

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



In Conversation with Tsering Lhanzes, Illustrator and Animation Filmmaker

EXPERT TALK : Ladakh's environmental challenges: Impact of tourism and human activities

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Substance abuse surges in Ladakh, prompting community action

New de-addiction centre to deal with crisis



Nenzen Chodon

LEH: In recent years, Ladakh has witnessed a concerning rise in substance abuse among its youth...

Ladakh. Historically, societal norms in Ladakh have granted more freedom for men to explore outside their homes...

cer, highlighted, "In Ladakhi society, we often see strained relationships between children and parents. Some parents are occupied with work or transferred to distant areas...

Peer pressure plays a significant role in pushing teenagers towards substance abuse. When managed positively, peers can help deter their friends from drugs...

Effective communication between parents and their children fosters mutual understanding and strengthens familial bonds...

Traditionally secluded, Ladakh's exposure to the outside world has ushered in lifestyle changes, influencing youth behaviors and choices.

Recognizing the influence of peer pressure, the district administration has initiated the formation of the YATO (Youth Against Tobacco and Other Substances) Club in schools.

With a growing number of young people involved in substance abuse, Leh-Ladakh has inaugurated its first de-addiction center on June 1st.

Substance abuse involves the misuse of drugs beyond their intended medical or therapeutic purposes. While drugs serve essential roles in healthcare, their excessive consumption poses severe health risks.

The YATO Club serves as a platform to proactively prevent drug abuse among teenagers. It emphasizes the importance of not neglecting vulnerable groups at the school level...

Treating addiction is particularly challenging in a place where stigma remains attached to the issue. Awareness is crucial to dismantle this stigma...

In Ladakh, the initiation into substance abuse often begins with soft drugs, which are more accessible and perceived as less harmful.

It is crucial for young people to explore various opportunities in life beyond academic education, including sports, art, culture, and environmental conservation.

Nilza Angmo emphasised, "Recovery is a distinct process that follows prevention. It is essential to educate children about the consequences of substance abuse early on.

Nilza Angmo, District Social Welfare Officer in Leh, explained, "The criminals involved in drug supply have a constantly evolving 'modus operandi' using discreet methods.

Similarly, families play an equally important role. In today's times, there often exists a gap in understanding between parents and their children.

As Ladakh's youth represent the future of the region, safeguarding them from the scourge of drug abuse is paramount. It requires concerted efforts from families, schools, and the community to create an environment where drug use is unacceptable.

Teenagers are highly susceptible to substance abuse, often influenced by peer pressure or driven by financial, family, or emotional challenges.

District Social Welfare Officer,

ITBP seizes 108 gold bars near Indo-China border, two arrested



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) seized 108 gold bars weighing 108.060 kgs near the Indo-China border on July 9.

away from the International Border at around 1:20 PM, the party encountered two suspicious individuals with mules.

other patrols launched simultaneously in the general area.

According to the press statement, on July 9, 2024, at around 01:30:02:00 PM, the 21st Battalion of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) launched a Long Range Patrolling (LRP) in the border areas of the Southern Sub Sector in Eastern Ladakh.

The patrol party took custody of both suspects and seized the items, then proceeded to Tactical HQRS Koyul to report the matter to Ajay Nirmalkar, Comdt 21 Battalion, ITBP.

In addition to the gold bars, the following items were seized:

- 2 mobile phones
•1 binocular
•Some Chinese food items
•2 knives
•2 ponies
•1 torch
•1 hammer
•1 nose plier

The ITBP is authorized by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India (GOI), to carry out search and seizures, and exercise the powers of Customs on the border to combat smuggling activities.

The patrol team, headed by Deepak Bhatt, DC/GD, comprised three SOs and 17 ORs. While reaching the area of Sirigaple, approximately 1 km

This patrol was planned by SHQ Srinagar, ITBP, with the approval of HQ NW Fir, ITBP, along with several

Ladakh Sangha Council: Strategies for sustaining Buddhist teachings and culture

Nenzen Chodon

LEH: The First Ladakh Sangha Council 2024 was held at Zen Hotel, Leh Ladakh, on July 12, organized by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in collaboration with the Ladakh Gompa Association.



During the First Ladakh Sangha Council 2024 at Zen Hotel, Leh Ladakh.

