

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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In Conversation with Reach Ladakh
Dr. Motup Dorje 5

Expert talk
Ramzan, the holy month 4

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Brief News

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Quiz and painting competition held in Nyoma

NYOMA: A quiz and painting competition was held at Cluster Resource Center Middle School Nyoma on May 25.

Mumtaz Hussain, Zonal Education Planning Officer, chief guest appreciated the participation of the students. He encouraged them to participate and work hard in extra-curricular activities along with academics.

In quiz competition, Middle school Nyoma and Mudh secured 1st position and 2nd position. While in the painting competition, Tsongkha Kharu secured 1st position in primary level and Nyoma Junior secured 2nd position.

Legal awareness camp held on rights of women, children, parents in Sankoo

KARGIL: Tehsil Legal Services Committee (TLSC), Sankoo on May 29 organised a legal awareness camp on social welfare schemes and right to maintenance of the children, women and parents u/s 488 CrPC and Domestic Violence Act at Panchayat Halqa Gond Magalpole.

It was attended by 200 to 250 people including children, women and senior citizens.

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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Leh celebrates 2563rd Buddha Jayanti with religious fervour



Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Marking the celebration of 2563rd Buddha Jayanti, thousands of devotees commemorated the Birth, Enlightenment and Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha on May 18 at Pologround.

The day was organised by Ladakh Buddhist Association, Leh and His Eminence Togdan Konchok Thupstan Stanbe Gyaltzen Rinpoche was the chief guest.

Devotees in large number carrying the holy sacred books took out the procession 'Bumskor' from Chowkhang Vihara, around the Leh town and culminated at Leh Polo ground. Also, twelve tableaux depicting the important stages of the Life of Buddha were also displayed during the procession.

Representatives from different religious heads, political parties, many dignitaries

and students from different schools were present.

His Eminence Togdan Rinpoche talked about the life of the Buddha and emphasised on inculcating good heart, selfless attitude and moral values.

He further appealed everyone to avoid social evil practices and advises to strengthen communal harmony, unity, and peace for a prosperous society.

Addressing the gathering, Tsewang Thinles, LBA President said that on this auspicious day people should pledge to bring changes in one's life and also practice Buddha Dharma in real sense.

He also talked about the importance of inculcating moral education among the younger generation to preserve the age-

...Continues on Page 3

BJP candidate Jamyang Tsering Namgyal sweeps Ladakh parliamentary election

Wins with a huge margin of 10, 930 votes



Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Making a historic move on May 23, BJP candidate Jamyang Tsering Namgyal sweeps Ladakh parliamentary election by securing 42, 914 votes out of 1, 26,513 total votes cast.

With a huge margin of 10, 930 votes, Jamyang defeated Sajjad Hussain, Independent candidate from Kargil who secured 31,984 votes.

While, Congress candidate Rigzin Spalbar secured 21,241 votes and Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai, Independent candidate from Kargil managed 29,365 vote shares. As many as 910 voters preferred NOTA and 87 postal votes were turned invalid.

Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency records 71.10 per cent polling for the Lok Sabha Election. Leh recorded a voter

turnout of 62.76 per cent while Kargil recorded a voter turnout of 79.49 per cent.

Expressing his gratitude to the people for all the support, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal said that the people believed in the party and voted for the development of the region.

"The election is between the parties who are for and against the UT demand. And the result speaks for itself that maximum people support UT demand and believes that Bhartiya Janata Party is the only party who supports and stand for the demand", he added.

Talking about his win Jamyang said, "We were confident enough to win this parliamentary election as this election was a one-way traffic. The Congress was divided in the region by making two can-

...Continues on Page 3



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Editor's Desk

Lotus blossoms yet again in Ladakh

Rinchen Angmo Chumikchan

The dynamics of politics have brought in many ups and downs in Ladakh in the last few years. The recent Lok Sabha election process was unique, be it fielding new faces, sidelining of senior leaders and interference of outsiders in local matters, internal differences, resignation of MP Thupstan Chhewang in November, and the BJP leaders openly bribing the Lehigh media and threatening to file defamation against the Press Club, Lehigh.

The BJP had set its foot for the first time in Ladakh in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections when Thupstan Chhewang won the seat against Congress candidate Ghulam Raza from Kargil by 36 votes. However, in the civic elections held in October, 2018, the Congress managed to win all the 13 wards. This, no doubt, had created a picture that the existence of BJP was under threat, but it proved wrong and BJP has managed to extend its hold in the region once again. The granting of the Divisional status to Ladakh a few months before the polls has surely worked in favour of the BJP.

Though it is believed that the BJP's huge-margin win in Ladakh was fuelled by Congress's failure, it is also true that the people, both in Lehigh and Kargil, were keen to have a young representative. And thus, BJP's Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, who is the Chief



Executive Councillor, Hill Council, Lehigh, managed to win the election by a huge margin of over 10,000 votes, defeating his nearest rival Sajjad Hussain, a journalist-activist-turned-politician.

