

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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August 16-31, 2019

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Brief News

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In our first episode, we have Former Deputy Commissioner, Leh Avny Lavasa. Don't forget to subscribe and like our channel.

Correction and clarification

It is the policy of 'Reach Ladakh Bulletin' to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition, date, news item or the article. You can contact at 9858394403 or email at editor@reachladakh.com. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone numbers.

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Gyal P Wangyal visits flood-hit villages of Nubra

Assures early assessment of property loss to claim relief



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: Flash flood damages cultivable lands, trees and houses in Morgi and Burma villages of Nubra valley on August 10.

To assess the damages caused due to flash floods and overflow of Siachen River, Gyal P Wangyal, CEC visited and met people of the affected areas on August 12.

Tsering Sandup, Deputy Chairman, Rigzin Spalgon, ACR Leh, Sonam Norboo, SDM, Nubra, SE PWD Leh, Tehsildar Sumoor, concerned engineers and officials were also present.

Gyal P Wangyal informed that at Morgi village two residential houses along with their standing crops including vegetable fields and trees were damaged severely.

While interacting with the affected families, he assured villagers for the earliest assessment of property loss through revenue staff to claim relief.

ACR Leh and Tehsildar Sumoor were directed to mobilise their field staff along

with the concerned department officials to assess the loses and submit the report to Council at the earliest.

At Burma village, standing crops along with trees were completely eroded due to the overflow of Siachen River. CEC directed SE PWD Leh to do the needful immediately to stop further erosion of land. He assured for assessment of property lose for claiming relief and assured that Hill Council, Leh will do its best to compensate the loses.

People of Trisha village which was hit by flash flood last year demanded a speedy restoration of their link roads, drinking water pipelines and removal of debris from their agriculture fields.

Gyal P Wangyal directed SE PWD and concerned officers to make a proposal and submit to the Council.

At Charasa village, people headed by Councilor Tegar Rigzin Lundup apprised about the demands of the village. CEC assured to give due consideration to the genuine demands of the village.

PHE daily wagers demand 18 months' pending salary

First five months' salary will be paid soon, says Gyal P Wangyal



Daily Wagers of PHE department during a protest near Council Secretariat gate.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Demanding release of monthly salary pending from the past 18 months, daily wagers of Public Health Engineering (PHE) protested for more than 10 days starting from July 31 at Council Secretariat gate.

Earlier, on June 6 a week-long protest was carried out by the employees, which was called off after an assurance of Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP to get their pending salaries paid in a week time. More than a month passed, the employees didn't get their due salaries thus, compelling them to protest yet again.

Phuntsog Angchuk, Vice President, Daily Wagers Association, Leh said, "Earlier in June we staged a protest which was called off after a week as Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP, Ladakh assured us that he has addressed the issue to the

governor and the pending salaries will be disposed of in a week. But unfortunately, we haven't received a single penny till now thus, forcing us to come out once again. We are tired of fake assurances and promises."

Daily wagers who are working with the department for over 15 to 20 years feel helpless. Many find difficult to manage room rents, children school fees, and daily needs. Despite various reminders, the concerned authorities have been ignoring the employee's genuine demands.

Chunit Angmo, President, Daily Wagers Association, Leh said, "Around 327 daily wagers of PHE didn't get their monthly salary from the past 18 months. We have raised the issue several times at all levels but nobody is ready to consider."

...Continues on Page 3

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Awareness drive on water conservation held in Stakmo



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

STAKMO: Water conservation awareness drive 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan' was organised by 37 Battalion Indo Tibet Border Police Force at village Stakmo.

The awareness drive was carried out under the leadership of Ramuresh Deputy Commandant, 37bn ITBP, with the unit officers, personnels, Nambardars and villagers of Stakmo.

Video awareness classes were arranged for the villagers to fully understand the different methods of water conservation such as rainwater harvesting, plantation, maintenance and upkeep of ponds and tanks, creation of new water bodies, creation and renovation of water recharge structure. Also, a drive to renovate the village pond that is now used for irrigation of crops field was done.

Villagers joined hands for water conservation efforts in a proactive manner to save the water for the future.

Jal Shakti Abhiyan is an awareness drive initiated by the Government of India to create a Jan Andolan for water conservation, to save and secure water for future generations and bring positive change in people for water conservation.

DM, Leh, fixes responsibility of Admins of social networking sites in Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: To fix the responsibility of the admins of social networking sites in Leh district, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, District Magistrate Leh issued an order on August 10.

The order was issued to stop irresponsible messages that are being forwarded and circulated

on social media in Leh district which can hurt religious as well as regional sentiments of the people and also for proper maintenance of law and order in the district.

The order reads that every social media group administrator shall register his group(s) name with

concerned SHOs of Police Station Leh/Nyoma/Nubra within two days from the issuance of this order.

Whatapp / facebook group admin shall report to the nearest Police Station about any posts or rumours being circulated which are sensitive and likely to cause public disorder. The admin shall be ready to bear responsibility and ownership of the content posted in the group. He/she shall immediately delete the said comment in addition to reporting to the nearest Police Station.

Any violation of these instructions will lead to strict action under relevant provisions of the Information Technology Act and RPC and other relevant provision of law.

Ladakh festival from 1st to 4th September



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: To finalize the programme schedule of Ladakh Festival 2019, a meeting was chaired by Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Deputy Commissioner with district officers and other stakeholders at DC conference Hall on 8 August.

Various committees were formed to ensure smooth conduct of the festival in Leh.

Moses Kunzang, ADDC, Leh informed that Ladakh Festival will be held from 1 to 4 September and cultural glimpses of Ladakh including Monastic Mask Dances, Thangka exhibition, archery competition, polo matches, handicraft and handloom exhibitions would be the major attractions of Ladakh festival. He briefed the committees of their tasks and responsibilities

and asked the officers to perform their roles efficiently to make the festival successful.

To give festive colour and flavour to Ladakh festival, Sachin Kumar stressed on beautification and decoration of main venues and Leh market.

He asked the concern committee for advance and wide publicity of Ladakh Festival to attract maximum participation of foreign and domestic tourists which he said is the ultimate objective of this festival.

To give a new look to the festival, few suggestions like the opening of a selfie-point with Ladakhi outfit for the tourists, invitation to few Foreign Diplomats to attend the festival, enhanced hospitality and arrangement of separate enclosures for tourists at the venues were put forth by the stakeholders attending the meeting.

Pashmina products receive Bureau of Indian Standards certification

Stanzin Dasal

CHOGLAMSAR: Indian Standard for identification, marking and labeling of Pashmina products to certify its purity was released on August 3 at Nagarjuna Auditorium, CIBS, Choglamsar.

The initiative was carried out by the Bureau of India Standards (BIS) in collaboration with LAHDC, Leh.

The objective of Pashmina certification is to promote the genuine Pashmina produced in Ladakh and curbing the malpractices in the market. The standardization will boost the economic status of the Pashmina growers and local artisans who were unable to get the actual prices. Also, it will further interest the young generation to continue the profession thus preserving the age-old culture and heritage.

