism and meaninglessness.

The individual-centric model derived from the enlightenment period that now found its way to the cold, windy mountains of Ladakh, has indeed liberated people from the constraints of religion, tradition, and superstition, but it has also casted the individual adrift – in every sense of the word. For the Changpa, the Tibetan Buddhist teachings played a fundamental role in shaping their attitude towards life and death. Their prayers serve as an anchor to the present moment, and their offerings a reminder about the importance of reciprocity. The Buddhist foundations not only fill their lives with meaning, but also make the difficulties that come with living in such a desolated geography a bit more bearable. Despite the changes brought by climate change, the nomadic-Changpa still operate under a mode of reality

that is bound by a healthy interdependence with their environment: taking just what one needs, no more, no less. As opposed to the illusory sense of insufficiency and increased competitiveness common among those who migrated to the capital, the Changpa's awareness about the limitation of their resources do not encourage feelings of scarcity or rivalry, but of harmony and cooperation. By surrendering to the harshness of the environment, the Changpa seemed to have reached a deep state of acceptance and tranquility with themselves, and with one another – for they know full-well that to adopt an individual-centric mode of existence in these mountains would mean death. Indeed, if a compassionate attitude towards one another was a necessity to survive as a nomadic herder, an individualistic approach seems to have become the required norm for those stumbling through the pseudo-modern streets of Leh.

Modernity has of course provided Ladakhis with undeniable benefits. It provided them with life-saving medicines, revolutionized their capacity to move around the country, made them physically safer than ever, and granted them with unimaginable levels of comfort. But it also alienated human connection, furthered anonymity, and contributed to the polarization between men and women.

"It is true that without the technological wizardry of the west we wouldn't have put a man on the moon, but we also wouldn't be talking about climate change" – Wade Davis. Today, the climate-change-induced receding of the glaciers poses a serious threat to half a billion people living in the Himalayan region. As the Himalayan ice caps continue to melt and give way into one big river, so too are the 5,000 indigenous voices being silenced and dissolved into a larger, but lonelier whisper. As the glaciers continue to shrink, so too are our cultural, social and spiritual possibilities being narrowed into a monochromatic way of being.

Does the 'climate of change' that the Changpa people currently hobble through, have to mean destruction? Can Phuntsok and his kin find ways of building on their own ancient foundations, rather than having modern education tearing them down? The Changpa did not reject development, nor they seemed to be against modernity either. In fact, Dolma made good use of her small, but efficient 10" solar panel that was placed outside their raybo, and which allowed her to charge her black & white Nokia phone. Rather, the Changpa, like many other indigenous and tribal groups around the world, do want to embrace modernity and take advantage of the remarkable benefits it has to offer. But they also want to be given the chance to do so at their own terms and at their own pace, one that allows them to interweave such advancements with their own cosmology and ways of being.

Indigenous Peoples want to claim their place under the sun, and they too deserve to carve their own path. Ultimately, persuading these groups to follow a one-dimensional map that promises to reward those who follow it with a panacea for all human suffering, is not only ethnocidal, but self-destructive, considering that Indigenous Peoples – who only account for 5% of the world's population – are the guardians of 80% of the planet's total biodiversity, making them the best environmental protectors and our best hope against climate change.

Vitor da Salva is doing Master in Human Rights from London School of Economics

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER / CEO, LADAKH AUTONOMOUS HILL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, LEH

NOTIFICATION

In exercise of the power vested in me under Section 4 (I) of J&K Land Acquisition Act Samvat 1990, I, Sachin Kumar Vaishya (IAS), Assistant Commissioner (Rev) / Addl. Deputy Commissioner / Collector, Land Acquisition Leh hereby notify that land particulars of below mentioned villagers of Stakna of Leh District are needed for public purpose namely for construction of approach road bridge at Stakna.

S. No.	Name of land owners	Khasara No.	Area	
			Kanal	Marla
1.	Stakna Gonpa	645	-	07
2.	State through Chuskit Norzom D/o and Thinles Gurmet S/o Tsering Spalgais and Tundup Dorjay S/o Tsewang Chonjor Co-sharer.	905/643	-	06
		Total	-	13

If any of above person / persons having any interest on the said land for acquisition may file their objection within 15 days from the date of publication / issuance of this notice.