The event was graced by His Eminence Thuksey Rinpoche, His Eminence Bakula Rangdol Nima Rinpoche, CEC LAHDC Leh Tashi Gyalton, Executive Councillor (Animal/Sheep) Tashi Namgyal, Executive Councillor (Culture) Stanzin Chospel, Nominated Councillor Ven Konchok Tsepel, Ven Tsering Wangdus, President of the All Ladakh Gompa Association, Vice President LBA Rigzen Dorjey, Tsewang Paljor, Deputy Secretary Culture, and venerable monks.

The display of primitive art and manuscripts in monasteries attracts tourists, eager to learn about Buddhist culture and Ladakh's history. His Eminence Thuksey Rinpoche emphasized the council's vision for the next 15-20 years, focusing on nurturing, protecting, and sustaining the teachings of Buddha rather than on further infrastructure development.

ing Heritage. He mentioned the construction of stupas at Umling La, Sindhu, and other locations, symbolizing peace. Gyalton also discussed initiatives by the administration to provide social security, including health insurance for the poor and for monks.

The council focused on the significant role of monasteries and monks in Ladakh in preserving ancient Buddhist teachings, literature, and culture. Historically, many Rinpoches and renowned Buddhist monks have dedicated their efforts to preserving Ladakh's unique cultural heritage.

CEC LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalton, highlighted the contributions of Buddhist monasteries to tourism, referring to them as the Liv-

Tsewang Paljor, Deputy Secretary / Special Officer Culture, noted that Ladakh's rich culture owes much to the guidance and teachings of the gompas. The event was an occasion to express gratitude for the historical contributions of monks and monasteries, emphasizing the continued importance of gompas as centers of worship and learning for future generations.

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## EXPERT TALK :

## Ladakh's environmental challenges: Impact of tourism and human activities

Stanzin Padma



**Sonam Lotus,**  
Director of Meteorological Ladakh

Climate change is a global phenomenon affecting regions worldwide, including Ladakh. Despite its vast expanse and relatively small population of around 300,000 in Leh and Kargil combined, human activities, primarily anthropogenic factors, contribute significantly to this issue. Activities such as the continuous emission of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, methane, and chlorofluorocarbons, as well as pollution from industries and transportation, have altered the natural balance of the atmosphere. Consequently, temperatures have risen beyond normal averages, impacting glaciers which serve as crucial freshwater sources.

Pollution exacerbates health risks, although fortunately, there have been no reports of extreme heat or cold-related casualties in Ladakh thus far. However, the region experiences intensified weather patterns such as heatwaves, extreme cold spells, and erratic monsoon rains leading to events like cloud bursts, floods, and landslides. These consequences underscore the urgent need for sustainable practices and policies to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change in Ladakh and globally.

As a meteorologist deeply connected with nature, I believe responsibility for environmental stewardship rests not just with the people of Ladakh but with everyone globally, especially policymakers. Implementing eco-friendly green policies is crucial in combating the adverse effects of climate change, which often result from widespread ignorance and unsustainable practices.

Fortunately, the Government of India has taken significant steps towards sustainability, exemplified by efforts to make Ladakh carbon neutral. These initiatives aim to reduce carbon footprints and emissions, although addressing such a complex issue requires time and concerted effort.

Given India's vast size, further robust green policies are necessary nationwide to combat climate change effectively. It's imperative that every individual worldwide acknowledges their role in environmental conservation. Ladakh sets a positive example with its community's strong commitment to nature, reflecting a hopeful trend towards greater environmental awareness and action.

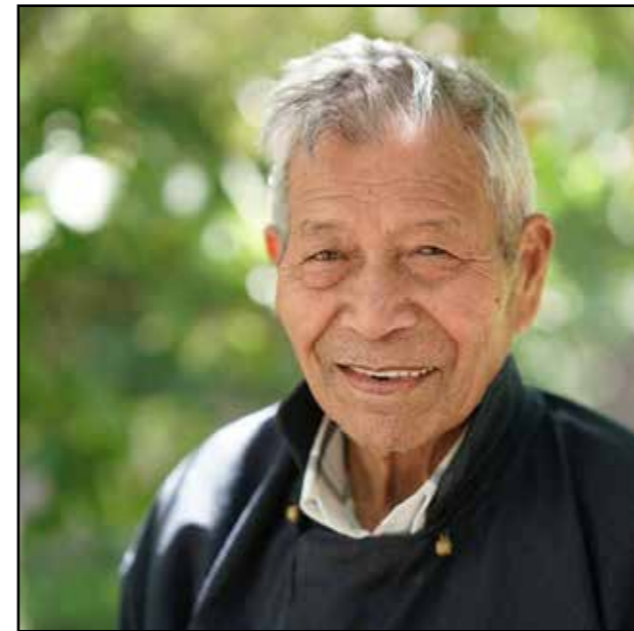
Governments, institutes, and universities organize numerous awareness programs, seminars, and strategies at the village and panchayat levels. However, there is a pressing need to translate this awareness into everyday practice. This responsibility is particularly significant for educators who play a crucial role in instilling environmental consciousness among students.