Surina Rajan, Director General BIS, Dr. A K Sahoo, Director, Central Sheep, and Wool Research Institute, Executive Councilors, district officers, delegates from handloom weavers, co-operative societies, Pashmina artisans, manufacturers, traders and academic institutes along with a number of BIS officials were present.

Gyal P Wangyal, chief guest said, "Pashmina is one of the most important resources of economic potential for Ladakh region. Presently, the substandard



products are mislabeled and sold as genuine Pashmina in the market. The certification of Pashmina products by the Bureau of Indian Standards will discourage the malpractices in the market thus, ensuring pure and genuine product to the customers".

"Bureau of Indian standards will establish a Pashmina testing centre in Ladakh with all the needed facilities where the products will be tested and marked. This will benefit the nomads and local artisan to get good prices", he added.

Avny Lavasa, Deputy Commissioner, Leh said that 2400 nomadic families of Changthang are solely dependent on Pashmina for their livelihood. The certification of the product will further, enhance the market thus curbing the practice of adulteration of pashmina products.

She said, "The steps taken for identification, marking and labeling of Pashmina products will ensure better prices to the local pashmina growers and artisans

who were suffering till now due to marketing malpractices".

She further appreciated BIS for the effort and initiative which requires expertise and unique research and development.

Surina Rajan, Director General, Bureau of Indian Standards said that Pashmina is a rare fiber specially the one obtained from the goats of high altitude region of Changthang area. The Pashmina of Ladakh is the world's finest fiber measuring between 12-15 microns in fiber thickness.

"The standards on Pashmina will not only protect the interest of consumers but the local growers and artisans. The initiative will definitely boost the economic status of everyone, she said.

Dr A K Sahoo, Director Central Sheep and Wool Research Institute, Dr. R K Bajaj, Deputy Director-General, Standardization BIS, Konchok Stanzin, EC, Animal and Sheep Husbandry also spoke on the occasion.

Hill Council, Leh, expresses gratitude to Centre for granting UT status to Ladakh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Gyal P Wangyal, CEC along with Tsering Sandup, Deputy Chairman and Executive Councilors met Amit Shah, Union Home Minister on August 7 in New Delhi.

They expressed their gratitude on behalf of people of Ladakh for granting Union Territory status.

Gyal P Wangyal said that Ladakh will remain thankful to Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India and Amit Shah, Home Minister for fulfilling the aspirations and dreams of Ladakhi people.

He hoped that under their leadership Ladakh will touch new heights and also invited Amit Shah to Leh upon which Shah assured to visit soon.



PHE daily wagers demand 18 months pending salaries

...Continued from Page 1

Skarma Gurmet, a daily wager from Skurbuchan said, "I have been working with PHE for the last 10 years. We are paid a very minimal amount which is also not paid on time. It's hard to meet the basic needs and many of us manage by taking loans with the hope of reimburse from the salary."

When asked about the issue to Gyal P Wangyal, CEC on August 9, he informed that he along with Deputy Chairman and EC's went to meet the concerned authorities in Srinagar personally on August 5.

He said that an amount of ₹ 1.5 crore is already released under wages by Financial Commissioner Finance on the disposal of DC Leh and directed Superintending Engineer PWD Leh to release five months pending salary to the daily wagers without any delay.

Gyal P Wangyal also assured to arrange remaining due salary of workers in the coming months and

requested daily wagers to resume their duties.

Pradeep Kumar Sharma, District Superintending Engineer, PWD, Leh said that the reason for the delay in the salary is that daily wagers are appointed to meet up the urgency. Different government schemes have a contingency fund of two to three percent from which the payment of the daily wagers is done. In their case, the liability was more which was taken up to the government at all levels."

"I appreciate the effort of Gyal P Wangyal, CEC who went there despite having curfew imposed in the valley and got the funds released. A pending salary of first five months will be distributed soon in their accounts."

Talking about the future plan, he said that an order has been issued to plan a duty roster to all the daily wagers and accordingly they will work and get paid. Also, executive engineers will record their progress every month for check and balance.

Health Department, Leh, initiates 'Yellow Line Campaign'

Aims to spread awareness about the harmful health effects of tobacco



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A 'Yellow Line Campaign' under National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) was inaugurated by Sachin Kumar, DC, Leh on August 7 at Govt Girls Higher Secondary School Leh.

Under this campaign, a yellow line will be painted 100 yards away from an educational institution's boundary wall, indicating tobacco-free zone.

The campaign was organised by the Health Department Leh to spread awareness about the ill effects of tobacco consumption and preventing young generations from getting addicted to it.

Sachin Kumar spoke about the hazardous effect of tobacco which causes diseases like lung cancer, mouth cancer, and stroke. He suggested people quit smok-

ing and other tobacco product with strong motivation to lead a meaningful healthy life. Also, he urged the students to study about the harmful effect of smoking and chewing of tobacco.

He also directed to ensure maximum participation of the public and educational institutions in this awareness campaign. Also, he urged for strict action against the violators of Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, supply, and Distribution) Act.

He further appreciated the step taken by the health department and assured to extend support at every stage.

Talking about the 'Yellow Line Campaign', Dr. Motup, CMO, Leh said that the launch of the

campaign is preferred in Girl's school considering that women are the head of the family who takes care of their family in all aspects.

He further sensitized student about their responsibility to stop someone who inhales smoking at a public place.

Dr. Iqbal, District Health Officer, Leh said that the objective of the campaign is to strengthen tobacco-free institution norms and also to create more awareness among student and staff about the dreadful consequences of tobacco.

He informed that within the yellow line, nobody would be allowed to sell or use tobacco product.

The campaign would play a great role in making tobacco-free institutions in Leh which will be further replicated in other institutions of Leh district.

Dr. Iqbal highlighted the present data of tobacco consumption in India and the harmful effect of second-hand smoking as well as electronic cigarettes.

Sumdha Chenmo road to be completed in 3 years

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The foundation stone of 10km Sumdha Chenmo road at Rongdo (Sumdha Chun) worth ₹7.88 crore under Central Road Fund was laid by Gyal P Wangyal CEC on August 3.

The construction of the road will be completed within three years.

Gyal P Wangyal said that opening of this road will provide a new developmental opportunity to the people besides improving their day to day life.

He said that the people of this village have gone through severe problems owing to non-availability of road during the past 70 years of independence. The present Hill Council left no stone unturned to complete the road within the time frame. Also, he informed that soon electricity would also reach Sumdha Chenmo.

Gyal P Wangyal credited former Member Parliament, Thupstan Chhewang for bringing CRF schemes in Ladakh for the first time.

He said that many of the road



projects have so far executed in Leh district under CRF benefiting large population. He further highlighted Thupstan Chhewang, MLC Chering Dorje and Councillor area Sonam Norbu for all the efforts in achieving this road under CRF and clarified that it is the responsibility of 5th Council to ensure steady funding flow to complete the road under stipulated time.

Gyal sought cooperation from the people and urged upon the Superintending Engineers PWD to keep a close monitoring on the execution.

