

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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Brief News

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7th edition of Summer Buddhist Council concludes in Nubra



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHYUNGRU: The 7th edition of Summer Buddhist Council, IDumra Khadot Yulsum Yarchos Chenmo concluded on the 9th day with religious fervour at Khyungru Drigung Kagyut Tongdol-phug gonpa, Khyungru, Nubra on July 23.

His Holiness Chetsang Rinpoche chaired the council and Governor Satya Pal Malik was the chief guest.

Expressing his happiness to be part of the Summer Buddhist Council, Satya Pal Malik reiterated the teachings of the Lord Buddha. He said Lord

Buddha taught human beings to walk on the path of righteousness, to stay away from the vices of greed and hatred, to respect life and not to harm any living being. He said that the virtue of tolerance and non-violence propagated by the Buddha has made Buddhism, the most peaceful religion on this earth.

He further added that every religion has preached respect for other religions and if we adopt our religious tenets in true letter and spirit then there will be no conflicts in the world.

Also, Governor assured

that his Administration will make all possible efforts to meet the aspirations of the people of Ladakh. He directed Avny Lavasa, Deputy Commissioner, and Leh, to identify land for building Girls Hostel at Diskit and prepare DPR for flood management works required to be done in Nubra. He also assured for early redressal of issues relating to the telecom connectivity in the area.

Gyal P Wangyal CEC, Hill Council, Leh, lauded the initiative of 'Back to Village' programme started by Governor's administration said that it is a significant step to reach out and connect with the people in the remotest parts of Ladakh.

To further strengthen governance in the district, CEC urged Governor to make the divisional offices functional at the earliest. He also demanded early approval of the Khema road project under

...Continues on Page 2

Three-day teaching of HH Gyalwang Drukpa concludes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NYOMA: With the conferment of long-life empowerment and blessings, three-day teachings of His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa concluded on July 28 at Nyoma Photang.

His Eminence Thuksey Rinpoche, H.E Palga Rinpoche, H.E Khamtak Rinpoche, and many young rinpoches, nuns, monks and a large number of devotees gathered and sought the blessing.

Taking about the growing environmental challenges, His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa emphasized to take strict measures to curb polythene and be responsive to the issues. His Holiness also asked people to be sensitive about the issues and challenges of climate change since the impact will be immediate in places like Changthang which has a fragile ecosystem.

Gyalwang Drukpa also stressed on promoting and preserving one's own culture

and heritage.

The occasion was organised by Changthang Druk Taksang Zhabzhu Tsogspa. An effort was made to organise the event with zero waste by installing segregation units, reusable water bottles and availing cloth bags for the people attending the teaching.

Gyal P. Wangyal, CEC expressed his gratitude to His Holiness for the blessings. Later, His Holiness launched the third volume of 'Sarzhengs' magazine by SAVE (Nyoma Block Students and Youth Organization).

Sonam Dorjey, Vice Chairman, Changthang Druk Taksang Zhabzhu Tsogspa thanked His Holiness for visiting Changthang and blessing the people.

Earlier, His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa visited different villages of Changthang region including Rongo, Hanley, Koyul, Tsaga and Muth.



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Lingshed village gets motorable road

DC congratulates the local people



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LINGSHEDED: The two-day long tour of DC/CEO, LAHDC, Leh Avny Lavasa to the village of Lingshed, Skumpata, Youlchung and Neyraks of trans Himalayan region was completed on July 29. She was accompanied by ADDC, Leh Moses Kunzang, SDM Khaltisi Tsering Motup, ACD Tsering Paldan, Ex-en PMGSY, Ex-en R&B and head of concern departments.

DC, Leh called the day memorable for the people of Lingshed for having a motorable road for the first time in their area. She informed that this 90 km of road from Sumda Dho to Lingshed has been constructed under PMGSY and the same road will be extended by 52 kms towards Dipling covering 7 kms in the first phase at the cost of Rs.2.5 crores under NABARD. She asserted that the coming of the road will ease other developmental works in the area and many of their grievances and problems will be solved.

DC gave assurance to consider all their demands and committed to get a V-set installed in next 15 days on priority to address their communication problem. As

demanding by Councilor Lingshed about helicopter services in Lingshed, DC said that this matter is being decided at the state level but she gave assurance to do the best at the level of administration to provide heli-services to Lingshed. She also visited the medical NTPC and government school at Lingshed. She directed the concerned engineer to provide the school and medical centre with pipeline for drinking water.

Sonam Dorjay, Councilor Lingshed expressed gratitude to DC, Leh for her visit in the trans Himalayan area and also submitted a memorandum demanding various facilities to ensure timely arrangements for organizing the next summer Buddhist teaching- 2021 (Yarchos Chenmo), multipurpose gathering ground, construction of a rest house, tractor road towards monastery, post office, bank branch and communication upgrade.

At Skumpata, the village Nambarder demanded for irrigation canal, construction of guest room, medical sub centre, ration store, heli-service and communication upgradation. DC assured to address their problems on pri-

ority. DC also gave assurance to install V-Set communication services as soon as possible in their village.

Enroute to Youlchung, DC visited ICDS centre and also inaugurated newly constructed additional class room that was completed in 2018 at the cost of Rs.7 lakh by Education Department. Sarpanch Youlchung presented the village demands including upgradation of Primary School to Middle School, additional teacher, construction of irrigation canal, repair of medical center, Heli-services and upgradation of communication. He expressed gratitude to all the district officers headed by DC, Leh for their constant support, coordination and hardwork in successful completion of all the projects on time. Lavasa directed the HOD of concern departments for timely completion of the ongoing projects and assured to consider their demands.