By integrating sustainability into the curriculum and fostering practical initiatives, educators can empower

future generations to adopt environmentally responsible habits. This holistic approach ensures that awareness translates into tangible actions, creating a sustainable and environmentally conscious society.

**Solution:**

- Avoid overexploiting natural resources and respect the environment.
- Cultivate crops and rely on local resources during times of need.
- Simplify our lifestyles to reduce environmental impact.
- Embrace green and eco-friendly attitudes in our thoughts and actions.
- Promote these practices to ensure future generations can adapt to sustainable living



**Chewang Norphel, Ice Man of India:**

In Ladakh, climate change has brought about significant consequences, notably a severe water shortage. Previously, the region benefited from heavy snowfall and extensive glacier ice caps that ensured robust groundwater recharge and sustained flowing springs (chumiks). However, due to accelerated global warming, these glaciers are melting rapidly, leading to the drying up of streams and diminishing water sources. This has critical implications for agriculture, drinking water supplies, and the overall ecological balance of the region.

The rapid growth of tourism in Ladakh has further exacerbated environmental challenges. The proliferation of hotels and guesthouses demands continuous water supply, often drawing from already stressed groundwater reserves. This intensifies water scarcity issues, underscoring the unsustainable practices driven by economic activities in the region.

Human activities play a central role in exacerbating climate change in Ladakh. Improper waste disposal practices, including burning waste, contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, there's a lack of awareness and responsible behavior in resource conservation—simple actions like leaving lights on unnecessarily reflect unsustainable consumption patterns. Adopting responsible waste management and efficient resource use is crucial for mitigating these impacts.

Traditionally, Ladakh practiced sustainable methods such as dry toilet systems that conserved water and utilized human waste as fertilizer for crops. However, modernization has seen a shift to water-intensive flush toilets, disrupting the natural nutrient cycle and placing further strain on water resources.

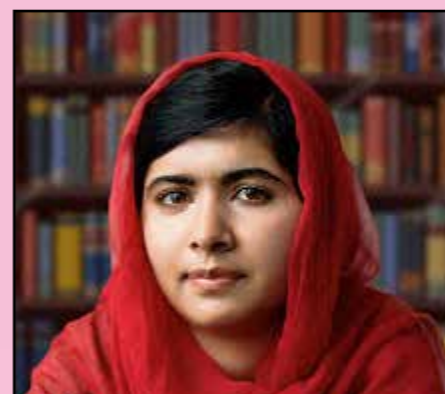
Transportation poses another significant environmental challenge in Ladakh. The increase in vehicular traffic, including military operations and tourist vehicles, contributes to air pollution, particularly during winters when diesel-powered vehicles emit significant black exhaust. The rise in private vehicle ownership has led to congestion issues, limiting space for pedestrians and exacerbating environmental degradation.

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...continues on page 6



## Malala Day



Malala Day is an annual observance held on July 12th to honour the resilience and advocacy of Malala Yousafzai. It was established by the United Nations in recognition of her efforts to promote education for girls worldwide. The day serves as a reminder of the importance of education and the ongoing struggle for equal access to education, especially for girls in underprivileged communities.

Yousafzai spoke before the UN on July 12, 2013, her 16th birthday, to promote universal access to education. Later, the day was declared "Malala Day" by the UN. With an audience of more than 500 young education advocates from around the world, it was her first speech in front of a crowd since the at-

tack. She said, "Malala Day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who has raised their voice for their rights."

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. Born on July 12, 1997, she gained international prominence after surviving an assassination attempt by the Taliban in 2012. Malala advocates for girls' right to education and continues to work towards improving access to education for children worldwide. Her courage and activism have made her a global symbol of education and empowerment.

Despite surviving a targeted attack, she continued to speak out and fight for the rights of girls to receive an education. Her courage, resilience, and determination have motivated millions globally, empowering them to stand up for their rights and work towards positive change in their communities.