Sonam Norbu, Councillor recalled that this remote village

has been over the last 70 years remained grossly neglected with their fundamental rights. He said that it is the 5th Hill Council who understood the pain and problems of the people of Sumdha Chenmo and bestowed this road for them.

He also underlined the unparalleled contribution of senior BJP leaders in granting road for Sumdha Chenmo and expressed hope that under the leadership of present CEC, Gyal P Wangyal, this road would complete within the time frame with a regular flow of funding.

Later, CEC also visited Sumdha Chun and addressed the grievances of the people.

DC Kargil reviews medicare facilities at Community Health Centre, Padum



Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, interacting with patients during his visit to Community Health Centre, Padum.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

PADUM: While taking stock of the facilities at Community Health Centre, Padum, Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, DC discussed issues related to the development of the hospital and up-gradation of the existing health facilities with the hospital management on August 1.

He inspected different wards and sections of the hospital including the Out Patient Department (OPD), Wards, Casualty Block, Dispensary, Labour Room, General Drug Store, X-ray Room and others. Also, he enquired about the status of the healthcare facilities being provided to the patient undergoing treatment at the CHC.

While inquiring about the status of patients treated in the General OPD, Baseer ul Haq Choud-

hary instructed to maintain the record of patients in computerized form. Also, he stressed on proper maintenance of records regarding the issuance of medicines to patients visiting the health institution.

While responding to the demand for a hematology analyzer and CVT for Dental Section and other related demands, he assured due consideration and necessary steps would be taken accordingly.

Dr Ibrahim Khan, Chief Medical Officer, Kargil was instructed to issue Autoclave for Minor OT section within 2 days and to ensure dental material for root canal treatment and filling available in due course.

Baseer ul Haq asked the health functionaries to discharge their allotted duties with utmost dedication and commitment in providing best possible healthcare facilities to the public.

Meanwhile, he also took stock of the pace of work on the construction of Operation Theatre (OT) section of CHC Zanskar. It was informed that the Central Heating Room of the OT section has been completed at a cost of ₹62 lakh while work on the OT block is being carried out in full swing.

Concerned engineers were directed to complete the remaining work within the stipulated time well before the onset of the winter season. Also, he stressed on proper maintenance of quality and quantity parameters in the execution of the project.

Yak health camps held in Khardong, Gya villages

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A total of 47 farmers from different villages in an around Khardong area and 55 farmers from Lato, Gya, Sasoma and Rumtse villages participated in a field day programme on yak health management held at Khardong and Gya village on August 8 and 11.

The programme was conducted by ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak, Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh in collaboration with Animal Husbandry Department of Leh-Ladakh.

The series of field day extension cum yak health camps were held at different parts of yak rearing villages of Ladakh to aware them on some common diseases in yaks and their control measures.

Dr. D. Medhi, Senior Scientist cum In-charge Extension of the institute imparted farmers about



basic manageable practices of their livestock. Dr. Juwar Doley, Scientist, ICAR-NRC, Stanzin and Dr. Morup, Veterinary Officers from the Animal Husbandry Department, Leh briefed about the scientific management of their livestock to breed, feeding, housing, and health management, especially during winter. Awareness was given about value additions of different yak products for their better income generation.

Some basic veterinary medicines like anthelmintics, antidiarrhoe-

al, liver tonics, fly repellents, etc were also distributed amongst the participants under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) head of the institute.

Tsering Wangchuk, Naib Sarpanch of Khardong praised the efforts of Dr. P. Chakravarty, Director, ICAR-NRC on Yak, Dirang for conducting such programme for the wellbeing of the livestock farmers of the area. He also advised the farmers to adopt the technologies scientists suggested during the programme to get the maximum benefit from their livestock.

DC, Leh, convenes introductory meeting with district officers



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: After assuming the charge of Deputy Commissioner, Sachin Kumar Vaishya convened an introductory meeting with the district officers on August 9 at DC Office Conference Hall.

While reviewing all the departments, he stressed on the need to complete the projects within the stipulated time frame and asked all the district officers for constant follow up. All the SDMs were asked to ensure close monitoring of ongoing works/projects and effective performance in the sub-di-

vision offices ensuring punctuality among the employees.

He assured to help any department or individual officer in addressing their problems but demanded active work responsibility and prompt disposal of cases.

Sachin Kumar stressed on the use of digital technology like 'Whatsapp' to keep a strict vigil on the progress of departmental works/projects. He urged the officers to complete the tasks on time without waiting for reminders to come from their high-

er-ups.

He mentioned the Mentorship program under which each district officer has to adopt a government school to teach the students with their expertise and knowledge. The officers were asked to visit their assigned school once in 15 days and play their role in mentoring the students with dedication and positive involvement.

Sachin Kumar seeks innovative ideas and cooperation in conceptualising the mentorship program.

Deputy Chairman, Leh Council, inspects SNM hospital



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: To project the issues and demands of SNM Hospital Leh with Governor J&K, Tsering Sandup, Deputy Chairman, Hill Council, Leh visited and took stock of the SNM hospital, Leh on August 2.

While inspecting all the wards, he inquired about the facilities being provided to patients.

Dr. Tsering Samphel, Medical Superintendent,

SNM Hospital Leh, Dr. Motup Dorje, Chief Medical Officer, Leh and doctors apprised Deputy Chairman about the problems of SNM Hospital in detail.

Talking about the acute shortage of doctors and nursing staff in the hospital, they informed that the 300 bedded hospital is still operating with the staff strength meant for only 150 beds. They further requested for earliest fulfillment of all the required posts for 300 beds announced in the State Budget for Leh Hospital.

Deputy Chairman also visited Oxygen Plant of the Hospital where Dr. Samphel informed that the Oxygen plant is the lifeline of all the hospitals of Leh district including SNM Hospital Leh. He highlighted the need for one additional chamber as servicing of the running chamber is already due.

Also, procurement of MRI machine, completion of a helipad for SNM Hospital and other issues was also discussed.

EXPERT TALK

Union Territory status for Ladakh

By Stanzin Dasal



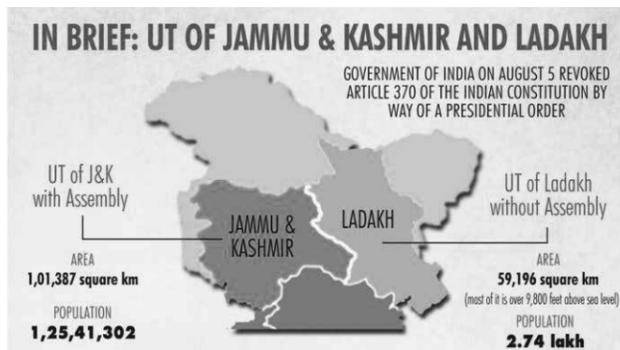
Tsering Samphel, Former MLA: From the last 70 years we have been demanding “Free Ladakh from Kashmir” at all levels because of the dominance and step-motherly treatment from the state government.