The BJP's vote share has increased to 33.94 per cent from 26.36 per cent in the 2014 parliamentary polls. The party has won three seats in Jammu and Kashmir, two from Jammu and one from Ladakh. In Ladakh, the fight was clearly between Lehigh and Kargil. Kargil unanimously decided to

field their own candidates as they were not satisfied with the national political parties. This led to the division of votes between the two Independent candidates in Kargil and the decision went in favour of the BJP. In Zaskar, the Buddhist community openly supported the BJP and they made sure that every vote went to the BJP. They even issued a press release in favour of the BJP. The other three candidates filed written complaints to the Election Commission, but no action was seen.

The Congress party did put up a spirited fight but failed to outwit the BJP's strategy. However, we cannot ignore the underlying structural reasons that made this victory possible and its sweep so deep and wide. There is no denying that money power was used, as it is used in every election by political parties. This is reflected in how the BJP party offered bribes to the journalists of Lehigh and how they were lying about the whole incident. This clearly indicates the abuse of power and threat on media's existence and credibility.

Using money by political parties during elections is not a new thing. We have been seeing and hearing about this in every election, and it is not only the fault of political parties but people are equally to be blamed for selling their votes. We tend to blame our representatives for not fulfilling their promises, but the crucial issue is: Are we choosing the right candidate, or merely selling our votes for a few hundred rupees? Time to do soul-searching!

Party	Candidate	Votes	Percentage
BJP	Jamyang Tsering Namgyal	42,914	34%
IND	Sajjad Hussain	31,984	25%
IND	Asgar Ali Karbalai	29,365	23%
INC	Rigzin Spalbar	21,241	17%
NOTA	NOTA	922	1%

CEC, Lehigh, inspects developmental work progress



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, CEC inspected a number of developmental works in Lehigh and took stock of the work progress on May 28.

Gyal P Wangyal, Deputy Chairman and Mumtaz Hussain, EC Minority were also present.

While assessing the progress of Choglamsar bridge construction, Jamyang instructed the engineers to gear up the pace of work and complete the bridge installation within 8 months.

The bridge constructed under CRF scheme is the main approaching bridge of Chuchot, Stok and Matho villages.

He later inspected the site of Eco Public Park at the old taxi stand near main market Lehigh. The engineers

informed that the park besides having amusement space for the general public will also have an Open Theatre, Cafeteria, toilets, etc.

Considering the significance of this park in adding beautification to Lehigh town as well as to facilitate the people for their leisure time, Jamyang instructed engineers to ensure the creation of the park in such a way that would truly serve the whole purpose.

He specially laid emphasis on giving a traditional touch to the entire structure of the park which should represent Ladakh with eco-friendly manner.

He also inspected the site near petrol pump chowk where illegal construction was carried out by some people. He made it clear that the land is located at an important junction will be needed for future road expansion. He further gave on spot instruction to the concerned departments to immediately cancel the land allotment order.

The progress of the installation work of a Blackhole machine at Bombgarh was also enquired. Looking at the rising environmental issue in the wake of huge accumulation of garbage there, a deadline was set for functional of the machine within a month. Executive Officer, MC, Lehigh was asked to gear up the works.

Lehigh students organise rally on environment protection

Demand executive councillor for environment in Hill Council, Lehigh



A child of five years taking part in the environmental rally.

Dawa Dolma & Rigzin Wangmo

LEH: The global issue of climate change needs global solution and to protect environment students of Lehigh organised a peaceful rally from NDS ground till main market Lehigh on May 24.

The aim of the rally was to raise awareness on climate change and global warming. Also, demands a separate executive councillor for environment in Hill Council, Lehigh.

The rally was organised by the students of Lehigh inspired by young girl Greta Thunberg from Sweden who skip her school every Friday and was out on street with play cards in her hand urging world leaders to unite and save the environment.

Konchok Namdol, President,

Ladakh Drayangs Association urged the political leaders for immediate actions and find viable solutions to combat the environmental crisis.

Stressing on the need to secure future, he requested locals to minimise the use of plastic especially single-use plastics like water bottle, straws, and cups. Also, urged the government to implement proper waste management systems and install recycling stations instead of dumping in landfills.

Rigzin Dorjay, President, Student Organization of Unified Ladakh stressed on existential issue of climate change and its impact on locals' life. Unfortunately, there is no initiative from locals in promoting sustainable development and saving the environment.

He expressed gratitude to non-locals and foreigners to take part in the rally but was ashamed that no locals participated. He also thanked Avny Lavasa, DC for extending support in this matter.

A copy of memorandum demanding executive councillor for the environment, promotion of eco-tourism and limited tourists, banning of plastic bags, and green day in Ladakh every Friday was also submitted to the DC.

Julia Bergmann, a Swedish participant in the rally emphasized on taking a stand and voicing against the man-made catastrophic as it is lacked among the people of Lehigh.