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

No. LAC-111(S)Rev/2019(803)
Dated:- 10-05-2019

EXPERT TALK

Alternative schools

By Rigzin Wangmo



Delek Namgyal, Program Manager- Leh: 17000 ft foundation is a nonprofit organization with a mission to work with the Government School of Ladakh to help improve education and create opportunities for the children of remote villages of Ladakh. It was established in Apr 2012 and has an office in Leh and Kargil and a head office in Gurgaon, Haryana. The program of 17000 ft includes:

- MapMySchool@17000ft - Survey and mapping of information about remote schools.
- Libraries@17000ft - Setting up and running libraries in remote Govt. schools to generate exposure and improve reading in children of remote villages.
- Infrastructure@17000ft - Improving infrastructure in remote schools to create a healthy learning environment and to encourage children to go to Govt. Schools
- TeacherTraining@17000ft - Helping to improve the capacity of Govt. school teachers through Residential and In-service Training Programs.
- DigiLab@17000ft - Solar Powered Digital Learning Labs in Schools with personalized and adaptive Digital content customized to the JK Bose Curriculum

About 220 Libraries have been set up across 13 blocks of Leh and Kargil District, Unfortunately, 4 Libraries were removed after the school strengths dropped significantly. We have provided 58,000 books for these libraries. Over 400 Reading Program & Monitoring days held across 131 schools in 7 years.

Infrastructure in 137 Schools are provided with attractive playgrounds for primary children. 18 schools are provided with colourful classroom furniture. 3 schools are provided with new toilets for boys and girls.

Around 21,000 copies of 21 story titles translated into Bhoti and distributed across 340 schools.

The DigiLab solution aims at improving education by providing access to digital hardware and learning content for teachers and students. Given that most remote villages lack electricity and con-

nectivity, the DigiLab is a complete standalone solution that not only powers up the school with Solar Electricity but also works offline within the school to deliver digital content customized to the local curriculum, and also syncs up to the Cloud through a Facilitator App to deliver a unified vision of all schools to the stakeholders from the Administration. Under this project, each school will receive:

- Solar Electricity - Electricity to power up a Digital Lab in the school with 200 W Solar Panel and Battery
- Furnishings - Lockable desks and chairs for the DigiLab room in the school
- Tablets / Tablet PCs- 6 to 14 Android tablets (depending on the enrolment of the school)
- L.E.D T. V- A 32" L.E.D T.V. to allow the teacher to display digital content as a part of her teaching process.
- Content Server - A Raspberry Pi content server to create a local Wi-Fi to sync and store student performance and house extra content
- Books - Graded Computer Literacy Books for individual students of grades 1 to 8
- Content - Educational Content customized for the JK Bose curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 in Maths, EVS, English Reading/Grammar and General Knowledge, Nonacademic content like stories, videos and games aimed at increasing exposure, and finally, access to software aimed at building Digital Literacy.
- Training- for Subject Teachers and Computer Literacy Teachers to implement and run the program under the school curriculum
- Performance Monitoring-Regular workshops and monitoring of Assessments, Usage and Performance 17000 ft will conduct that and made available to teachers, HM and the DoE.



Tashi Gyalsan, President Student Association for Village Education-SAVE: The Students Association for Village Education -SAVE is a regional student's movement, established in 2008 at Jammu by some first of the higher education aspirants from Changthang Nyuma Block.

A group of 7-8 boys and girls felt the urgent need of raising educational awareness among the people of the Changthang region and organized themselves in helping the school children in Changthang to prepare them for the competitions that awaits in pursuit of their further journey of learning and Higher Education.

With time the association expanded and more well-wishers and stu-

dent members joined and looked at the other issues that persist in the region. Backwardness and low enrollment in the higher education is the prime focus, SAVE also looked at the issues like the migration of the Nomads from Changthang, losing heritage and culture of the region, environmental awareness and many more.

To tackle these issues, the SAVE has started various initiatives, to begin with organising talks by socially influential personalities as a part of its awareness drive, calling for experts for career guidance, and for the general wellbeing the students prepared skits and dramas with themes catering to the issues of the Changthang region.

A Learning Center at Choglamsar Leh was one of the most ambitious steps that SAVE has taken to help the young members to solve the challenges they encounter in their pursuit of college studies. At SLCC we focused on personality development, english speaking and writing.

Since 2017, we have published our annual magazine namely SAR-ZHENGES, where we invite young writers from different schools and colleges to get their works published in three different languages, English, Boti and Urdu.