We were not been able to reflect our regional distinctiveness and aspirations. Within J&K’s budget, Ladakh gets meager share because of which development of the region slows down. Our leaders were never given equal representation in a real sense and being under Jammu and Kashmir, we have been deprived of our equal rights and shares at all levels.

Modi government decision to reorganize the state of J&K and giving UT for Ladakh is a historic move. With this Ladakh is being integrated along with other states and Union Territories of India giving an equal opportunity to represent, express views and opinions in nation-building. Though UT with legislature could have been better but we must not forget that getting UT itself is a big thing. We should be grateful that the government has kept the Hill Council intact with the UT status with further assurances to strengthen and empower the council. This is one positive step but there is some confusion in the working system. We can see the situation or tussle between Kejriwal and Lieutenant Governor in Delhi. Similarly, Hill council will work as per its law but with the appointment of Lieutenant Governor, there can be some challenges. A committee has been formed to clear all the doubts and make a needed change and I am sure it will be taken care off.

Like two sides of the coin Union Territory has a positive and negative effect. UT has paved the way to development but along with it, there are growing insecurities of land, businesses, job and many more. All these insecurities are there and can’t be ignored. Ladakh being an unexplored area, people from outside will look forward to settle or invest. Fact is, such a situation existed even before getting UT status when Article 370 and 35A was prevalent in the state.

Protection against all these insecurities is possible under special provisions for the administration of the tribal-dominated areas such as Schedule 6 of the Indian constitution. We can look for many such provisions or law by consulting different experts to further safeguard



our interest. And along with the time we can take up the needed law and provision to the government.

Change is inevitable and we all should be prepared to handle the crisis or unexpected situation. There is a lot more pressure to improve every sector such as education because we are not confined to only J&K state like before. Our challenge is with the whole nation now. Bigger responsibility is in the hands of all leaders to get our due shares from all the corporation and assets of the state.

There will be challenges, needed changes and chances of making mistakes thus, we have to be very sensitive, rise above party lines, sit and brainstorm together for a better tomorrow.

Solutions:

- Need to look for laws and provision such as Schedule 6 to safeguard the region from outside insecurities
- We need to set a direction and work collaboratively
- Experts consultation for further needed changes is must



Chering Dojay, Former MLC: Ladakh getting Union Territory status is a dream came true for the people of Ladakh. The hardship and struggle of the people for the cause can’t be forgotten. But, along with it, we can’t deny the fact that UT was also important for Ladakh because of its strategic importance. Today, we are given our own status and identity like other parts of the nation.

UT for Ladakh is a new thing and there will be changes. Growing insecurity is very obvious because the acquisition of immovable property and appointments to services is no longer limited to permanent residents. Union Territory status for Ladakh was possible only after the removal of Article 370 and 35A. We all were well aware that the

law which grants exclusive rights to J&K residents in government jobs and land will no longer be applicable after UT status.

I personally don’t see much of the disadvantages in UT because we are being freed from the Kashmir dominance. Our demand for UT is to get separated from Kashmir because we were often neglected at all levels. There were delay in funds flow, no equal representation and shares despite having the major portions of the land. Such discrimination won’t be faced now because we will get our funds directly which will be used extensively for the development of the region. DPR’s for the various developmental projects can be sent directly to the centre for approval.

Employment opportunity will grow as there will be opening up of more new departments. Also, the present employees will enjoy all the benefits provided by the centre government.

Granting of UT without revoking Hill Council is a positive point because the state land remains under the council which ensures that is not sold to private individuals from outside. But the threat on private land indeed prevails since it depends on an individual’s decision. This is something that we have to understand and act accordingly. More investors and industries will look for opportunities. There is a provision of law such as schedule 6 in the Indian constitution which safeguards the interest of the tribal area. We can look into the possibility of such provisions by thorough discussion, research and expert’s opinion. Moreover, many things will be cleared after working of the whole system.

While working for the UT administration, relation of Hill Council and Lieutenant Governor need to be very positive and strong. The problems of getting due shares between Leh and Kargil district also won’t be an issue because of the prevalence of two councils.

Now, huge responsibility lies upon the BJP party as they are in power at both the Council and centre level. There is a need for brainstorming, discussion and opinion of experts for further changes and we are all set to do so. Also, we have to get our due shares from the state resources since we are getting separated. A task force has been formed to do the same. One year will be a transitional phase for which three committees have been set up to decide everything.

Solutions:

- Brainstorming, discussion, and opinion of experts for further changes are needed
- Collaborative effort and support is a must
- A provision of law such as schedule 6 in the Indian constitution needs to be explored and understand to safeguard our regional interest

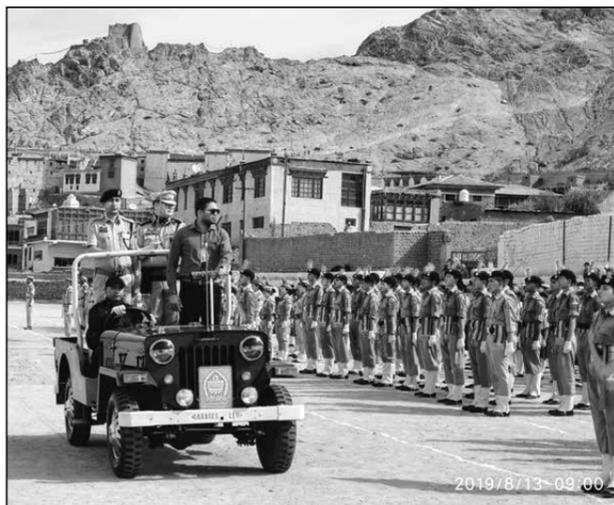
FORTNIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



Spreading across the message of peace and harmony; His Holiness Chetsang Rinpoche interacting with the Shia religious heads at Shia mosque Phyang.



Experts discussing about the Union Territory status for Ladakh in the debate session organised by Press Club Leh on ‘Understanding ‘UT without Legislature’ for Ladakh on August 7 at Lotsava Auditorium Hall.



Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Deputy Commissioner, Leh inspecting the parade during the Full dress rehearsal of 73rd Independence Day celebration on August 13 at Pologround, Leh.



Ladakh Science Foundation in collaboration with ‘Ladakh Buddhist Association - Youth Wing’ Zanskar conducted a career counseling cum PMSSS scholarship scheme awareness at Govt. Hr. Sec. School, Padum Zanskar.

SoulSpeak

P.P. Wangchuk

Kant and his ‘outstanding thoughts’



I am not sure whether anybody can say with authority she/he has read and understood the book, Critique of Pure Reason, by German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Like many of us the world over, I too have read it time and again to make myself wiser but nothing much that could be called ‘great’ has happened. In fact, most of the philosophers across the globe have confessed that they could hardly make much of a sense of it!

Therefore, the natural question one can ask is: Why so? Yes, there are several reasons but I would like to limit myself to the extent of my understanding: Kant had the habit of writing long, circuitous sentences, infact several sentences in one sentence, thereby making it, at times, a full-page monologue. And that puts you in a “what does he want to say?” kind of dilemma. Maybe, some of us, fall asleep while going through some of the pages of the book.