Slogans like save the future-save the children, say no to plastic, save the environment were raised.

Documentary 'Foe in Phayul' screened in Lehigh to create awareness on plastic hazards

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Ladakh Heart Foundation screened a documentary film titled 'Foe in Phayul' to create awareness on plastic hazards at Lehigh market on May 23.

In the last decade, Lehigh has seen an increase in tourism figures which has significantly led to an increase in revenue and employment generation but it has also resulted in plastic waste production.

Thupstan Chogyal, President & Founder, Ladakh Heart Foundation said, "Apart from tourism, the food consumption patterns of our local people have also been changed drastically and adding more plastic waste by consuming packaged food. Plastic bottles and food wrappers are irresponsibly disposed off everywhere in the market, on the roads of Pangong, Nubra and in the mountains causing a serious threat to our fragile ecosystem of Ladakh. So we have to come up with a better management system to reduce the impact on our fragile ecosystem and landscape".

He further added that the Govt and NGO's are working together to educate and implement sustain-



Documentary screening in the main market.

able waste management and also have been raising awareness to minimize waste production. They can't tackle this problem alone and each one of us is responsible for this cause.

He requested tourists to carry their personal water bottle and refill them to reduce its impact on the fragile ecosystem. And also suggested if travel agents, hotel and restaurant owners and retailers could install water refill system this way we could manage and reduce plastic bottle waste.

A cultural programme was also showcased in the main market.

PLOT FOR SALE

Plot for sale in Karzoo Stakpa behind Kailash Guest House.

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Global Himalayan Expedition sets up Digital Education Centre in Govt. school, Kargil

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Helping the students to know about computer education, a Digital Education Centre was set up in Government High School Tacha in Kargil on May 15.

The project was initiated and completed by the Global Himalayan Expedition. It is the 17th digital education centre set up in Ladakh.

While elaborating about the project, Paras Lomba, Engineer, Founder, Global Himalayan Expedition informed that the centre has unique solar-powered servers that provide offline knowledge content for the students. The offline encyclopedia needs no internet and the system has all academic and project related information which the students can search.

Paras Lomba said that the Global Himalayan Expedition leverages tourism to improve



livelihoods through education, access to power and light, as well as revenue-generating activities.

He said that using solar power to bring sustainable energy, digital education, wireless connectivity and livelihood creation to remote villages in Ladakh is a challenge which is possible only with the help of locals.

Shakeer, Member, GHE engineering team said that they have installed 10 solar powered 24" LED computers along with a 40" LED screen in the school. The

centre is powered up by 500 W DC solar microgrids.

He told that the task was completed in 4 hours with the help of his teammate, Stanzin Gurmet and was equally supported by the headmaster of the school Fida Ali and village education committee.

Global Himalayan Expedition has been electrifying un-electrified villages of Ladakh and providing electricity for the past 6 years in the remote villages of Ladakh.

ITBP organises cultural programme in Hanley



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

HANLEY: Around 500 villagers and school children of Hanley, Korzok and Chumur participated

in the cultural programme organised by 37th battalion, ITBP under civic action programme on May 18 in Hanley.

Rakesh Kumar, Commandant, 37th battalion ITBP was the chief guest.

The cultural programme was aimed to connect the people and children of remote areas of Leh district with the rest of India and to inculcate the sense of belongingness.

Renowned singer, Tundup Dorjay Stakmo performed around 19 songs including local traditional dance and patriotic songs. Also, one programme each by Hanley villagers and schools was presented.

BJP candidate Jamyang Tsering Namgyal sweeps Ladakh parliamentary election

...Continued from Page 1

didates contest the election one each from Leh and Kargil while the other Independent candidate influence was limited to only a few belts of the Kargil district. So, there was no doubt."

Sajjad Hussain congratulated Jamyang Tsering Namgyal for the historic win and said, "Jamyang is a young and dynamic leader and I believe that he will work for the development of whole Ladakh region."

Also, he extended his gratitude to all the people of Ladakh who voted for him despite being a new face. He said that it is indeed a very good sign to

see that the majority of people are opting young and new leaders.

Talking about the proxy candidate Sajjad said, "Congress has played a very hypocrite role by making one candidate officially and other unofficially to fight the election. Such things not only affect the election process but create a gap between each other."

Supporters from different parts of the region congratulated the new MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal.

In the 2014, Lok Sabha elections, the seat was won by Thupstan Chhewang of the BJP by a margin of 36 votes where he defeated IND candidate Ghulam Raza.

Leh celebrates 2563rd Buddha Jayanti with religious fervour

...Continued from Page 1

old tradition and culture of Ladakh. He further stressed on good parenting, proper monitoring of the child to keep them away from indulging into wrong activities.

Ven. Shedup Chamba, President, All Ladakh Gonpa Association Leh spoke on the importance of the day.