Courtesy: Jagran Josh

## DID YOU KNOW



1. In a historic move, the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) unanimously recognized the profound contributions of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to global peace. The assembly declared July 6th, the Dalai Lama's birthday, as the 'Universal Day of Compassion'.

2. You can't fold a piece of A4 paper more than eight times. As the number of layers doubles each time, the paper rapidly gets too thick and too small to fold. The current world paper-folding record belongs to California high school student Britney Gallivan, who in 2002 managed to fold a 1.2km-long piece of tissue paper 12 times.

3. Smells can pass through liquid. Please don't try smelling underwater (your nose will not appreciate it), but smell does protrude through liquid.

4. Bats aren't blind. Despite the famous idiom, bats can indeed see, but they still use their even more famous echolocation to find prey.

5. Pine trees can tell if it's about to rain. Next time you see a pine cone, take

a close look. If it's closed, that's because the air is humid, which can indicate rain is on its way.

6. You inhale 50 potentially harmful bacteria every time you breathe. Thankfully, your immune system is working hard all the time, so virtually all of these are promptly destroyed without you feeling a thing. Phew.

7. You can see stars as they were 4,000 years ago with the naked eye. Without a telescope, all the stars we can see lie within about 4,000 light-years of us. That means at most you're seeing stars as they were 4,000 years ago, around when the pyramids were being built in Egypt.

8. Plants came before seeds. According to the fossil record, early plants resembled moss and reproduced with single-celled spores. Multicellular seeds didn't evolve for another 150 million years.

9. New car smell is a mix of over 200 chemicals. These include the sickly-sweet, toxic hydrocarbons benzene and toluene.

## SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

## The ways of an inspiring leader

Leaders, in whatever the field, are the champions of social progress and prosperity. If you are an inspiring person, you are a leader in the making. Only inspiring persons can become great leaders who can move the masses, be it in politics, social or spiritual fields. Mahatma Gandhi was not only a great political leader but an equally great social leader too. He had a complete grip over the minds and the hearts of the masses because of his 'do-it-to-show-it' qualities. So were Abraham Lincoln and Nelson Mandela, iconic leaders in all walks of life.



The Dalai Lama's leadership traits of love and compassion coupled with forgiveness mark his persona. Today, he has followers all over the world, from all faiths. And he is 'elected' as the most-loved and respected person year after year.

Author and speaker John C Maxwell says: "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way." Isn't that so inspiring? Let's have a look at the good qualities an inspiring leader possesses.

We can list three major umbrella qualities that make one a path-finder. The foremost quality an inspiring leader needs to have is humility. Humility is the basic requirement but it alone leads one nowhere until one has clarity and the courage to translate one's vision into reality.

That is why German writer John Peter Zenger had this to say: "Great leaders are not defined by the absence of weakness but by the presence of clear strengths." Yes, clarity with courage and vision makes one an inspiring leader.

Such leaders inspire us with their vision and action, and they have the knack to simplify complex issues, thereby giving everybody a complete solution. The secret of their success lies in the fact that they are great innovators too. They seek the so-called 'out-of-box' solutions when the normal and the traditional systems fail to deliver results.

A great leader's idea of success lies in not giving up at any cost, but to look at every issue from a different angle for a good solution.

And, great leaders not only help the masses, they also keep a constant watch to 'produce' great leaders for tomorrow!

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

## Fortnightly News

### In Conversation with Tsering Lhanzes, Illustrator and Animation Filmmaker

Interviewed by Yangchen Dolma

**Q1. Tell us about yourself. What drives your passion for storytelling through animation and filmmaking?**

My name is Tsering Lhanzes, and I am from Nubra Valley. I have a master's degree in Animation Film Design from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. I love art and storytelling, and animation allows me to combine these passions.

Animation fascinates me because it can cross language and cultural barriers, making it a powerful way to tell stories. It lets me use visuals, sound, and emotion to create messages that connect with people. Filmmaking helps bring these animated stories to life in a way that feels real and engaging. My education and work experiences have shaped how I tell stories. I am inspired by how visual storytelling can make people feel, think, and talk about important social and environmental issues. Through my work, I want to celebrate my cultural heritage and explore themes that everyone can relate to.

I am always looking for new ways to be creative and inspiring in animation and filmmaking. My goal is to create works that have a lasting impact and add positively to the world of art and culture.