In the same year, we also established a network of alumnus of Nyuma Higher Secondary School, through which we can ideate all the possibilities and gaps in the learning experience of Students at Nyuma Higher Secondary School.

At two of the major occasions in a year, we host a general meet, under the banner called SAVE Annual Meet in summer and SAVE Winter Meet, it is the occasion when we find time to meet the village heads, parents and other stakeholders for the development of Changthang. Inviting the experts and intellectuals from different fields to speak on various themes, cultural shows, assisting the new registrants and team-building exercises are major happenings of such occasion.

We do most of our events through different wings, that caters particular services and arrangements, few of the most active wings be, Culture and Heritage Wing, Academic Help Wings, Creative and Designs Wing, Sports and Adventure Wing and Media and Publications Team.

One of our next big projects in line is to organise the first ever Changthang Football Tournament, for this we have over 200 kids between the ages of Ten to Twenty-one have already registered and 60% of them are girls.

At SAVE we believe that with perseverance, dedications and open-mindedness we can achieve the dream of A Better Changthang.

...Continues on Page 6

IN FOCUS

Youth organizations making difference in Ladakh

Rigzin Wangmo and Dawa Dolma



Youth Association Kanji (YAK) brings together the youth of Kanji on a common platform to serve their community and engage them in building a more educated and developed society. Besides objectives on the environment, health, culture, tradition, sports, protection of wildlife & responsible tourism, YAK primarily focuses & aims for the development of the Education system for the Kids, the welfare of the villagers and protection of the youth's rights.

YAK works on its own annually planned projects and plans decided in compliance with the Association's aims and objectives. Kanji is a beautiful unexplored tourist destination whose advertisement, we have refrained primarily for educating our villagers first towards the promotion of sustainable tourism. We are in constant talks with the respective Govt department with whose help, YAK aims in creating an eco-valley and organic tourist destination.

We schedule most of the Team Projects only during winter session, because of the mass availability of the youth members. Organizing a month and a half long Skilled based winter camps for

around 90+ kanji kids for the last 2 years is one of the greatest achievements that YAK boost about. With support from the District Administration and other like-minded NGO's, YAK also organized a Woman Leadership Camp for around 39 girls from across Ladakh.



Youth Association Gya Meru Education system in Ladakh has been designed to models copied from places ignorant of the local systems, traditions and custom. The gap between curriculum and reality is widening that students suffer a lot; the books they follow aren't relevant to the culture and environment of Ladakh. This education system is theory oriented than practically oriented in which, rote learning is approvingly crucial. Even though, rote type of education system might help in developing child brain. It never allows student to encouraged to think "out of the box", questioning, thus totally abandoning of creativity.

Breaking down in traditional mode of living is one of the greatest set back to the cultural identity of Ladakh. Influx of population from secluded area is increasing highly that Leh is on the verge of exceeding its maximum accommodation capacity leading to urbanization issues.

In response to overcome these issues, "Youth Association of Gya Meru (YAGM)" was established to introduce model of sustainable living among villagers of Gya and Meru, address the gap between theoretical and practical education system, and sustainable environment to prolong human existence in these inhabitant villages. We design a few set of approaches like building leadership skills, developing innovative ideas and focuses on applied and practical aspects of academic models.



Youth Association Shayok (YAS) believes in the saying "United We Stand, Divided We Fall" and advocates alternative education system and co-curricular activities to advance younger generation of Shayok and Durbuk.

Our activities include confidence building, language skills, ethical values, Buddhism, ice hockey, computer to name a few by conducting workshops, winter and summer camps, tournaments and establishing library.

YAS was formed, as there was a great need for

the village, most of the parents are illiterate and uneducated in terms of modern education and lack awareness to guide their children. Besides, it was also seen that the youths of the village have to lead and support the villagers in the village's development.



Zanskar Winter Sports Foundation Dr. Phunchok Zangpo founded it with the support of like-minded youths from Zanskar in the winter of 2019, with the sole aim of promoting winter sports in Zanskar. The organization brings youths of Zanskar to a single platform to exhibit their potential.

Under the foundation, Zanskar Ice Hockey Foundation was established and built the First Ever Ice Hockey Rink despite unprecedented challenges like carrying equipment via the frozen river trek. The Ice Hockey training program was imparted to over 150 kids and around 150 youths from all over Zanskar.