Secondly, he has used words that were ‘dead’ long, long ago, and the present generation finds it difficult to digest them. And thirdly, he is such an “evolved soul” that we ordinary human-beings are left out of his sphere of intellectual ring!

Have a taste of this sentence from the book (on the existence of God): “If there exists anything, then there must also exist an absolute necessary being. Now I, at least, exist; therefore, there exists an absolute necessary being. The minor premise contains an experience, the major the inference from an experience in general to the existence of the necessary.”

Flummoxed? But, one must agree that one can enjoy reading Kant if one tries to stop and ponder after reading every single sentence. Therefore, I have no hesitation in recommending the book to those who have not yet been lucky enough to read it. Reading this book is like enjoying some food that you enjoy a lot, say somewhere in Bangkok or Hong Kong, but you do not understand what you are eating!

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

IN FOCUS

In the past, we used to drink directly from streams. It's unthinkable now: Leh residents

By Stanzin Lhadol

Even as the water crisis in Leh looms large, hopes of the residents have risen with the establishment of the Municipal Committee (MC). Set up in 2018, for the first time, the urban local body is an important grassroots organisation, representative of India's democratic structure. It has commenced with 13 elected members representing different wards of the town.

In our mission to ascertain the most pressing issues concerning Leh town, a meeting with the MC Chairman, Dr. Namgyal, and his fellow members, was important. Clearly, it was too early for the committee to fathom everything, but on meeting them we learnt that issues related to water topped their list of concerns.

This was followed by a visit to a few main areas of Leh town as we felt that would educate us on the subject. These included field visits to Diskittsal (Housing Colony), Murtse Colony, Skalzangling and Gangles, exposing us to rather unimaginable and harsh realities that the residents of these areas had to face.

Slowly, we began assessing the water crisis in Leh with an understanding of its multifaceted nature. The crisis is on account of several reasons, including drying up of sources, seasonal fluctuations in demand and supply, overexploitation, overuse, contamination and policy lapses, amongst others. The solutions, therefore, require a multipronged approach.

Towards an attempt to resolve the crisis, exhaustive and reliable data is needed, which is not there. For instance, there is no clear data that quantifies the demand-supply gaps and the seasonal or decadal change in demands. Until now the groundwater aquifer remains a mystery. There is an inkling of

groundwater table receding from indirect evidence when bore-wells and water bodies dry up. The glaciers are melting at an alarming rate, yet one cannot ascertain the precise impact this will have on the water availability for Leh town.

Scarcity of water, some say, is a myth! There is enough water provided the water is managed well. Water now seems scarce due to its overuse and misuse. Over the years, the demand for water has risen due to tourism and growing commercialisation in Leh town. There are estimates of the supply graph ascending very sharply in the coming years.

In most of these areas we visited, there was no need to ask people about the shortage of water - it was evident from the parched and defunct community taps. In all three wards -Murtse, Skalzangling and Housing Colony, fetching water for drinking and cleaning purposes is a daily struggle. The residents state, "The problem gets worse during the winter season." At the logistics end, the climate of Ladakh poses several challenges. Breaking and freezing of pipes are the most common concern. At Murtse, we met Rinchen, Municipal Committee member of the ward. She graciously let us into her home and introduced us to a solution that she has resorted to keep her water pipelines free from freezing. She borrowed the traditional concept of a Yokkhang, an underground house, and applied it to her bathroom and water pipelines. "This method of laying pipes way beneath the soil prevents freezing of pipes", admits Rinchen cheerfully.

The Goba of Housing Colony, Stanzin Otsal, recounts, "The community tap water works more effectively than individual tap water systems during winter." He asserts that the community taps, being common property, are looked after collectively by all the members. They regularly light fires around the mouth of the taps to prevent freezing of pipes,

but with individual pipelines, it becomes difficult when residents are not always around. Such findings reveal the persistent climatic challenge of the region and calls for innovative measures such as insulation of the pipelines.

The Public Health and Engineering (PHE) department is responsible for ensuring the supply of water in the Leh town area. P Angchuk, a senior engineer of the PHE department, shared some thoughts on the institutional and logistical challenges that the department is faced with.



"The biggest issue that we are dealing with is that of extreme climatic conditions. The sub-zero temperatures of the region result in freezing, breakage and blockage of pipes and taps. The existing pipes are galvanized iron pipes, which cannot be prevented from freezing. The new water supply pipelines are insulated, ductile iron pipes, which have been introduced keeping in mind the low temperature. These have resolved the issue of freezing and blockage of pipelines during the severe cold months", says Angchuk.

He adds that "considering the unique climate and topography of the region, successful systems adopt-

ed by the rest of the country cannot be replicated in Ladakh. The experts in Delhi or Bangalore are unable to provide solutions to our unique challenges."

The maintenance of a water supply system calls for huge investment in a region like Ladakh. "The corpus of funds dedicated to the maintenance of our water supply system is minimal and inadequate. Whereas maintenance is necessary and crucial for the unhindered provision of service to the public", laments Angchuk.

In Skalzangling, most water pipelines are non-operational, some on account of freezing during the cold winter months and others are new pipelines to which the PHE department promises to supply water soon. The residents are eagerly waiting to see these taps run. To meet their daily needs, they either fetch water from far-off taps, sometimes requiring them to travel several kms. They also rely on tankers to supply water, which are mostly infrequent, erratic and unreliable. Tashi, a senior engineer at PHE, shares, "The tankers that the department owns are overworked. They cater to both the government and the public. There have been instances when people in power make excessive demands for water brought in by the tankers at the cost of unmet demands for water by the general public"

During the months of winter, demand for water plummets. Yet, it is despairing to note the non-availability of water in the regular taps. Streams and rivulets have surplus flow of water in winters while in summers they dry up. Tapping the water from these sources will allow its reuse. These seasonal paradoxes can be fixed with the application of a blend of traditional and modern techniques.

Inequitable distribution, lack of regulation and absentee caretakers too bother the common people. While some pipes have no supply, others are overflowing without proper regulators leading to a lot of wastage. The unregulated water then overflows into the streets and on roads leading to problems for the residents. Another issue that calls for attention

...Continues on Page 6

IN FOCUS

By making Ladakh a UT, the NDA has finally restored its dignity

The region's unique geographical location gives India a chance to think about its own 'Belt and Road' plan

By P. Stobdan



By restoring the dignity of Ladakh, which was once compared to other Himalayan kingdoms such as Nepal, Mustang, Bhutan, Sikkim and

Monyul, the Indian government has finally done the unthinkable. Ladakh feels liberated after 185 years of slavery and coercion. India's Kashmir policy was based on Jawaharlal Nehru's own wistful familial links with the Valley that undercut India's interests in several ways.