Neyraks was the last village where people demanded for number of development projects like providing fund for construction of Primary School, to permit chadar trekking for 8days instead of 5 days, to permit tourists to visit till Lingshed village, repair of water taps, provide land compensation and construct link road from Kong-tse to medical sub center. In response Lavasa instructed SDM Khaltisi to give compensation to the villagers for land, trees, fodder land and irrigation khuls that were damaged during road construction to Neyrak village by BRO 81 RCC. She also directed RDD to handover the newly constructed ration store to the public and PHE department to repair the water taps.

infants and young children. The virus can cause severe watery diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and abdominal pain. Children who get rotavirus disease can become dehydrated and may need to be hospitalized.

Good hygiene like hand washing and cleanliness are important but is not enough to control the spread of the disease. Rotavirus vaccine is the best way to protect a child against rotavirus disease. Most children (about 9 out of 10) who get the vaccine will be protected from severe rotavirus disease. Nearly 7 out of 10 children will be protected from rotavirus disease of any severity.

It is given orally to infants in a three-dose schedule at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age. The vaccine will be co-administered with other vaccines as per the immunization schedule.

Sachin Kumar Vaishya, ADC, Leh, Dr. Motup Dorjey, Chief Medical Officer, Leh, Dr. Manzoor, Deputy CMO, Dr. Tsering Samphel, Medical Superintendent Leh, senior officers/doctors of Health Department of Ladakh Division Leh/Kargil, participated in the workshop.

of diarrhea amongst children. Over 75,000 children die annually because of diarrhea, in India. Rota Virus Vaccine is a new vaccine that is expected to be launched in September this year throughout the state. The vaccine will be introduced in routine immunization as per the recommendation of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Preventive measures and vaccination of infants will prevent spreading of the virus.

Talking briefly about the dosage, storage of Rota Virus Vaccine, he said that state-level workshop is being organised for the first time in Ladakh Division to train the trainers so that the cascade training flows down efficiently for wide awareness for its proper application.

Rotavirus spreads easily among

State-level workshop on Rota virus vaccine held in Leh

Expected to be launched in September throughout the state



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A state-level workshop on introducing Rota Virus Vaccine (RVV) in routine immunization as per Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare GoI was organised on July 27 at DC Conference hall.

The workshop was organised by the Chief Medical Officer. Dr. Arun Sharma, Director, Family Welfare MCH & Immunization J&K inaugurated.

Dr. Qazi Haroon, State Immunization/Nodal Officer FW J&K, Dr. Sheema Chaudhary, SHO WHO, Srinagar, and other experts spoke about various aspects of Rota Virus Vaccine.

Dr. Arun Sharma informed that Rotavirus accounts for 40 percent of hospitalization because

Governor inaugurates Kargil Ladakh Tourism Festival

Announces 2 degree colleges and 2500-MW solar power project

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Multicultural music and dance performances by the artists of Purgi, Balti and Shina Dardi ethnic tribes and polo exhibition match were showcased during the two days Kargil Ladakh Tourism Festival.

The festival was inaugurated by Satya Pal Malik, Governor, J&K on July 21 at Khree Sultan Cho Sports Stadium.

Satya Pal Malik said that the Governor Administration is fully committed to give impetus to the tourism sector in Kargil.

He said that to provide tourists round the year connectivity, expansion work of Kargil Airport will be taken up soon for which ₹ 200 crores have already been sanctioned. Also, the Government is soon starting a 2500 MW solar power project to enhance power sector in Kargil.

He informed that the Government is keen to ensure equitable development of both the two districts of Ladakh division. Historical steps have been initiated in this regard which includes the establishment of Ladakh Division, creation of 495 posts and the establishment of Cluster University.

The governor also announced the establishment of two colleges for Kargil district including a Women's Degree College.

Talking about the steps being taken by the Governor's Administration to bring transparency in the system, the Governor said that the Government is taking



strict measures to check corruption and corrupt elements which are one of the major bottlenecks in the path of progress and development.

Responding to a question about the start of work on the Zojila Tunnel project, he said that the rebidding process would be completed within the stipulated timeline so that work on the project is started at the earliest.

The Governor further spoke on the evacuation of the army from the lower Kurbathang Plateau, grant of 10% duty allowance in favour of the employees working in Ladakh region, augmentation of Education and Health sector and establishment of Kargil Scouts on the lines of Ladakh Scouts.

Feroz Ahmad Khan, CEC, Hill Council, Kargil expressed his gratitude to the Governor on behalf of the people of Kargil district for having fulfilled the long pending demands of the people by granting divisional status to Ladakh, creation of 495 posts and allotment of equal number of directorates to both districts, sanction of ₹ 200 crore for expansion of Kargil Airport and ₹

280 crore for completion of languishing projects.

He projected several demands and sought the intervention of the Governor in early start of work on construction of Zojila Tunnel and expansion of Kargil Airport, sanction of funds under State Sector, establishment of women's police station and IRP Battalion in the district, release of the pending dues of casual laborers, sanction of special funds for completion of the remaining works of the Council Secretariat Kargil and Delhi Bhawan at Dwarka, New Delhi and other related demands.

Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, DC Kargil spoke about the multiethnic folk traditions and cultural ethos of the district and the steps being taken by the LAHDC Kargil and District Administration Kargil for tourism promotion in the district.

Various stalls of local handicrafts, handloom, agricultural and horticulture products, stalls of ethnic food and local dry fruits and ancient artifacts were also exhibited by various Government departments and private societies.

BSNL daily wagers demands pending salaries



Daily wagers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) protesting outside the office in Leh.

Stanzin Dasal

LEH: Daily wagers engaged with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Leh staged a protest demanding payment of the pending salary on July 17 in Leh.

Around 116 casual workers are left without salaries for nine months.

Morup Dorjay, a casual worker said, "Our salaries are kept pending from the last nine months because of which we are facing a huge crisis. We are finding hard to meet our daily expenses due to the non-payment of salary".

"We have raised the issue several times at all levels but has not been considered so far", he

added.