In future, we are looking forward to promote winter sports, including ice ski and another important winter sports in the Zanskar valley. The foundation looks forward in preparing two under 19 teams of men and women each for a district and state level tournament.

In Conversation with Padma Tamchos, Trainer of Leh District Cricket Association

Interviewed by Dawa Dolma

Q. Tell us about yourself?

I am Padma Tamchos from Housing Colony, I have been playing cricket since childhood and took part in a local team popularly known as Tip Top club (junior) and then joined the club officially as a member. I have played during my school years, college tenure, and also took part in many other cricket tournaments within Leh and played for cricket academy in the rest of India.

Q. How did you come up with providing cricket coaching training among Ladakhi students?

Mr. Gyal P Wangyal, Deputy CEC, LAHDC plays an important role calling Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Academy (JKCA) delegates to Leh and conducted first JKCA district tournament in collaboration with youth sports and service. JKCA officials Mr. Ashiq Bukhara, a former president of JKCA and Mr. Pravez Rasool, Indian cricket member attended the final and propose to send Ladakhi children to compete in District level cricket competition. In response to their proposal, we convened abundance of meeting and decided to target girls' child as there are wider scopes and greater opportunities to utilize the platform appropriately.

In collaboration with Tip Top and Cosmos (local sports team), we initiated training session to Ladakhi girl students with the help of Mr. Shafi, Cosmos's captain, locals sponsorship and District Administration support particularly DC, Anvy Lavasa. We held Ladakhi girls cricket tournaments twice a year in presence of DC.

Our main mission is to widen the scope for girls in cricket with an aim to prepare them in becoming district, state, national and international cricketer. At the same time, it is a platform to exhibit their talent through equal opportunity. Presently, we classify the group based on sequentially (on a first-come, first served basis) and in future will arrange groups under age category.

At the same time, recently started boy batches to encourage them to engage in new activity and we have around 50 boy participants.

Q. What is the key reason behind choosing cricket over other sports?

The craze for cricket is omnipresent all over the country. We have been organizing cricket tournaments in the beginning and end of tour-



cricket field and poor pitch in Leh. Currently, we are playing on a surface of ground by placing mattress as a pitch. Due to such outdated field, many instances of being injured, and under such condition, it might be dangerous to the safety of the players.

Ill equipment is another concern; so far the coaches and trainers spent their earnings to buy equipments. However, those equipments are not sufficient to excel their endowment. We have submitted a memorandum to DC to consider these challenges to be fulfilled.

Above all, absence of changing room is a major issue. Since most of our trainees are girls and them having no place to change their attire is utterly shame and ridiculous.

Q. How many tournaments did you hold so far in the region?

The following are lists of tournaments that held so far in the region:

- NDS memorial T20 tournament
- Tip Top cricket champion league
- Girls T20 cricket tournament with Cosmos club

Q. How important is co-curricular activity in a student's life?

The attitude towards academic excellence is highly prevalent in our society that we tend to neglect co-curricular activity in a student's life. However, these days Ladakhi children and parents are giving equal importance to extracurricular activity along with school education.

Co-curricular activities like sports, music, and dance play such a significant role in strengthening physical and mental health. For many, the sports act as a stress buster and an extremely social game that one gains skills like inter-personal, self-discipline, communication, team work, time management and so on.

There are motivated parents and children coming all the way from Kargyam (Changthang) to inform us about their enthusiast participation in coming tournaments. We are overwhelmed by their appreciation and unconditional support.

Q. What is your future outlook on Bat and ball game in the region?

Future is convincing to us as we bring everyone under single umbrella to exhibit their potentials in district, state, national and international level if the facilities would be met. There is plenty of scope, motivation and encouragement is highly needed.

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“Education should not only limit within academic curriculum rather co-curriculum activity should be emphasized as well. Living a meaningful life is the philosophy.”

ism season every year. Being a youth, we unanimously took the decision to conduct tournaments around that time to engage youth in recreational activity and prevent them from involving into substance abuse.

Q. What challenges did you encounter being a trainer or during the course of training?

It is obvious that the prior challenge that we face is lack of proper

FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



An educational and motivational tour comprising of 15 students & two teachers of Nubra Valley was flagged off from Pratap Pur on May 13.



Congress party organized rally in solidarity with Leh Press Club.