**Q2. Your film "Taar" has been selected for various international film festivals. Tell us about it. How does it feel to showcase your work on a global platform, and what do you hope audiences take away from it?**

"Taar" is a special project for me as it explores the significant impacts of climate change on my homeland, Ladakh. Being selected for various international film festivals is a great honor. It's not just about presenting my work; it's about highlighting the urgent environmental issues our region faces.

Showcasing "Taar" on a global stage is incredibly rewarding. It gives me a chance to raise awareness about Ladakh's delicate ecosystem and the resilience of its people dealing with environmental challenges. Through animation, I hope to create empathy and understanding among viewers worldwide, showing how interconnected we are with nature.

I want audiences to see "Taar" as a prompt for reflection and action. I hope they understand the real and immediate effects of climate change on vulnerable communities like Ladakh. More than just awareness, I want the film to inspire discussions on sustainable practices and collective efforts to protect our planet for future generations.

**Q3. Your illustrations and designs often feature Ladakhi motifs and themes. How do you balance traditional inspiration with modern appeal?**



#### MESSAGE TO THE READERS

**“Embrace creativity to uplift our community and celebrate our cultural heritage. Let's build a future where artistic endeavours thrive, creating economic opportunities and fostering pride. Together, we can make a meaningful impact through our creative expressions.”**

Creating art within the Ladakhi context is something I absolutely love. I truly believe in the beauty of our culture, being a Ladakhi myself, and it is what I know best. Growing up immersed in this culture, it naturally influences my work. When I first tried creating a story, my initial instinct was to begin the story with an "Abi" and a "may-may," which made me realize the deep connection I have with the stories I heard as a child and their impact on me.

In terms of balancing traditional inspiration with modern appeal, I prioritize authenticity in portraying inspiration and the design language that needs to be considered. My goal is to create genuine representations that resonate with my heritage and personal experiences.

**Q4. Tell us about your book 'Acho, Nomo and the Yak' published by DIET. How long does it take to illustrate a book?**

I always wanted to write and illustrate a children book. Acho, Nomo, and the Yak was the first children's book I wrote and illustrated, and I was more focused on learning and understanding the process. I had great fun working on it, and it was truly a childhood dream come true. Growing up, I had minimal encounters with local Ladakhi children's books, so creating one was a very satisfying experience. The book is about two siblings looking for their lost yak. The book is available in both English and Bhoti languages. It has been distributed to the government schools in Ladakh. The process, including writing the story, illustrating, and layout, took around two months, not counting the Bhoti translation and final text editing.

**Q4. What role do you believe art and storytelling play in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, especially in Ladakh?**

Art and storytelling play an essential role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, particularly in Ladakh, by capturing and conveying the unique traditions, customs, and folklore of the region. These mediums serve as vital tools for educating younger generations and raising awareness among outsiders, ensuring that cultural knowledge is passed down and understood widely. They foster a strong sense of identity and pride within the community, bridging generational gaps and connecting elders with the youth. Additionally, by promoting Ladakhi culture through art, the region can attract tourism and economic benefits, supporting local artists and communities. Ultimately, art and storytelling keep Ladakh's rich cultural heritage alive and relevant, enabling it to thrive in the modern world while maintaining its distinctive identity.

## Fortnight Highlights



Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoo inquired the health of two young boys who met with an accident at Tangool, Kargil. He assured that all necessary medicines would be provided free of cost by the hospital and assured full support during their treatment.



A team of NITI Aayog headed by Programme Director, Major General K Narayanan AVSM, SM(Retd) launched the Sampoornata Abhiyan in the aspirational block of Rupsho.



The Sand Dune Festival held in Nubra Valley was graced by Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Leh, Tashi Gyalson, as the chief guest. The festival, a vibrant tribute to Ladakh's cultural diversity, highlighted a commitment to preserving its rich heritage.



The District Social Welfare Office, Leh in collaboration with the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) successfully organized a distribution camp for assistive devices, benefiting senior citizens and individuals with disabilities on July 12.



The Department of Information and Public Relations in collaboration with Education Department, Health Department and Ladakh Police, Leh organised an awareness programme on 'Drugs and Substance Abuse' at St. Peter's High School, Chuchot Yokma on July 4.



The National Commission for Women (NCW) and the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad, jointly organised their 99th programme to encourage women towards entrepreneurship as a career, held on July 1 at NIELIT, Kargil, with support from the National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT).



Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) inaugurated the poster exhibition along with the rollout of Three New Criminal Laws in UT of Ladakh organised by Ladakh Police, at the Eco-Park in Leh market.





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