Another employee, Gurmet Dorjay said, "We request all the concerned officials to kindly pay our pending salaries at the earliest. If our demands are left unheard we will continue our strike in the coming days also."

When asked about the issue to Phuntsog Dorjay, General Manager, BSNL, Leh said, "BSNL is facing a financial crisis because of which the problem is arising. The crisis is prevalent countrywide and high-level meetings are convened to address the issues and hope that it will be solved soon".

"For a time being considering the financial crisis faced by the daily wagers we can facilitate them with the withdrawal of EPF so that they can use the money for a month or two and by the time we expect funds to be released", he added

The protestor threatened that if this continues they will further intensify the struggle.

7th edition of Summer Buddhist Council concludes in Nubra

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NABARD and sought his intervention in proper functioning of Solar Power Plant of Digger.

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Member Parliament expressed hopes that Ladakh will touch new

heights of development and prosperity under the administration of Governor Satya Pal Malik.

Geshes Thupstan, Chairman Organising Committee Yarchos Chenmo, Sargun Shukla, SSP, Leh, Sachin Kumar, ADC, Councillors and many other dignitaries were present.

Governor meets several delegations in Kargil

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Around 16 delegations including Anjuman Jamiat-ul-Ulama Isna Ashria Kargil, Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust (IKMT) Kargil, Anjuman e Sahab Zaman Sankoo Suru, Buddhist Association Kargil and other religious, political and social organisations met Governor Satya Pal Malik on July 21 in Kargil.

The delegations put forth their demand including early completion of works on the 200 bedded hospital at Kurbathang, early start of work on Zojila Tunnel, opening of Kargil- Skardu road, survey for Railway Connectivity to the district, expediting work on AM-RUT projects for development of Kargil town and sanction of new projects for town beautification, establishment of multispecialty hospital and revival of adventure tourism activities in the district.

Other demands raised by the delegations included delimitation of Assembly constituencies, grant of district status and assembly segment to Drass, separate district status to Sankoo, construction of Panikhar-Pahalgam-Kishtwar, Hanu-Turtuk and Drass-Tilel-Gurez-Bandipora roads, opening up of Degree College at Sankoo and Shakar Chiktan besides development of winter sports activities in the area,



release of the pending wages of the casual laborers working in different departments, establishment of Degree College at Sankoo and measures for preservation of the colossal Buddha statues.

A delegation of All Zaskar Co-ordination Committee demanded grant of district status to Zaskar, delimitation of Zaskar Assembly Constituency, reservation of MLC seat for minorities in Kargil district, construction of small airstrip at Zaskar, creation of separate division for execution of works on NH 301, restoration of Pawan Hans Helicopter Service between Zaskar and Kargil as well as Leh and speedy construction of Nimo-Padum-Darcha Road.

Ladakh Buddhist Association Kargil Unit delegation put forth demands like delimitation of LAHDC Kargil constituencies and creation of separate constituencies therein for Buddhist minorities, allotment of land for construction of Buddhist colony at Kargil and Jammu, creation of

posts for Bhoti teachers, Minority Property Safety Act Bill, construction of Buddhist Monastery/ Temple in Kargil town, creation of separate district for Buddhists of Kargil by merging areas from Shargole to Khalbtsi, tourism development package for upliftment of Buddhist monuments and other related demands.

Employees Joint Action Committee (EJAC) reiterated the demand for sanction of Special Duty Allowance (SDA) in favour of the employees working in Ladakh Division and reservation in promotion for SCs and STs while a delegation from the Bar Association Kargil demanded for establishment of Consumer Court in the district and early construction of Court Complex at Kurbathang Kargil.

Meanwhile, the delegation of Students Educational Movement of Kargil (Ladakh) demanded extension of infrastructure in the degree colleges of Kargil, extension of subject combinations in University Campus, degree colleges and higher secondary schools, establishment of public libraries in various blocks and other related demands.

The Governor assured them that all issues would be given due consideration and the genuine concerns would be fulfilled in a phased manner.

Tsering Sandup elected as new Deputy Chairman of Hill Council, Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Tsering Sandup, Former EC Education also the councillor of Panamik constituency was elected as Deputy Chairman, LAHDC, Leh unopposed on July 24 at Hill Council Assembly hall.

The election was conducted by DC/CEO, LAHDC, Leh Avny Lavasa in presence of Gyal P. Wangyal, Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Leh

The name of Tsering Sandup for the post of Deputy Chairman was proposed by Stanzin Sherab, Councillor Khalbtsi which was seconded by Tsering Paldan, Councillor Gya Meru. Tsering Sandup expressed gratitude to everyone for keeping the trust in him.

He said that it would not be a new thing for him to work as Deputy Chairman as he has already served under the capacity of Executive Councillor. He further added that his previous experience will help him to serve the public with greater spirit and assured that he will dedicate his time and service for the well being of the common people.

The Deputy Chairman seat was left vacant after Ex-Deputy Chairman, Gyal P Wangyal was elected as the CEC of 5th Hill Council, Leh.

Ladakh School Olympics; Govt. Higher Secondary schools win rafting competition

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Govt. Higher Secondary School, Saspol girl's team and Govt. Higher Secondary School, Summor boy's team won Ladakh School Olympics, 2019 rafting competition on July 20.

The river rafting competition of school children covered a stretch of 8 km from Tsoksti till Sangam view point in Zaskar River.

Chief Guest of the occasion, C Phuntsog, Vice Chancellor, Ladakh Cluster University appreciated the initiative and efforts of district administration in organising the Ladakh School Olympics and including river rafting as one of the sporting event. He stressed on the need to give more attention to promote sports in the country to have greater participation in world Olympics. He said that Ladakh School Olympic is a step forward in this direction.

He further suggested Administration to involve both Leh and Kargil districts in Ladakh School Olympic from next year to ensure more participation and better competition.