Cash prize and certificates were awarded to the position holders of Bhoti essay writing competition which was conducted by LBA Youth Wing on Ambedkar Jayanti.

A blood donation camp was also organised by LBA Youth Wing in collaboration with the medical department.

Martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Ali observed in Kargil



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Commemorating the 1400th anniversary of Hazrat Imam Ali's martyrdom, a mourning procession under the banner of Anjuman Jamiyat Ullama Isna Ashriya Kargil (AJUIAK) was taken from the campus of Hozia Ilmiya Kargil on May 27.

Thousands of people participated in the procession. The mourners in black-clads, beating their chest and reciting lamentations remembered the greatest martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Ali A.S.

The main sermon was delivered by Hujjatul Islam Wal Muslamen Sheikh Hassan Waizi. He urged upon the people to follow the path shown by Hazrat Imam

Ali for a better life and true value of Islam.

Referring to his administrative skill which is still remembered by the world he urged upon people to follow his path to ensure peace and equality in the society.

Imam Ali was struck in the head with a poisonous sword by Ibn Muljam while he was saying his prayers in the great mosque of Kufa, which is located in Iraq now, on the 19th of Ramadan 40 AH (27 January AD 661). He passed away two days later. Imam Ali, Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin, is highly respected for his courage, knowledge and deep loyalty to the Prophet as well as for administering justice.

The night before his demise is believed to be one of the three holy nights known as the Laylat al-Qadr (the Nights of Destiny), which represent an unparalleled opportunity for Muslims to dedicate much of their time in praying. The Night of Destiny is believed to be the night when the first verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) more than 14 centuries ago. It is also thought to be the night when the blessings and mercy of God are abundant, sins are forgiven, supplications are accepted, and God decides the fate of people for the coming year.

Throughout the Night of Destiny, Muslims recite the holy Quran, hold vigils until dawn, and pray.

Army organises 'Next of Kin' rally in Chumathang

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

CHUMATHANG: As part of the 20th-anniversary celebrations of Kargil Vijay Diwas, a rally 'Year of the Next of Kin' was organised by the Kairey Brigade of the Fire & Fury Corps on May 26 at Chumathang military station.

Hundreds of Veer Naris, Veterans and Next of Kin from all over Eastern Ladakh region participated.



As part of collective collaboration, three medical officers from the Army Medical Corps, a dentist with mobile dental van and two specialist doctors from the civil administration provided health advice and medical facilities. Medicines, dental check-up and treatment were also provided to patients from the mobile dental van.

A total of 320 patients including 24 Veterans, 4 Veer Naris and their dependents benefited from the Medical-cum-Dental Camp.

With the implementation of the 'Year of the Next of Kin' initiative, Fire & Fury Corps reiterated the commitment of the formation in particular and the Indian Army in general, towards

the well-being of retired army personnel and their dependents.

The medical outreach facilitated by the Fire and Fury Corps under the guidance of Ina Joshi, Zonal President AWWA was appreciated and well received by the Veer Naris, Veterans with their NOKs and also by the local population of the area.



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EXPERT TALK

Ramzan, the holy month

By Stanzin Dasal



Sheikh Abdul Qasim Mutahhary, Imamia Jama Masjid, Leh: Ramzan is the holy month observed during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The month starts with the sighting of new moon after which the fasting continues for 29 or 30 days. The sacred month aims to purify the soul and bring the individual closer to Allah. It is made clear in the Holy Quran that fasting is compulsorily prescribed to all Muslims. A boy above 15 years and girl above 8 years follow the Ramzan month.

During Ramzan, one can eat before sunrise and breaks the fast after dusk. Apart from abstaining from drinking and eating one should also refrain from smoking, gossiping, lying and other immoral act. The month is not just about restriction from certain things but teaches patience and develops new and better habits in one's life.

Benefits of Ramzan

While practicing self-restraint in the sacred month it purifies oneself both physically and spiritually. It is believed that during fasting the body gets cleansed and many diseases borne by food and drinks eliminates. And spiritually it enables to analyze oneself, understand the pain of others and being compassionate towards one who is in need.

The practice is made mandatory to everyone whether rich or poor so that one can understand the suffering of poor people, the thirst and hunger they face. Self-realization encourages offerings, sharing and helping others which need to be inculcated by everyone.

Who are exempted?

The Holy Quran makes clear that Ramzan month is about making one righteous and strictly discourages hardship and sufferings during fasting. Thus, people who are sick or suffering from a chronic health condition, aged person, breastfeeding mother, pregnant women and the one who are menstruating, travelers are exempted from fasting. They can practice at alternative times of the year. Also, one who breaks his/ her fast due to health condition must feed poor person or donate 750 gm of rice, wheat or anything for each day missed.

If any person who is fit to observe fast but chooses not to follow, have to practice the fasting next time for two months.