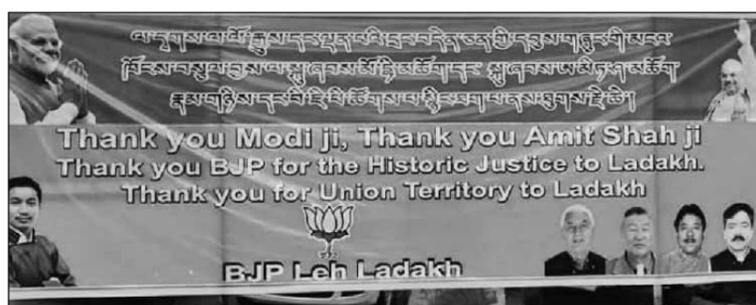
First, on October 26, 1947, when the brief subjugation-links with the Maharaja of Kashmir had elapsed, the people of Ladakh persistently resisted being a part of the Jammu and Kashmir's (J&K) unitary framework. But Nehru refused to heed; instead, left Ladakh to the mercy of Kashmiris despite its territorial incompatibility. Sheikh Abdullah had no links with Ladakh whatsoever.

Despite Kashmir's dire record of tricks and mischief, the Indian leadership was hell bent on appeasing the Valley. The results of that policy had long become untenable. In the late 1970s, Sheikh Abdullah even launched a nefarious "Greater Kashmir" concept to obliterate the identity of Ladakh.

Third, the territorial reality was that 82% of J&K was neither Jammu, nor Kashmir; it was Ladakh and Gilgit-Baltistan. Why would 15% people rule the rest of 85%? It was a flawed arrangement, anyway.

Fourth, Ladakh remained critical for India's national security. Imagine, without Ladakh, the China's People's Liberation Army would be sitting on the southern foothills of the Himalayas. It has been self-harming to have ignored Ladakh thus far, even failing to underpin its strategic value for gaining direct access to the Tarim Basin and the Tibetan Plateau. It has cost the nation heavily thus far, while keeping such a vast strategic frontier area in the hands of separatist-oriented Valley leadership.

Fifth, India's fallacious old-fashion statecraft failed to check both China and Pakistan from eating into the state's territory. Over 55% of the state's 222,236 sq km of J&K was occupied either by China or Pakistan. Also, India's tagging of Ladakh to J&K underscores its lack of strategic clarity. Further, the constitutional arrangement sought for J&K essentially contained the seeds needed for India's own destruction. The cumulative impact of those missteps has been get-



ting clearer by the day.

Sixth, the myth of J&K had long outlived its historical inviolability. It was never a functional state and has cost the country heavily. In any case, with Kashmir having bogged down in separatist mode, Ladakh risked sliding into disarray amid simmering anger among the people. The situation had become untenable in the post-Burhan Wani incident in July 2016 due to pro-Azadi protests, hartals and shutdowns spread to other parts of the state. It is certainly not a good statecraft if demographic scarcity becomes a liability, leaving Ladakh's vast borderland vulnerable to enemy encroachment.

Seventh, Ladakh's economic potentials have not even been thought of. Its colossal Indus water resources of Zaskar, Suru, Drass, Shayok tributaries only benefit Pakistani farmers in Punjab and Sind. India did nothing to harness the water flow. Only 5% of Ladakh's arid land is irrigated. If Article 370 impedes outside investments, the only economic source of tourism remains hostage to instability in the Valley. Poor connectivity, in any case,

limited the flow of tourists to Ladakh.

The nation was ought to rethink its J&K policy realistically, and in tune with the changed circumstances. New Delhi has been grossly ignoring the Ladakh's Union Territory (UT) demand for too long, predating even the Telangana movement. In fact, for the seven decades, the people of Ladakh stood united in demanding a UT status. To be fair, the Bharatiya Janata Party promised to fulfil their aspiration in 2014.

Significance of reordering J&K is enormous. Clearly, it was not a choice, but a necessity, for there are far bigger imperatives on the strategic front for India.

The Chinese forays into Gilgit-Baltistan, albeit under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) pretext, may not be without its historical claim over the region since the Tang Dynasty. China's eventual control over Pakistan occupied Kashmir would have direct consequences for Ladakh. Why should we allow J&K to become a trilateral problem?

Ladakh's unique geographical location should offer India a huge counter-offensive potential in terms of leveraging connectivity to the Eurasian region and China.

The best way to blunt the CPEC is to think about India's own "Belt and Road" idea. Narendra Modi should offer Xi Jinping an alternative energy corridor originating from an Indian port running across Ladakh to China. Why not use the Aksai Chin highway jointly? The proposal could spring multiple advantages, ranging from attracting Chinese investments, earning transits fees, to nudging Beijing to depend on India, thereby buying guarantee against any Chinese misadventure across the Line of Actual Control. China stands to gain from a more reliable economic corridor through India than risking investments in terrorism-plagued Pakistan.

A fresh thinking was also needed to draw on the growing opportunities for uplifting the Himalayan region in terms of promoting sustainable economy and tourism, besides environmental protection. It is time for the government to set up a Himalayan authority. Some beginning seems to have been made when the chief ministers of eight Himalayan states met recently in Mussoorie. But for that to happen, the re-setting of J&K was an imperative.

The separation of Ladakh from J&K could now become the kernel in India's long-term domestic and foreign policies. It would be a coup de maitre to deal with multiple challenges.

Courtesy: Hindustan Times
P Stobdan, a former diplomat, is from Ladakh. The views expressed are personal

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh
Department of Wildlife Protection, Leh**

RECRUITMENT (no. 67/nmhs/adv/2019-2020 of 5th July 2019)

Wildlife Protection Department, Leh, Government of Jammu and Kashmir wishes to engage people for the positions mentioned below for project sanctioned under National Mission for Himalayan Studies and Project Snow Leopard for a period of one year (extendable). Interested individuals must send their application form with a covering letter, a detailed CV, copies of relevant degrees/diplomas and a brief note on previous research experience by email or by post to the office of the Wildlife Warden, Leh by 23 August, 2019. Shortlisted applicants will be called for an interview.

Project	Number of Positions	Essential Qualification	Desirable Qualification
Understanding Ladakh's socio-ecological processes to design landscape-level development strategies	01 Research Associates/ RA-III	Ph.D. or equivalent degree or having three years of research, teaching and design and development experience after masters degree in life sciences, ecology, climate change or related fields	Experience in spatial analysis using remote sensing and GIS tools, Experience in quantification of eco-system services, vegetation quantification with background in field taxonomy; data management and statistical analysis, quantification and documentation of biological resources including wetlands; climate change and policy related studies, humanities and social sciences etc.
	02 Research Associates/ RA-II	Ph.D. or equivalent degree or having three years of research, teaching and design and development experience after master's degree in life sciences, ecology, climate change or related fields	
	Research assistant/ JRF	Post Graduate (PG) Degree in Basic Sciences, Environmental Sciences with NET qualification or Graduate Degree in Professional Course with NET qualification or Post Graduate Degree in Professional Course.	
	01 Accountant/ JRF	Masters/bachelors in commerce.	Minimum two years experience in accounting. Retired accountants may also apply.
Project Snow Leopard	02 Research Associates/ RA-I	Ph.D. or equivalent degree or having three years of research, teaching and design and development experience after masters degree in life sciences, ecology, climate change or related fields.	A person with a degree, work experience, and field knowledge of genetics will be given preference. Veterinarian with experience in wildlife management and keen in fieldwork will be preferred. Experience quantification and documentation of biological resources including wetlands; soil analysis, water analysis etc.
	01 Research Assistant/ JRF	Post Graduate (PG) Degree in Basic Sciences, Environmental Sciences with NET qualification or Graduate Degree in Professional Course with NET qualification or Post Graduate Degree in Professional Course.	
	01 Project Fellow	Ph.D. or equivalent degree or having three years of research, teaching and design and development experience after masters degree in life sciences, ecology, climate change or related fields.	

GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Age limit for all the positions is 28 years, but may be relaxed as per Government of India rules.
- Application in the prescribed format should be sent by email to wildlifewardenleh@gmail.com by 23 August, 2019, clearly mentioning the position applied for. Application forms can be obtained by sending an email (please mention 'Application Form' in the subject of the email) or by visiting the office address given below during working hours.
- Application should be in the prescribed format, duly signed and should be accompanied by self attested copies of documents on educational qualifications, research experience, UGC/CSIR/GATE certificate (if any), extracurricular activities, date of birth, mark sheets of all examinations, community certificate (if sought relaxation as per Government of India rules), etc.
- Salaries and allowances will be in accordance to the guidelines issued by Government of India
- The Wildlife Warden Leh, reserves the right to reject any candidature in view of incomplete information provided by the candidate or for any other reason thereof.
- For more details, please contact Wildlife Warden, Leh, Department of Wildlife Protection (J&K), LAHDC, Leh-Ladakh 194 101, wildlifewardenleh@gmail.com, Tel: +91-1982-252171, 9419168155

In the past, we used to drink directly from streams. It's unthinkable now: Leh residents

...Continued from page 5

is the quality of the water. Surprisingly, there were no reservations about the quality of water among the locals.

Dr. Jigmet Yangchan, scientist SKUAST, says, "Visibly clear and odourless water is presumed safe and clean for drinking." This fallacy was laid to rest after study reports shared by LEDeG in a meeting of NGO Forum revealing findings of chemical and organic impurities in the water.

Dr. Yangchan has conducted research to determine the reasons for the degrading quality of water, especially in Leh town. Her drive for the cause of clean water over several years has resulted in alarming findings. She associates water pollution with agricultural run-offs and discharge of grey and black water in the water bodies. On one of her solo missions, she decided to assess the quality of water in the Ganges region where she assumed the water to be of supreme quality and pure given its location near the headstream. She was shocked to see the test results. The water was impure and unfit for consumption.

Later, she identified the point source of pollution

– it was where a few households were discharging their grey and black water in the streams and main water bodies.

Lobzang Tsering, Municipal Committee member from Gompa, says, "The Border Roads Organization has allowed their labours to settle near the water bodies in makeshift arrangements. The people of Gompa are raising complaints of their water sources getting polluted due to human activities close to the water sources. They have made pleas to the administration to look into this matter and relocate the labours away from the water bodies."

This carelessness towards the sources of water is true for all the water bodies in Leh town, which receives unregulated sewerage and all forms of waste at various points.

People heave a sigh when issues about purity and availability of water are discussed. Especially the elderly folks reminisce of a time when water was clean and abundant. To validate their point, they say, "In the past, we drank water directly from the streams." This is unthinkable now and we must realise why!.

Courtesy: BORDA-LEDeG-LAMO

PUBLIC NOTICE

No 9926564K rank L/NAIK Rinchen Dorje EX Service Man Ladakh Scouts Leh S/o Ishey Phunchok R/o Ibex Colony has claimed that his son namely Rigzen Dawa name has been wrongly entered as Rigzin Dawa in the Army record of, Record Office Ladakh Scouts and produced an affidavit duly verified by Notary public Leh to this office for making necessary correction. Hence the notice is hereby served through press to file objection if any in this office, Zila Sainik Welfare Office Leh Ladakh within 7 days from date of publication failing which necessary correction will be made.

10-day handicraft and handloom exhibition opens in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: An exhibition of around 20 stalls of various handicrafts items including pashmina shawls, thanka painting, copper works, wood carvings, pottery, local cuisines and many more were opened on August 2 in Leh market.

The ten-day-long exhibition was organised by the Directorate of Handicrafts, J&K.

While inaugurating the exhibition, Gyal P Wangyal, CEC said that Ladakh is known for its rich handicrafts. The local handlooms and handicrafts products have high potential at the state and national level.

He appreciated the initiative of Director Handicrafts in holding an exhibition in Leh providing an opportunity to exhibit varieties



of handicrafts and handlooms products of various self-help groups of Leh, Kargil and Kashmir. Such platforms for exhibition and selling of products would go a long way in further promotion of handicrafts besides encouraging the creative skill of the artisan community.

He further informed that Leh will soon have a well-equipped

handicrafts exhibition centre for which Hill Council is all set to send the proposal which was principally agreed by the Government.

Tsering Sandup, Deputy Chairman, Inderjeet, Director Handicrafts, J&K, Rubina Kausar, Director Handlooms, J&K and other concerned officers were present.

Zanskar celebrates annual Karsha Gustor festival

Haji Anayat Ali stresses on strengthening age-old ethos of communal harmony, peace and brotherhood



Haji Anayat Ali, Chairman Legislative Council addressing the gathering during Karsha Gustor festival in Zanskar.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ZANSKAR: The annual Karsha Gustor festival was celebrated with great religious fervor on August 1 at Karsha monastery.

Mask dance was performed by the monks to ward off the evil forces and to establish the victory of good over evil. Folk music and dance were also presented.

Haji Anayat Ali, Chairman Legislative Council expressed optimism that the celebrations associated with it will go a long way in reiterating and reinforcing the notion of the victory of good over evil besides helping to revive and promote the rich monastic traditions.

He said that age-old ancestral ethos of communal harmony, brotherhood and peace are essential parameters for growth and development. We should strive hard to cherish and promote these virtues to establish a progressive and prosperous society.

Haji Anayat said that that the coming up of new administrative units is a welcome step and district status if granted to Zanskar will usher in a new era of unprecedented growth and development in the area. He assured people that the issue would be vigorously taken up at appropriate levels.

He further assured the members of Karsha Gonpa that he will urge the Governor to visit Zanskar in future and ensure that the project for the development of the monastery gets sanctioned at the earliest. He informed that effort is also on to sign a MoU with the Tribal Affairs Department to get funds for augmenting facilities to students of Zanskar and other areas of Ladakh region who are residing in different hostels in Srinagar and Jammu.

Feroz Ahmad Khan, CEC assured that LAHDC Kargil is committed to extend their support for holding such events in the district in future. Also, he urged people to contribute their bit towards the promotion and preservation of traditional values and virtues of peace, love and compassion.

Besides, Er Phunsog Tashi, EC Tourism and Zanskar Affairs Baseer ul Haq Choudhary, DC, Councillors, Lobzang Motup, Head Lama Karsha Monastery, King Zangla Nima Namgyal and many other dignitaries were present.