World Migratory Birds' Day was celebrated at Tsokar Lake here on May 11 by as many as 60 volunteers cleaning the lake which is home and breeding ground for many migratory birds including Black Naked Crane (BNC).



SNM Hospital celebrated International Nurse Day on May 13 at the community Hall, Housing Colony, Leh.

SoulSpeak

P. P. Wangchuk

The right understanding of philosophy of life makes us deal with life easier



I am asked quite often this question: What is philosophy and who is a philosopher? In a way, it is difficult and yet quite easy to answer. It would be difficult if I try to answer it the way philosophers like Immanuel Kant did. But when we talk in the normal and common language, it can be easier to define and understand philosophy and philosophers.

I can say the easiest way to dismiss and get away with such a difficult question is to say: A philosopher is one who thinks philosophy, talks philosophy, writes philosophy and acts philosophically. But I must not seem to be trying to escape the temptation of not going for the traditional and academic definitions like of which great philosophers like Immanuel Kant and others had given. For them, to understand philosophy, one requires a science that determines the possibilities, the principles and a “range of priori knowledge”.

It may sound difficult and confusing, but if you break them down to their bare essentials, then they are reduced to your and my thought pattern of what philosophy is all about. But the beauty of these great philosophers is that they keep us spell-bound even today, and you seem to be getting a different meaning and revelation every time you read them again. I also feel that to understanding them, one has to understand the era they belonged to and the thought movements prevalent then. Equally true is to have a grip of today's realities and their difficult peculiarities.

But then it is not for us here to be bogged down with definitions. What is important to remember is that philosophy is crucial in our lives, as it is the examination of the general and the fundamental issues of life. Hence, its understanding makes the course of our journey on this planet a bit easier.

Courtesy: Hindustan Times

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

Kaksar school upgraded to High School after 68 years

Anayat Ali

KARGIL: The Lone School of Village Kaksar situated on the LOC that witness almost all the wars fought between India and Pakistan, got upgraded to High School recently after 68 years of its establishment in 1952.

On May 12, the School was officially inaugurated by the Chief Education Officer, Kargil, Nazir Ahmad Wani during a programme. Students of the School presented various cultural and educational programmes on this occasion and also kept some demands before the Chief Guest.

Nazir Ahmad Wani, while asserting on the need of quality education from Government-Run



Schools, appreciated the efforts of the school teachers who are working hard to make a learning process fun by organizing various programmes like the Famous Kun Banega Dosopati, which was a hit on social media.

He also assured to fulfill the de-

mands of the school like library and laboratory for providing better education to the students.

Kaksar is a historical village of Kargil where the villagers pay tribute to Kargil War Hero Captain Sourab Kalia by organizing a cricket tournament every year.

Kargil Celebrated World Red Cross



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Underlying the service of Red Cross Society towards the welfare of the needy, Deputy Commissioner, Baseer ul Haq Choudhary urged people to contribute to Red Cross activities on the International Red Cross Day, May 8 at Auditorium Hall.

Highlighting the importance of World Red Cross Day, DC said that organizing such programmes would help to educate people about the importance of Red Cross Society. He requested the youngsters to volunteer for human welfare and develop in them the principles of universal-

ity, impartiality, love, care, and sympathy.

Meanwhile, Vice President District Red Cross Society Kargil, Khalid Amin spoke on the occasion and expressed views on World Red Cross Day. He urged the participants to inculcate the spirit of charity for the welfare of the needy.

To mark the day, hundreds of students from both Girls and Boys Higher Secondary School Kargil participated in a rally earlier. The students were holding placards and shouting slogans about the fundamentals and underlying objectives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

As a gesture of appreciation to Red Cross, a student of Delhi University Nasreen Fatima contributed a donation towards Red Cross Fund of 5000 in the form of cheque.

Expert Talk: Alternative schools

...Continued from page 4



Konchok Norgay, Director SECMOL Alternative Institute

Phy: Conventional education is in the need of huge attention especially for the mode of learning and teaching. When education is to equip our young generation to comprehend the environment in future and cope with it efficiently, the conventional education system will be of much less use.

In the alternative education system, we adopt participatory and experiential learning methods that will enhance students' capability to understand almost any new concept. For alternative education, school is a small workshop or playground where students have fun in learning new things and end up with useful solutions to real-life problems people face. We perform several activities in the school through which students can draw the conclusion of the all concept and learn the skills to materialize them.