**How Ramzan ends?**

The holy month ends with a sighting of new moon and marks it by celebrating Eid -ul-Fitr. The festival is marked by breaking the fast, offering prayer and feasting with family, friends, and relatives.

Before offering the prayer, a practice named Zakat is followed which means donating around 3 kgs of food or money each person in the family to the needy one. The offering to the needy is compulsory to the one who is well off and can help others.



Dr. Abdul Qayum, President, Anjuman Moin ul Islam: There are five pillars of Islam and Sawm, (Fasting during Ramadan) is one among them along with Shahadah (testament of faith), Salat (5 times prayer a day), Zakat, (giving charity tax to the needy), and the Hajj (going on pilgrimage to Mecca). All five pillars form a basis on which every individual should live its life.

During Ramzan Muslim eat a pre-dawn meal, fast whole day and breaks the fast after sunset. Apart from eating and drinking, they should refrain from immoral acts also. Prayer during the night time called Tarawih is also held in mosques. In the month of Ramzan, one should indulge in prayers, giving charity to the poor and needy. It is believed that good deeds performed in the holy month are of immense virtue and can earn 70 times more reward as compared to regular months.

What month-long fasting means?

People constraint their thoughts and idea about the holy month only to stay without food and water. Ramzan has a wider concept; it's about self-realization, bringing inner development and changes. Month-

long fasting is about inculcating positive thoughts, offering prayers, helping the poor and needy, understanding the pain and suffering of others, being disciplined and punctual. It's all about cleansing one's mind, body, and soul.

Who can or cannot practice Ramzan?

Every Muslim who is mentally and physically fit and the children who have reached the age of puberty observe fasting. The practice of fasting for one month is mandatory to follow. Anyone who is physically unfit and is suffering from illness or old age, traveler, women who are menstruating is exempted from fasting. Fasting with hardships and causing harm to the body is strictly restricted.

What is Zakat?

Also, in this holy month Zakat, giving charity to the poor and needy is also performed. People who have wealth more than ones need are obliged to pay 2.5 per cent from it as a tax. The tax amount is known as Zakat is used or given to the one who is poor and in desperate need. One can identify the person who is in need and offer it or else give to the concern association or society who will further use the amount in the education of poor destitute children, taking care of orphans, widow and other needy people. The aim of practising Zakat is to make everyone financially balanced and develop.

Laylat al Qadr or the Night of destiny

Likewise, Friday day is observed as holy among the whole weekdays. The last 10 nights of the fasting month, Laylat al Qadr or the Night of destiny is considered the most powerful and sacred night during which people pray the whole night.

To mark the end of the month-long fast, Eid ul Fitr is celebrated. Apart from feasting, they pray and thank the Almighty for the strength to complete the Ramzan month successfully.

IN FOCUS

Remembering Sonam Norbu, a great son of the soil

Celebrating the 110th birth anniversary of Norbu, who saved Ladakh in 1948



P. Stobdan

Ladakh International Centre (LIC) makes it sure that India and the people of Ladakh do not forget the gems who have done a lot in nation-building.

Sonam Norbu, a Padma Shri recipient (1961), was one such hero who had contributed immensely to the defence and development of the country.

Norbu was born in Leh (in Nyachu family) on May 27, 1909. He passed away at the age of 70, on February 2, 1980.

Sonam Norbu was a graduate of the University of Punjab, and later completed his engineering degree at the University of Sheffield (United Kingdom) in the 1930s.

In 1947, when India got independence, Sonam Norbu had reached the peak of his engineering career, and started contributing to the defence of the nation.

While in December 1947, Skardu had already fallen into Pakistani control, the advance of tribal raiders towards Leh was held back through the winter months by the State forces led by Lt Colonel Sher Jang Thapa. Ladakh was then vulnerable as the garrison in Leh was defended by only a platoon of 33 men.

The story of defending Ladakh began when a company of 2nd Battalion of Dogra Regiment crossed over Zojila on foot from Srinagar on February 16, 1948. They were accompanied by distinguished engineer Sonam Norbu.

Norbu, along with the 2nd Dogra Company, arrived in Leh on March 8, 1948, and soon started the project of building an airstrip on March 4, 1948.

And he took up the task of constructing a makeshift airstrip at Leh without any engineering and technological support. He came with just Rs 13,000/- to complete the task.

In an outstanding achievement, he completed the construction of a 2300-yard airstrip in three weeks, on April 6, 1948. The runway was built solely through manual labour with no help of mechanical tools. It seems, among others, Babu Dorji of Chute-Rantak, played a key role in mobilising local resources.

According to a write-up by Lt Gen NS Brar, Sonam Norbu (being a true honest Ladakhi) had spent Rs 10891/- for preparing the airport and the remaining balance of Rs 2109/- was deposited in the treasury.

Following the run-way completion, Norbu immediately sent a wireless message requesting for a quick dispatch of aircraft and reinforcements. However, the Dakota transport aircraft, piloted by Air Commodore Mehar Singh, co-pilot Flight Lieutenant SD Singh along with General Thimayya on board, landed in Leh only on May 24, 1948.