Congratulating the top three boys and girls team, he urged the students to inculcate the true



sportsmanship spirit by learning to take victory without pride and defeat without remorse. He said that sports teaches discipline, self control, good manners, team spirit and promotes holistic growth and to be a good human in life.

Advisor to all Ladakh Rafting Organisation informed that the best 10 students selected from the rafting teams both girls and boys will be sent to Rishikesh for river rafting training this year. Besides, the selected students will also compete in the world highest rafting competition to be

held in Leh this year.

Expressing gratitude to Avny Lavasa, DC for including rafting in Ladakh School Olymppic, he requested administration support to promote river rafting in Leh which has great potential.

In girls team, Govt. High School, Chuchot Shamma, Leh scored second and Govt. Higher Secondary School, Sakti third. In boys team, Govt. Higher Secondary School, Nyoma won second position and Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School, Leh scored third.

Avny Lavasa assesses disaster preparedness in Leh district



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A mock drill was held on July 26 to assess the preparedness of various agencies in case of emergency during disasters like flash floods, cloud burst and others.

The aim was to check the preparedness, availability of essential services like medical facilities, ration, drinking water, electricity, accommodation, bedding, telecommunication set-up, availability of resources like rescue equipment, JCB machines, and tippers. Also to enhance coordination between the district officers appointed as Nodal officers and other agencies viz police, SDRF, army, ITBP, GREF, Fire & emergency services, etc.

The drill was conducted under the supervision of Avny Lavasa, DC/ Chairperson, District Disaster Management Authority, Leh.

Stakeholders representing Army, ITBP, State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), Civil Defense, Air Force, CRPF, Police and district officers were present at the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) near Council Secretariat. Besides, four camp centers were also identified at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Leh, EJM College, Tashi Thongsmon Choglamsar and Food Craft Institute Tyakshi Thang.

Addressing the stakeholders at the Lotsava Auditorium, J&K Cultural Academy, Leh, Avny Lavasa said that the mock drill is conducted to sensitize stakeholders with the preparedness at the time of disaster.

"SDRF has been conducting awareness camps at various community levels and schools and their awareness will prove helpful", added Avny.

She informed that the four identified centres have been equipped with basic facilities for emergencies and have all the basic facilities of food, shelter, drinking water, toilet, and medical aid. NIC center at Divisional Commissioners Office complex will continue to be the main meeting point at the time of any disaster as the office has uninterrupted power supply and communication facilities.

The personnel of SDRF and staff of the medical department also conducted an exhibition of rescue equipment and demonstration on medical evacuation.

Cultural Academy, Leh, to launch talent hunt

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A meeting was convened by Sachin Kumar, ADC, Leh regarding the launch of a talent hunt programme through J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in Leh district on July 29. The meeting was attended by JD Education, Ladakh, ACD RDD, Leh, CEO, Leh, DPO, Leh and Assistant Editor, Culture Academy, Leh.

Dr. Thupstan Nurboo, Assistant Editor, Culture Academy Leh who is also appointed as the District Coordinator to conduct the talent hunt in Leh district informed that the department will launch a talent hunt programme in singing, music instrument and painting competitions at the district level. He added that the talent hunt will begin with the singing competition that will be conducted at different levels and the first level will be held at Gram Panchayats level where RDD with collaborate to

identify 3 selected candidates from each panchayat.

"At second level the selected candidates at Gram Sabha will compete at Zonal level where the School Education Department with assistance from J&K Academy of Art, Culture and languages will select 5 candidates from each zone to compete at district level competition", says Dr. Nurboo.

He informed that in the third level there will be competition among the selected candidates from each zone and 5 selected candidates from colleges. In the last level, the 3 winning candidates at the district level will compete with candidates from other districts in the state-level competitions. The winners at both district and state level will be awarded cash prizes.

ADC, Leh urged the concern officers to conduct the programme as per the guideline and assured full support from administration.

District Police, Leh organises victory parade



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

CHOGLAMSAR: Marking the 20th Kargil Vijay Divas, a victory parade was held on July 26 at District Police Line, Choglamsar.

Five contingents of District Police Leh and IR 25th Battalion participated in the parade.

Sargun Shukla, SSP Leh paid rich tribute to the officers and jawans who laid down their lives to recapture the posts and made India victorious during the Kargil War.

A symposium on the topic 'Recognition of courage and valour in India' was also organised and

the students of JNV and CIBS Choglamsar took part.

Suresh Kumar Chib, ASP, Leh, Ishtyaq A Kacho, Deputy SP Hq Leh, Dr. Palmo, Police Medical Officer and many other guests were present.

Later, certificates were presented to the symposium participants.

EXPERT TALK

Hepatitis

By Rinchen Angmo Chumikchan



Dr. Willayat Ali, MBBS, MD; President, Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre, Kargil: There are five types of viral hepatitis, A to E. The main concern in Kargil is Hep B which is having a higher prevalence as compared to the rest of the country. In the '90s, it used to be news to get a Hep B patient, but from 2004 onwards sporadic cases started appearing.

In 2008, I joined as a physician in Kargil. Once I had a chance to go through the blood donors register in blood bank DH Kargil. Some 200 people had been screened for blood donation and it was shocking to find that 34 people with HBsAg positive which is four times higher than the highest prevalence area, Taiwan, (7%). This is alarming. Later, all surgical, dental and antenatal patients were screened before procedures.

Soon after, doctors approached the higher authorities regarding the issue but nothing concrete was achieved. Then we approached NGOs working in the field of health. Here in Kargil, Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre took an interest in the issue and devised a two-phased strategy.

Phase one includes the dissemination of information to people through seminars, lectures in schools, religious gatherings, radio talks, panel discussion on local TV and all resources available were being used. Since Hepatitis B has a very similar mode of spread as HIV, the scenario was really scary.