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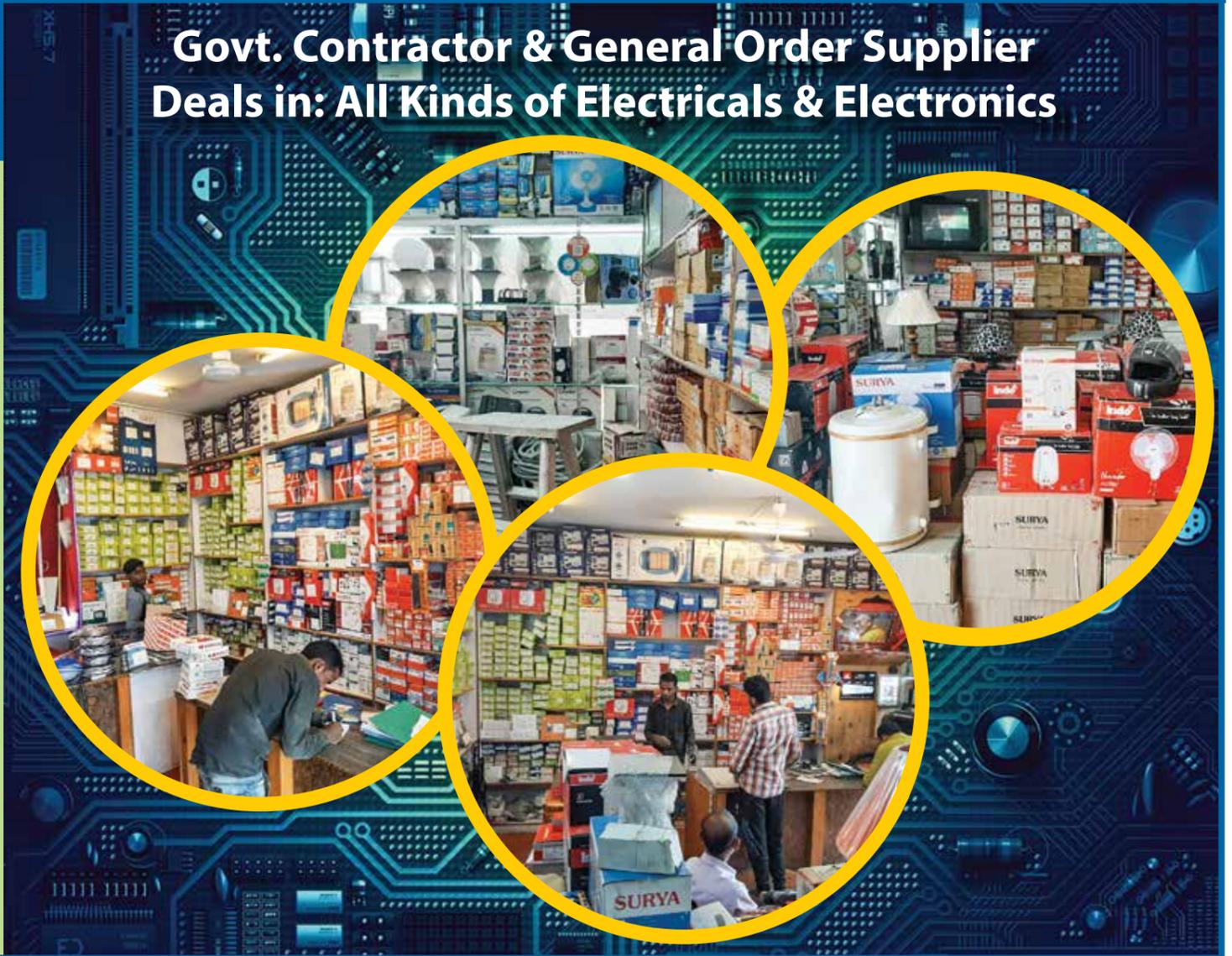
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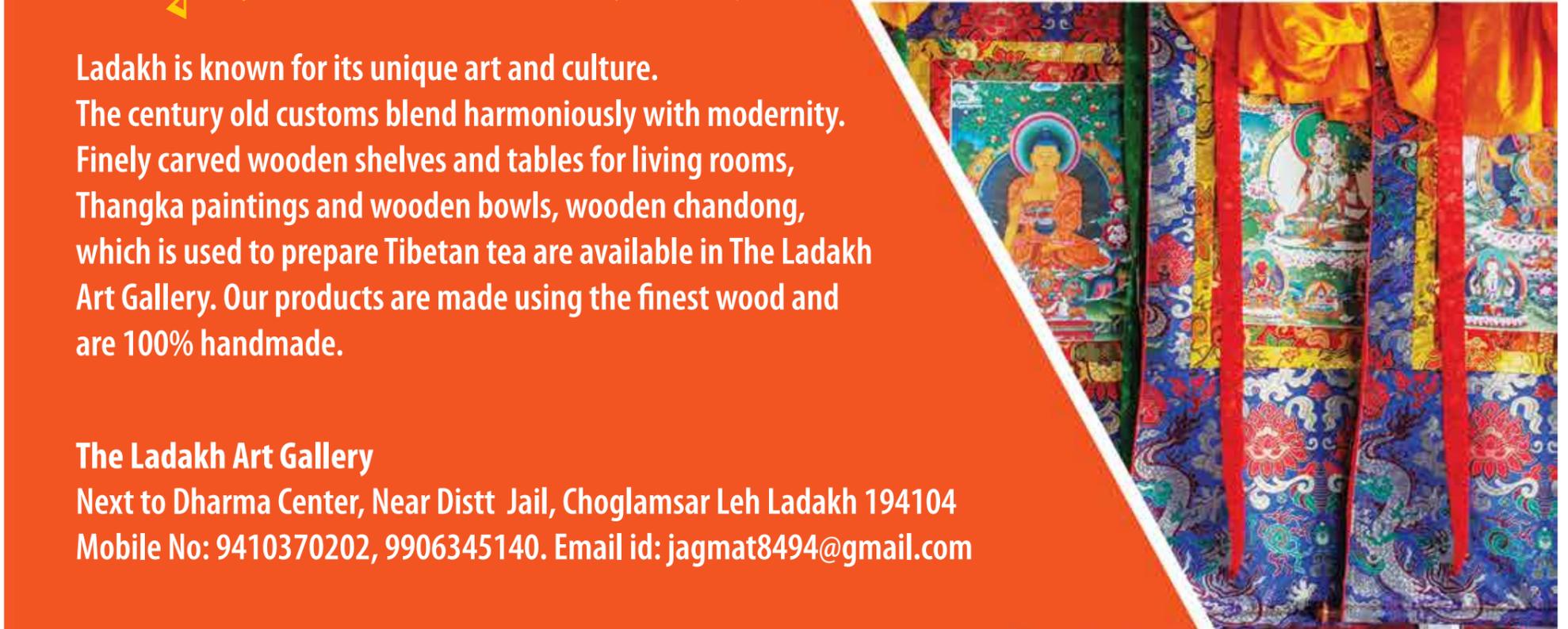
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