Therefore, May 24, 1948, therefore, marked a watershed in the history of modern Ladakh – the day when Sonam Norbu prepared the ground for plane landing in Ladakh, much before the local people had seen even a bicycle. Thanks to him, Ladakh bypassed the entire agrarian and industrial age and directly started enjoying the fruits of modernity. People then were so innocent that they flocked to the airport with 'choonpo' (fodder) for the 'flying horses'!

Meanwhile, the Pakistani raiders had already reached up to Ladakh-Konka (near Nimu and Taru) by May 22, 1948. Since the entire route from Zojila, Kargil and Khaltsi and Nimu had been occupied by the raiders, Leh could be saved only by air reinforcements.

Bad weather, however, prevented the reinforcement reaching Leh not before a week later when a flight of six Dakotas dropped a company of 2/4 Gurkha Rifles along with arms and ammunition at Leh airport on June 1, 1948.

Subsequently, more reinforcement of troops reached Leh by road through Rohtang Pass as well. Leh was saved and the enemy forces were pushed back by July/August that year.

The Indian Forces regained Zojila and Kargil by November 1948 under the Operation Bison, and a cease-fire followed on January 1, 1949. Of course, the raising of 7 J&K Militia and heroic deeds Major Chewang Rinchen and others is a separate story which will be covered later.



Clearly, the contribution of the first British-trained engineer from Ladakh cannot be forgotten. Among others who saved Ladakh from falling into Pakistan included Air Commodore Mehar Singh who was awarded with the Maha Vir Chakra.

General Thimayya who planned the mission later became the Chief of the Army Staff.

Lt Col Sher Jang Thapa, Major Hari Chand and Captain Khusal Chand were awarded the Maha Vir Chakra for their gallant actions in Skardu and for keeping Leh secured. Major Rinchen was also awarded the Maha Vir Chakra for saving the Shyok Valley.

Sonam Norbu later joined the J&K PWD and also became Chief Engineer with the Border Roads Organisation. He was instrumental in completing both the survey and construction of the Srinagar-Leh road through the Zojila Pass in the 1950s. For his distinguished service to the nation, he was awarded by the Indian government with the national civilian award the Padma Shri in 1961.

Sonam Norbu continued to play a pioneering role in the defence, development and administration of Ladakh. He had served as the Development Commissioner in Ladakh. Later, Norbu was appointed as the first Indian Ambassador to the Mongolian People's Republic, in 1971.

In 1975, Sonam Norbu was inducted as Minister of Works and Power as well as Ladakh Affairs in Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's Cabinet. Sheikh Abdullah reposed so much trust in him that portfolios entrusted him had comprised over 70 per cent of State's budget. All the developmental works in Ladakh were undertaken during his tenure as Cabinet Minister. It was again Sonam Norbu who opened up Ladakh for international tourism and got Leh connected with air service in 1977. He continued to serve as Minister until his death in 1980.

A memorial Chorten (Stupa) is built in his memory, and is located near Sketsak in Leh. The main hospital in Leh, Sonam Norbu Memorial Hospital (SNMS), is dedicated to him.

Ladakh International Centre (LIC), in the last few years, has been trying to build up Ladakh's identity by resurrecting the past glories and achievements of our people. We are trying to be creative and exploratory in revitalising and reshaping the future destiny of Ladakh. In 2016, the LIC had conceptualised the idea of celebrating the 400th anniversary of King Singge Namgyal and Lama Staksang Raspa.

The writer is the President of Ladakh International Centre.

In Conversation with Dr. Motup Dorje, Chief Medical Officer

Interviewed by Stanzin Dasal

Q. Brief us about the Health Department of Leh district. What are the roles and function?

Health department responsibility is to provide complete health care facilities in the whole district. In health, there are three major components including, Preventive, Promotive, and Curative. Preventive care is primary prevention of occurrence of a disease which is infectious and also non-communicable diseases. Examples include vaccination against diseases, maintaining a healthy diet and exercise regimen for young adults and avoiding smoking. We need to concentrate more on non-communicable diseases such as heart attacks, diabetes, cancer, etc. In promotive health, effort is made to reduce the impact of the diseases, enabling people to increase their control over own health. In curative, specific medical treatment and therapies is provided to a patient to improve or eliminate symptoms.

Overall, the department roles and responsibility is to reduce the morbidity of different diseases prevailing in the district, to provide better treatment facilities, control, and prevention of communicable diseases, imparting health education, etc.