Phase 2nd includes the vaccination of masses who were uninfected but for that a huge budget was needed and the Govt. was not helping. To approach donors for funding, concrete and scientific data was needed. It was in 2008- 2009 that Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre approached the then HoD, medicine, GMC Srinagar and the Director, SKIMS, for a structured prevalence study of the disease in Ladakh.

I had the privilege to discuss the issue with Dr. M.A. Kamili, HoD GMC and Prof Shokat Zargar, Director, SKIMS. From GMC, the study was conducted in Kargil by a PG scholar, Dr. Farooq and the prevalence was found to be 7.5 % in Kargil.

In 2015, Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre conducted a review to assess the impact of phase one and found sufficient knowledge regarding Hep had been generated, and people from far-off places like Parkachik, Rangdum were approaching private clinics for vaccination.

In the year 2016, planning for phase 2 started. Here the plan was to screen masses for Hep B and vaccinate the uninfected and evaluate the infected for further treatment in a phased manner. Plans were formulated for resource generation and donor agencies were approached. Unfortunately, no one came forward due to the huge project cost. Ultimately it was decided to raise funds locally by monthly donations from the members of Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre (800 members). It was decided to vaccinate the total population of Kargil district between the ages of 10 to 60 years at an estimated project cost of Rs 1.6 cr.

Luckily, a charitable organisation from Mumbai (Al-eiman- charitable trust) agreed to bear the cost of vaccines and the rest was to be borne by the Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre.

Hep B vaccinations were included in the Universal Immunization Programme of the Government of India in 2006, 2007, and hence all the children below the age of 10 years were vaccinated and excluded from the project. Roughly 10 % of the population was presumed to be vaccinated due to extensive awareness campaign and 10% were already infected. Moreover, the temporal profile of the disease is such that it takes 20 to 25 years to develop cirrhosis or end-stage liver disease and liver cancer and the average life span in Ladakh is around 70 years. Hence, persons above 60 years were also excluded. The thrust of the project was on the young and productive age group.

The WHO norms of mass vaccination in an epidemic or endemic area do not include screening to reduce both cost and time. Since there is an effective treatment for the infected by early intervention and liver cirrhosis and cancer can be prevented even those infected hence screening was also made a part of the project even though it doubled the project cost. The project was named Hepatitis B-free Kargil 2020, and was launched by the Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre in October 2017.

Till date, around 45,000 persons have been screened and vaccinated fully against Hep B by Baqirya Health Care and Research Centre in collaboration with Al-eiman- charitable trust, Mumbai and Health Department, Kargil.

In the year 2017, the Shargole block was covered and in 2018 Chiktan sub- division from Henasku Bodhkarbu to Batalik and south block was covered. In 2019, the Drass sub-division and Sapi Batambis and Choskore area of Kargil block were also covered.

Present scenario; cause of spread and present trend

The studies available show a prevalence of 7.5% in Kargil. The mode of spread is multifactor and can't pinpoint a single cause. Interviews of patients reveal unsafe injection practice, poor sterilization of equipment during deliveries, blood transfusion, sexual transmission in couples and vertical transmission from infected parents, etc.

Therefore, there has to be great stress on prevention and get all those yet uninfected vaccinated against hepatitis B.

Solutions:

- All uninfected needs to be vaccinated.
- All pregnant ladies need to be screened and those found infected need to consult the doctor for treatment to prevent spread to the baby.
- Safe injection practice should be strictly followed.
- Proper sterilization of instruments during surgical procedures.
- All health personnel be mandatorily vaccinated.
- Safe sexual behaviour and practices.
- Campaign against IV drug abuse and syringe sharing.
- Safe and fully screened blood transfusion and blood product infusions.



Padmashree awardee Dr. Tsering Norboo, Physician: Hepatitis is a global burden in the world and it is caused by a virus. It is an evolving disease. There are five types of hepatitis viruses – A, B, C, D and E. Hepatitis B and C cause chronic liver disease. Hepatitis A and E spread through contaminated water or food. They often produce symptoms such as jaundice but last for short durations and Hepatitis D is an incomplete virus and causes infection only along with hepatitis B.

The most severe is Hepatitis B and C. According to WHO data, 325 million people are suffering from Hepatitis B and C and cause 125 million deaths every year.

The most common route of transmission is from mother to child. Other routes of transmission include unsafe blood products, immunological products, sexual contact with an infected person, and unsafe needles and syringes.

Hepatitis B and C virus infections usually cause chronic hepatitis, which leads to liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, and death.

However, Hepatitis A and E are not that severe.

Discovery of hepatitis E came to limelight when 1978-Kashmir epidemic of hepatitis was investigated. In November 1978, Dr. Mohamad S Khuroo investigated an epidemic of jaundice in and around a town 50 km from Srinagar. Pregnant women were more affected and many had been reported dead. He discovered "Hepatitis E" as a new disease entity.

Cases in Ladakh

So far, Ladakh Institute of Prevention has screened nearly 5000 people for Hepatitis B—a preventable disease. Those whose tests come back negative are encouraged to get their vaccination, while those who test positive for further investigation and appropriate treatment. This is one of the interventions which can prevent liver cancer and other chronic liver diseases. Ladakh Institute of prevention also conducts extensive surveys on non-communicable diseases in remote areas based on WHO and ICMR guidelines.

Prevalence rate

In Leh district case, if we take out the average of remote areas (Changthang, Nubra and Zaskar) the prevalence rate is 5.7% out of 100. In Leh urban area, the prevalence rate is 2% out of 100. And in a village in Changthang, the prevalence was very high which was 13% out of 100. We did thorough research and find the mode of transmission and it was mostly through mother to child. Later they were screened, tested and treated free of cost. Now, people are aware of the disease.

The Tibetan community has a high prevalence, which is 11% out of 100. In few families, there are cases where 3 members are affected in the same family from cancer, cirrhosis and die due to Hepatitis B. From this kind of incident, we need to understand the urgency of the disease.