SECMOL Alternative Institute is one example, which is run by students with minimum involvement by the faculties. The kids here learn the basic science of all things like governance, computer, commerce, electricity, dairy, cooking, mathematics and so on. Here we give importance to stimulating the intelligence of students, improving skills for using knowledge through intelligence and developing intelligence and skill towards the positive change of humankind.

In every sense, the way one learns is not only from books. What is written to memorize or learn

is drawn from the environment, human action and natural phenomenon. One can have proper observation and quantifiable systematic notes. It is always advisable to draw lessons from the existing things, action, or the natural tendency of things around. Unless we attempt to make students learn the fundamental concept of how things work through prolong observation, a majority of them cannot come up with an innovative idea or ideas that will be helpful to our ecosystem and for humankind in particular.

After exposing self to many concepts based on experiments, one can conclude with abstract concepts thereon. Therefore, the school must play the role of creating makers' space or adopt STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) program effectively regularly.

The two big differences in the alternative education system and conventional education system are:

In alternative education: Multiple and varied teaching and learning materials (TLM) are used. Therefore, the students are encouraged to use almost all senses to understand things at a different point of time. This involves observation, listening, watching, feeling, reading and having fun.

In conventional education: Students are encouraged to listen, read, write, memorize, regurgitate and have a dry run.

What also helps an alternative education system, is wrapping it to the context (history & geography) of the students, which makes it even more relevant and easier to grasp. When education becomes an innate part of life, learning is always happening and never goes for a miss.

Kargil protested against Sumbla rape case



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Imam Khomieni Memorial Trust organized a massive protest against the heinous rape incident of a 3 years girl child in Sumbla Bandipora in north Kashmir, on May 13 at Lal Chowk.

The march started from Jamia Masjid passed through the main market the town and culminated at Lal Chowk where the leaders addressed the gathering.

The protestors in thousands were carrying placards and shouting slogans demanding justice for the girl and a stern punishment to the culprit behind the act. The

protest was joined by the hundreds of students from Mutharry Public School and hundreds of women from Zainabia welfare committee.

Demanding fast court trial to ensure justice to three year old Aimen Zehra, Asgar Ali Karbalai, former MLA, Kargil urged the judiciary as well as the authorities to ensure justice to the victim child at their earliest.

He reiterated that if justice was given to the Asifa case on time, such repetitions of heinous crime would not have occurred. He further said that he has spoken to

the DGP Kashmir and SSP Bandipora and reiterated that there should be no leniency adopted while dealing with the persons involved in this act.

Appealing masses not to pay heed to the rumors, Shiekh Bashir, Vice Chairman, IKMT said that while entire humanity and people of the state are together to fight for the justice to the victim. We should not allow any miscreant or vested element to create confusions over the sensitive issue and everyone must also ensure that the dignity and honor of the victim and her family is not dragged beyond a point.

At the same time, Student Educational Movement of Kargil (SEMOK), Youth Action Committee Kargil and many other organizations also condemned this heinous crime

In the end, an appeal was made to the state government to establish a fast trial court for hearing of the case.

Market Checking team conducts inspection, fine imposed against erring shopkeepers



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Under the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, a massive market checking of Kargil town was carried out from Fatima Chowk to Islamia School Chowk, all fruit mandis of Kargil town and other business establishments were checked on May 14.

An inspection team headed by Tehsildar Kargil Muhammad Salim Wazir accompanied by the members of the Enforcement Wing of FCS&CA, Inspector Food Safety, and Municipal Committee and Police personnel took the stock of the town.

The team thoroughly inspected over 70 establishments and took stock of the hygienic conditions of food items like vegetables, fruits, meat and other food items available in the market. They also checked the charging of rates and other set standards.

During the inspection, 10 establishments were penalized right away for violating the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 and Essential Commodities Act. A fine of ₹ 4700 was collected from the offenders on the spot.

Huge quantity of stale fruits and vegetables were also seized and destroyed.

The shopkeepers and traders were asked to display the rate list prominently at their establishments besides maintaining cleanliness.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner has appealed all the traders to avoid black marketing or hoarding and warned of stern action against the violators under rules.

Specific directions have also been issued to the concerned officers to carry out frequent inspection and checking of the market to curb overcharging, black marketing, and use of polythene and sale of substandard food items.



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