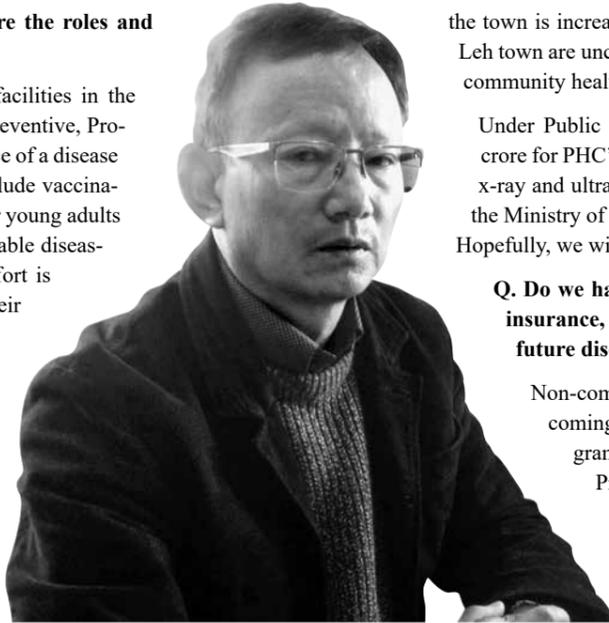
Q. How many medical health centres, PHCs and sub-district hospitals are catering health care in the entire district?

In Leh district, there are 177 institutions including 1 district hospital (SNM) in Leh, 1 Sub-district hospital in Nubra, 1 Community Health Centre in Skurbuchan, 14 Primary Health centres, 3 new types of Primary Health centre and 158 sub-centres are catering in different villages.

Q. Talking about public health issues, we have witnessed that many of the patients are diagnosed late when referred to a big hospital outside states. What is the reason behind and how it can be curbed?

Late diagnosis of the disease is mainly because of the lack of awareness among people about the signs and symptoms of the disease and referring to the health centre late.

Awareness of various diseases, its signs and symptoms, availability of treatment and early prevention needs to be imparted. There are many health programs such as the National Health Program, National Health Mission and many others to ensure awareness, screening, and



the town is increasing every year. Around 30,000 population living within the periphery of Leh town are uncovered. In villages, even the smallest population area has health centres or community health worker trained by the department.

Under Public Sector Undertaking, MRI machine for SNM hospital got sanction, ₹2.4 crore for PHC's. We will be equipping Diskit sub-district hospital and Khaltse with digital x-ray and ultrasound machine. Changthang area is covered under the special program of the Ministry of Home Affairs under which there is a provision of medicine and equipment. Hopefully, we will get this year.

Q. Do we have any plans and policy regarding health issues like referrals, health insurance, and preventive healthcare of diseases like cancer, heart disease, and future disease trends?

Non-communicable diseases such as Heart attacks, mental health, diabetes are becoming a matter of concern nowadays. Different programs such as National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE), National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS), National Dialysis program is launched focusing on the health promotion, early diagnosis, management, and referral of cases, besides strengthening the infrastructure and capacity building.

Also, we have a mobile medical unit which moves to two different places in a month.

Q. Tell us about the training and exposure provided to the personnel to improve health care at all levels.

Training is held every month in every block also at district, state and national level. With the help of NGO, training is imparted to the gynaecologist to screen and diagnose cervical cancer. Training and exposure to health care workers at all level is an ongoing process.

Q. What are the different Government schemes and benefit provided for the people and how to avail it?

The government is focusing more on mother and child health for which a national programme named Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK) are provided. Under JSY, all pregnant women are paid incentives of ₹1000 to the urban areas and 1,400 to the rural areas after delivery. In JSSK, the pregnant-

...Continues on Page 6

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“Health workers are definitely there to provide every care and assistance but along with it, we need cooperation and responsibility to improve the health sector.”

treatment. We organise health education program frequently in every part of the district to educate people.

Q. What are the plans and measures taken to provide better health facilities?

Talking about the health facilities, I am more worried about the urban areas for now as compared to rural areas because the population of

FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



Ladakh Monlam Chenmo the congregational prayer for the world peace & harmony organised by All Ladakh Gonpa Association.



Students performing a skit on Life of the Buddha during the Buddha Jayanti celebration in Leh.



Ladakh Heart Foundation screened a documentary film titled 'Foe in Phayul' to raise awareness of plastic waste at Leh market on May 23.



After winning the MP Ladakh seat, BJP Leh celebrating the grand victory at Polo Ground.



Thousands of people participated in the procession of the Martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Ali in Kargil.

SoulSpeak

P. P. Wangchuk

Only by heightening one's awareness, one can get to grab opportunities



If we try to see how great personalities of the world got to have great heights of fame and name, we would get to see one common thread among them all: Their persistence on daily and regular effort in promoting their work so that there is some progress every day.

Such persons, according to inspirational writer Robin Sharma, "heighten their awareness of the opportunities for daily greatness that inspire them to make the better daily choices that yield better daily results." Yes, it is like saying that nothing great works out overnight; and that, to use a cliché, every drop plays a role in making an ocean deep and vast.

Of course, such persons are known for their oceanic patience. They know very well that no miracle is possible without consistent hard work. Miracles, if at all, happen at the end of the day as a sweet reward to one's hard work!