Another reason can be that 20- 30 years back we lacked basic health care delivery system and the region was devoid of high tech cutting edge investigative facilities. We lack awareness about the disease.

Acute Hepatitis B Infection and Chronic Hepatitis B Infection

A hepatitis B infection can result in either an acute infection or a chronic infection. When a person is first infected with the hepatitis B virus, it is called an "acute infection" (or a new infection). Most healthy adults that are infected do not have any symptoms and are able to get rid of the virus without any problems. Some adults are unable to get rid of the virus after six months and they are diagnosed as having a "chronic infection." A simple blood test can diagnose an acute or chronic hepatitis B infection.

The risk of developing a chronic hepatitis B infection is directly related to the age at which a person is first exposed to the hepatitis B virus.

The younger a person is when they are first infected, the greater the risk of developing a chronic hepatitis B infection.

Most pregnant women do not know whether they are infected with hepatitis B and can unknowingly pass the virus to their newborns during childbirth. Therefore, since the risk of newborns becoming chronically infected at birth is so high that all the infants are recommended to receive the first dose of the hepatitis B vaccine within 12-24 hours after birth.

What can be done

Ladakh has a less population and every village has a hospital centre and infrastructure. This task is very easy if done with dedication. We can send a team in a village and inform the head of the village about the screening. Give the responsibility to gather all the villagers to them.

Hill Council, Leh and District health services have the manpower and facilities. If the cost of the vaccination is high, people will be ready to pay for that as the economic conditions of the people have improved. They just have to provide the service, system by system, we can eliminate the disease. Everybody needs to understand the urgency of the disease be it health planners, politicians, bureaucrats. They can discuss about the disease with the experts who have done work in this disease.

Mass Vaccination

We need to keep one thing in mind, we need to screen people first and then go for vaccination. Otherwise, what happens is that without screening we cannot go for mass vaccination as there are people who are already positive. Otherwise, a misconception remains in the people that we are vaccinated. If we go for mass vaccination, screening is the foremost important thing. We should complete who are negatives and later cover those who are affected.

Solutions:

- Meticulous screening
- Effective vaccination
- Awareness about Hepatitis
- Prevention is very important
- Ensure easy availability of the vaccine
- Awareness among health care deliveries
- Health care workers are at risk so make sure to provide them with proper equipments.
- Timely test and Treatment

SoulSpeak

P.P. Wangchuk

Setbacks help us discover ourselves



Why do we say setbacks help us discover ourselves? A much simpler one, but much more pointed, is: You are unlucky if you don't get setbacks! That is because you sit and do nothing; and, as a result, nothing good comes your way.

Before one understands this kind of thought, one must realise that, in life, the moments of setbacks are as many as there are moments of joy. In most cases, the one is the outcome of the other. That is to say, joy succeeds setbacks and vice versa.

Therefore, we must accept the vicissitudes of life in our stride just as we take day and night with equal ease and hope. Let's use more of reason and less of emotion in order to balance our life with the forces of nature that never fail us if we comply with the well-proven rules of the game.

And, at times, as someone has said, a setback becomes a pre-requisite to your success, not a life sentence. That clearly means that setbacks are a necessary part on one's life's journey. The more you get setbacks, the more mature and humble you become. In other words, setbacks are the stepping- stone to a better comeback that assures of a higher reach.

Therefore, the need during at any setback moment is to stand up and resolve that it is a challenge and that you are ready to face it. One must also realise that nothing good comes in life without having to face stiff challenges.

And, finally, as African philosopher Mokokoma Mokhonoana says, "A setback often moves us to a road that is worse, but leads to an even better destination."

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

In Conversation with Tsering Youdol, Artist

Interviewed by Stanzin Dasal

Q. What first drew you to painting? And how did you learn?

I remember drawing since I was in school, especially those science diagrams, painting the walls of a village school with colourful chalks. I could get my hands on, any flat surface. I used to draw diagrams of my classmates in exchange for colours. I grew up seeing my father doing wonderful calligraphy works, the handwritten invitation cards for army official and the beautifully designed notebook covers with flowers and petals. And the most important part is the pencil portrait he did in shading which was beyond amazing, and his words that eyes are the most important and difficult part of the portrait. I guess I am very much inspired by the work of my father.

My journey with art started in 2015 when I pursued my BA having Fine Arts as one of my subject from Government Girls College, Chandigarh. I am pursuing masters in Visual Art from Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla.

Painting, in particular, attracted me because of its nearly limitless possibility. For me, painting is a passion, meditation and an infinite space in this finite world for being with oneself. I feel it is a process of thanking nature and people of my native land. I strongly believe that simplicity and sticking to basics are key to content life and I try to pursue these philosophies in my work.

Q. You have exhibited your work in several group shows. Can you share your experiences?

I have exhibited my works in groups at All India Fine Arts and Craft Society (AIFACS) Delhi, Shimla, International Roerich Memorial Trust (IRMT), Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, Khajuraho, Jaipur, Jammu and Gallery GIB in Japan. Few of my artwork is selected for All India Art Exhibition at Shimla and Jammu. Apart from exhibitions, my work is in private collections in India Germany and USA. I also attended several workshops. When working in a group we realise what we are good at and weak in? This is how I realise the status of my work and subject as compared to others and how I can improve it. It's all about learning and giving the best.

Through these exhibitions and workshop, I got an opportunity to explore different styles of art, interact with people from different regions and cultures which provides a platform to share different ideas and thoughts. These exposures also give me a chance to roam around different places which gives the best experience while learning about the place, culture, tradition and its people.



Q. Tell us about your process of making the paintings?

First is choosing a sheet when working with watercolour, I mostly use Waterford and Fabriano. Sometimes, I wet the sheet before drawing. Then I choose a subject, prepare the colours that represent the subject which gives depth to it. While painting a portrait of a local person I have to get that local texture. As in watercolour, there is two technique wet on wet and wet on dry, I use both accordingly, rest is just playing with watercolour.

Q. What style of art would you classify your work and on which medium you work?

I would call my style figurative and portraiture. I love working with watercolour apart from trying other medium as well. What I paint or draw is always related to Ladakh or Buddhism. As an artist, I draw inspiration from our little universe Ladakh, its people and their lives. Portraying the raw beauty, purity, innocence and piousness of our people had been my favourite. I feel Ladakh is called heaven not just because of beautiful landscapes and historic monument but of the people who live here and their loving nature.

Q. What are the differences you see in artworks of then and now?

The difference in artworks of then and now is that earlier it was purer, more like meditation, devoted and less commercial. And now it's little more commercial.

Traditional art in Ladakh is degrading; we are losing our art to machines and outer tradition. Earlier most of the things in a house from spoons to pillars, walls, lamps, and doors were handcrafted and designed traditionally which is now can be seen in museums and heritage.

Q. What is your advice to a new artist? Do we have a scope in this field?

Art is no less than meditation. When you paint you get the inner joy and satisfaction. With art, you express yourself and also earn from it. Paint what interest you and seek validation from inside.

Yes, we have a scope in this field. If you work hard there is scope in the rarest of rare subjects, but if you don't then there is no scope in any field.

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“ Art is an integral part of our culture. From the making of our traditional attire to jewellery, local cuisines to folk song and dance, thanka painting to building monasteries are all art which involves our emotions, ideas and much more. Art surrounds life, it's not a new subject, it's the most basic and common thing we share. ”

FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa Rinpoche blessing the devotees during a conferment of three days teaching in Nyoma Changthang.



A dental patient getting treatment during a Medical camp organised by Fire and Fury Gunners as part of Operation Sadbhavna in Hemishukpachan.



Sports Minister Kiren Rijju, Avny Lavasa, DC, Leh and Sargun Shukla, SSP, Leh during the early morning cycling session in Leh.



Local residents and monks of Lingshed monastery while giving a warm reception to Avny Lavasa, DC, Leh during her visit to Trans Singey-la area.

LAMO Centre gets UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award



Eric Falt, Director of UNESCO Representative for the UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Commemorating the occasion of winning the Award of Distinction by UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation in November 2018, Ladakh Arts and Media Organization (LAMO) invited Eric Falt, Director, UNESCO, New Delhi, to Leh for the celebration.

A panel discussion on 'Built Heritage in Ladakh', followed by the unveiling of the award plaque by the owners of the two houses, Dr. Angchuk of Munshi House and Stanzin Gyalton of Gyaoo House along with Dr. Monisha Ahmed, Executive Director and Co-Founder, LAMO and Tashi Morup, Project Director, LAMO. Music performance with contemporary Ladakhi musicians and vocalist was also showcased on July 8.

Eric Falt, Director and UNESCO Representative for the UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office, informed the audience that apart from built heritage, UNESCO is now looking at the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) which is one of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. He expressed the tremendous potential for Ladakh to come up with projects, with a common unified agenda and vision with communi-

ty participation.

Dr. Monisha Ahmed spoke on the restoration of the Munshi and Gyaoo houses that make up the LAMO Centre, and the potential of rejuvenating and adapting historical buildings so that they can be used as contemporary spaces. She said that culture is not merely rooted in tradition but is also open to change and innovation. Though change is inevitable, it is also important to acknowledge and understand the past.

Dr. Angchuk Munshi, owner of the Munshi House shared the history about his house in the context of the Old Town of Leh, including the dates preceding the 17th Century and the construction of the Namgyal Palace. He elaborated the historical information through written documents maintained by his great grandfather, Munshi Spalgyas, as well as the Moravian Missionary August Hermann Francke and a 15th-century thangka depicting his family members led by Guru Chospel (forefather) that he possesses.

Wangyal Tsering, Convenor of INTACH Ladakh Chapter, raised conservation challenges faced in Ladakh in light of the modern developments taking place. Also, he highlighted the initiatives being taken by INTACH towards

conservation and the formulation of regulation and legislation for heritage sites.

A structural engineer by profession, Wangyal Tsering has taken part in many conservation projects in various monasteries in Ladakh. Also, he designed some large-scale statues of Buddha at Likir, Diskit, Nye and Stok.

Phunchok Stobdan, Former Indian Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan and the Founding President of Ladakh International Centre, Leh stressed on the importance of nature in the conservation of heritage. He also spoke about the lack of representation in Ladakh to speak for the conservation of historic buildings that are a vital part of the region's heritage.

Noorjahan Chunka, who works as a freelance Art Conservator, raised an important issue regarding opportunities for the younger generation to explore in the field of Conservation and the potential for work in Ladakh. She also identified the challenges and problems faced in the region.

Questions over the issues and opportunities in the conservation field in Ladakh were raised including challenges of conserving the heritage because of modern infrastructural developments, future of conservation of Ladakh, private ownership of the monuments, heritage regulations and youth's role and responsibilities.

The panel discussion reached a consensus over the importance of community participation in protecting and conserving, the rich and wide range of heritage, both tangible and intangible, prevailing across the Trans-Himalayan Ladakh. Also, exploring the possibility of nominating the Old Town of Leh as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

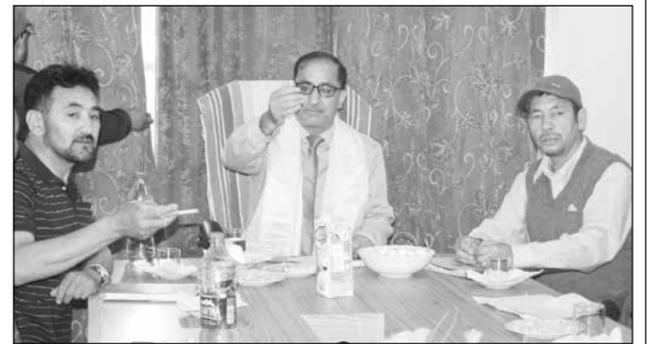
Director Horticulture reviews work at horticulture department in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: While reviewing the development of Horticulture department, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, Director Horticulture Kashmir visited fruit plant nursery on July 20 and took stock of various activities being carried out.