As they say, plan your work and then work your plan. That is because any goal you aspire for has no meaning until you have it with a definite route map on how to realise it. And it takes time, maybe weeks and months before one can see a clear light through the web of hazy planning. Any good idea, to begin with, may be a bit hazy, but meditating on it with sincerity and hard work can make one get a sort of clarity that would look like the gateway towards your goal. And, with the passage of time, as your conviction gets strengthened, your goalpost will seem to be coming nearer.

Therefore, one must be clear-headed enough to realise that one has to labour hard and keep on chasing one's dream.

Courtesy: Hindustan Times

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

Anjuman Imamia demands justice to 3 year old Bandipora rape victim



Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Shia community of Leh demands justice to the 3 year old girl child who was allegedly raped by a local boy of Bandipora district on May 17.

The protest rally was called by Anjuman-e- Imamia, Leh after offering the Friday prayer.

Ashraf Ali Barcha, President Anjuman Imamia said, "We

strongly condemn the incident and such heinous crime against the whole humanity. It saddened us more to see that there is a delay in taking a necessary action against the culprit."

A three-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a local boy on May 8 in the Sumbal area of Bandipora district. Police has arrested the accused.

Expressing deep sorrow and anguish upon the heinous crime the protestor demanded stringent punishment against the culprit. Also, demanded trial of the culprit under fast track court to deliver speedy justice. Also, the culprit should be met out with an exemplary punishment.

A copy of memorandum was also sent to the Governor Satya Pal Malik.

Dr. Motup Dorje

...Continued from page 5

mother admitted in the hospital is provided free medicines, diagnostic, diet, and referral transport. Likewise, children under one year are also included under the programme. Also, there is a programme named free drugs and diagnostic under which there is a list of drugs and diagnostic which are made available to the people for free.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY): Under this, families as per the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data will be offered a benefit cover

of ₹500,000 per family per year to cover medical and hospitalization expenses. People who are included in the SECC data of 2012 can apply for a golden card through which one can avail the benefit from any empanelled hospitals.

Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres: Under this programme, Sub Health Centres and Primary Health Centres are strengthened as Health and wellness centre. Free medicines, basic equipment, child health services, medicines and care for communicable and non-communicable diseases, emergency care are provided

DC, Kargil reviews arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: To ensure necessary arrangements for the Shab-e-Qadr, Martyrdom Day of Hazrat Ali (A.S) Jumat-ul-Vida and Eid-ul-Fitr, Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, DC, Kargil convened a meeting on May 22.

He directed the officers to work in close coordination and cooperation with the representatives of the religious organisations for timely arrangements. Also, asked them to define the routes for the religious congregations to carry out in a hassle-free manner.

Discussion on the provision of drinking water, power, medicare, sanitation, ration, better traffic management, and other requirements were also held.

Concerned officers were asked to put in place proper sanitation mechanism and medical facilities around the locations where religious congregations take place.

Baseer ul Haq Choudhary also directed the officers of PHE, PDD, and FCS&CA to ensure adequate supply of LPG, rice, flour, and other essential commodities. Also, uninterrupted power and drinking water supply during the ensuing religious days.

Shops raided, food items of poor quality seized in Padum

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: A market checking team led by the in-charge Tehsildar Zanskar on May 27 carried out a market checking of Padum town and adjoining areas. He was accompanied by SHO Padum and officials of Animal Husbandry, FCS&CA and other concerned departments

During the course of the inspection the team seized about four quintals of stale food items including vegetables, fruits and other eatable items which were destroyed on spot.

The team also asked all the traders to abstain from selling stale food items, to avoid black marketing or hoarding and warned of stern action against the violators under rules.

National Disaster Management Authority reviews disaster preparedness in Kargil

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: A review meeting of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) to deal with disasters and natural calamities in the Kargil district was held on May 23.

Lt Gen (Retd) N C Marwah, Member, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner Kargil was present.

Baseerul Haq Choudhary apprised N C Marwah about disaster scenario in the district due to cloudbursts, flash floods, agricultural drought, locust, snow

avalanches, earthquake, landslides, cold waves etc.

He informed about the need for augmented infrastructure to deal with various eventualities and disaster situation in the district and sought the intervention of the Member NDMA to effectively deal with eventualities.

To swiftly deal with disasters and calamities in the district, N C Marwah urged to permanently station a team of NDMA with all manpower and machinery. Also, he projected the provision of satellite phones for an effective communication system in far-off and inaccessible areas of the district.

He further appreciated the commitment of the District Administration, Kargil in its efforts towards disaster risk management. Also, he assured all possible support from the NDMA to strengthen the DDMA in terms of necessary requirements.

While underlining the importance of awareness about various disasters and calamities at the community level, he stresses on holding capacity building programmes for the public to impart knowledge about disaster-prone areas as well as the immediate ways and means to deal with disasters.

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