Accompanied by Chief Horticulture Officer, Leh, Horticulture Development officers and other field officers, he visited fruit plant nursery of Terchay, Sumoor, Nimoo and Saspol. He was appraised that under such nurseries various fruit plants are produced and distributed among the farmers especially Apricot. Also, he visited various medium density orchards in the areas as well as other components viz Pack House, Poly greenhouses, vermin compost units, Bore/tube wells, water storages tanks and others.

Ajaz Ahmad Bhat also interacted with the farmers and orchardists and assured all technical as well as financial support from the department under various develop-



mental schemes. The officers and officials were instructed to remain punctual in performing the government duties and maintain a close liaison with the growers/orchardists so that they get the timely know-how about the benefits of those schemes. Also, he instructed to conduct awareness/training camps on a large scale in all areas of the district so that the farming community can get timely technical guidance, necessary advisory and timely operations.

He informed that 300 solar dryers for Ladakh region are being established and seabuckthorn

has been approved by GOI. Steps are being taken take-up on all such activities as per DPR at the site.

Later, he inspected fruit and vegetable canning centre Nimoo and Khaltse. Instructions were given to make these centres functional immediately so that unemployed youths of the area can get the benefit.

While visiting various Zonal level offices in the district, he instructed to complete all the developmental works complete within the shortest possible time and utilize the funds judiciously.

5-day workshop for doctors in Leh

Training given for early detection and prevention of cervical cancer and colposcopy



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A five-day training workshop for the early detection and prevention of Cervical cancer and Colposcopy training for doctors concluded on July 20 at SNM Hospital.

The workshop was organized by Dr. Naseer & Dr. Girija Memorial Foundation in collaboration with SNM Hospital, Leh, and with the support of Padmashree Dr Landol.

Cervical cancer is among the top causes of cancer-related deaths amongst women in India. It can be easily detected in the pre-cancerous stage with regular screening. If diagnosed early, it can be

treated using colposcopic procedures.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr Motup Dorje, CMO, Leh on July 16.

Dr. T Samphel, Medical Superintendent, and Dr. T. Wangchuk Katpa, Deputy Medical Superintendent facilitated the programme. The training was delivered by Dr Veena Kaul, consultant Gynecologist and colposcopy trainer from the UK, along with Dr. Shameem Mir, a gynaecologist working in the UAE.

During the workshop, Dr Anjila Shah, Public Health Consultant from the UK and founder of the

Foundation spoke about the HPV vaccination which can prevent cervical cancer. This vaccine, although available in India, is not yet a part of the national immunisation programme.

The Foundation is based on the vision of Dr. Naseer and Dr. Girija, who always believed that every person deserves quality healthcare regardless of their place of residence or ability to pay.

This training programme is the second in the series of such programs organised by the Foundation, following an eye camp conducted at Chandilora, Tangmarg earlier in the year.

Two-day super-specialty health camp held in Sankoo

Team examines 300 neuro, 500 ortho and 150 cardio patients

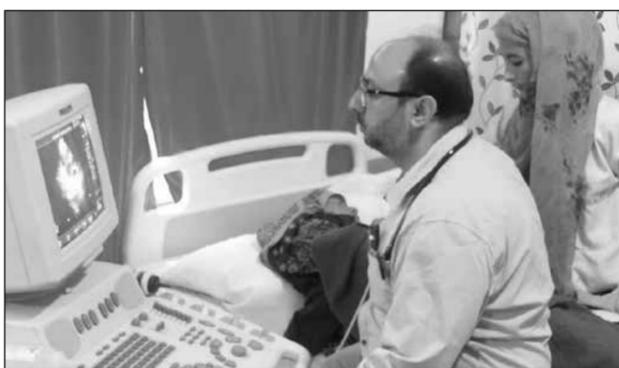
Reach Ladakh Correspondent

SANKOO: Nearly 1200 patients were examined by super-specialist doctors during a two-day free Multi super speciality health camp on July 27 and 28 at the community health centre, Sankoo.

The medical camp was organised by Dreams for a Change Foundation / Vehicleage Kargil in Association with Paras Hospital Gurgaon Delhi -NCR and Health Department, LAHDC, Kargil.

Around 300 neuro patients, 450 to 500 orthopaedic patients, 150 cardio patients were examined. Patients who were referred for surgery or major treatment and belonging from BPL will be provided free treatment and surgery by Dreams for a Change & Paras Hospital NCR-Delhi in the coming days at Delhi.

Renowned specialist including Dr. Rahul Kumar and Dr. Joseph, Orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Sanjay Gupta Neurosurgeon, Dr. Muneer Ahmad, Cardio surgeon, Dr Mahesh Wadwani, Cardiothoracic vascular surgeon exam-



ined the patients.

Dr. Mahesh Wadwani said that the health camp was organised for the poor & needy people. He expressed gratitude to Hill Council, DC, Chief Medical Officer and Shanawaz Var, MD, Dream for a Change Foundation for the support in organising such Free Multi-Speciality Medical Camp at Sankoo Kargil.

Talking about the commitment of Paras Hospital NCR Delhi to provide better service for needy and poor people of the nation, Dr. Mahesh assured to organise such camp in the future as well.

Shahnawaz Var, MD, Dream for a Change Foundation expressed his satisfaction over the conclusion of the medical camp successfully with the help of doctors, paramedical staffs, volunteers of Basij-e-Iman district administration, Kargil and Hill council, Kargil.

Earlier, the medical camp was inaugurated by Haji Anayat Ali, Chairman J&K Legislative Council, in presence of Feroz Ahmad Khan, Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil.



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