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AUGUST 16-31, 2024

# REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



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Jigmet Rafstan,  
LBA Youth wing President

**Expert Talk:**  
Ladakh's Apricots: Traditional crop with  
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THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

**GREETINGS TO ALL ON THE**

**78<sup>TH</sup>**

**INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST**

**ADMINISTRATION OF UT OF LADAKH**

# Fortnightly News

## Ladakh's cultural heritage and achievements celebrated at 8th dPal rNgam Duston in Leh

Historian & poet Abdul Ghani Sheikh receives dPal rNgam Duston award & LAHDC Lifetime Achievement Award to Late Ven Lama Lobzang



### Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The 8th dPal rNgam Duston, themed 'Celebrating 50 Years of Tourism in Ladakh' was held at NDS Stadium in Leh on August 5. The event was organised by LAHDC Leh on the occasion of the UT Declaration Day. Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) attended the celebration.

L-G presented the dPal rNgam Duston Award to historian and poet, Abdul Ghani Sheikh while the LAHDC Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on the late Ven Lama Lobzang for his contributions for the well-being of the people of Ladakh. LG also presented Certificates of Appreciation to Lobzang Tsendol, the first women travel agent in Ladakh; Nawang Tsering, owner of Hotel Omasila and Tsewang Motup, owner of RIMO Expedition, for their contribution to making Ladakh a prized tourist destination.

Terming the event as important which has its own significance, LG stated that the people of Ladakh are celebrating the realisation of their dreams after Ladakh was bifurcated from the erstwhile state of J&K and declared a Union Territory five years ago. He called the event as important as any other event which has equal participation from all sections of society. He stated that distinguished people, who promote Ladakh's cultural tradition and social fabric, are also appreciated on this day.

Congratulating the award winners and their family members, LG stated that they deserved awards for their contributions towards the Ladakhi society. Calling Ladakhis good citizens of the country, LG appreciated the people of Ladakh for preserving their cultural identity. The HLG shared three concerns and the steps being taken by the Administration on these issues.

Firstly, LG stated that his primary concern is preserving water and making drinking water available for future generations 30 years down the line. He highlighted the need to use surface water instead of relying on underground water. He informed about the water projects initiated by the UT Administration in Leh and Kargil districts to address water-related issues. He stated that the people of Ladakh have to travel long distances to reach the district headquarters due to the large geographical area of the region. He stated that efforts are being made to ensure that people don't have to travel long distances by making the administrative units more accessible for them.

Thirdly, LG stated that Ladakh is dependent on the Government of India for funds. He also stated that Ladakh can generate income through the solar power project announced by the Prime

Minister of India, Narendra Modi, and become self-reliant by selling solar electricity. He further stated that electricity would be provided to all. The LG also highlighted the terms and conditions included by him in the said solar project, including benefits to the people of the area in which the solar power project would be established along with appropriate employment for the locals.

He highlighted initiatives taken by the Administration to prepare Recruitment Rules for gazetted posts along with ensuring Reservation Rules as per India norms to meet the aspirations of the Ladakhi youth. He stated that the reserve lists of posts would also be operated soon. He also highlighted the dreams of the Prime Minister of India to make Ladakh a zero-carbon emission region. LG further highlighted the instructions passed on to government officials to stay alert and help the needy in case of occurrences of floods due to rainfall and rise in water levels in rivers and streams in Ladakh.

Wishing everyone on the occasion of dPal rNgam Duston and UT Declaration Day, Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Advocate Tashi Gyalsong congratulated historian and poet Abdul Ghani Sheikh and the family members of late Ven Lama Lobzang for winning the dPal rNgam Duston Award and LAHDC Lifetime Achievement Award, respectively. He highlighted the contributions of Abdul Ghani Sheikh and late Lama Lobzang in the field of literature, art and health. He stated that efforts have been made to recognise

and appreciate people engaged in tourism activities as Ladakh is celebrating 50 years of tourism in the region.

Advocate Tashi Gyalsong stated that dPal rNgam Duston is organised to celebrate the glory and pride of Ladakh and to remember people who have made contributions to the development of Ladakhi society. He said the event is also a platform for the youth to showcase their talent to promote Ladakhi culture. He also highlighted the development and changes which have taken place in Ladakh over the last five years since the region was declared a Union Territory.

A documentary on the achievements of LAHDC Leh was also screened on the occasion. There were several performances on the occasion, including musical offering, mask dance or Chhams, Yak-Singge dance, folk performance by artists from Hanley village, theatre performance by artists of Ladakh Theatre Organisation, dance performances by Ladakh Dance Institute, Fitt Dance Institute and Art of Motion, jablo song and dance by Students' Association of Changthang, performance by Japanese artists, Ladakhi folk song and dance, mimicry performance by Junior Johnny Lever, performance by renowned Ladakhi singers, Padma Dolker and Stakmo Dorje and performances by the winner of Indian Idol, Pawandeep Rajan. Ladakhi bands, Dashugs and Rolyangs also performed on the occasion.

## Apex body and KDA stand firm on 4-point agenda after joint meeting in Leh

Plans sustained agitation if demands are not met



### Nenzen Chodon

**LEH:** A joint meeting between the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) was held in Leh on Sunday, August 11. The meeting brought together core members from both organizations, including Member of Parliament Ladakh, Haji Mohamad Haneefa Jan, LAB co-chairman Chering Dorje Lakrook, Nasir Munshi, President of the District Congress Committee Kargil, Asgar Ali Karbalai, Ashraf Ali Barcha, President of Anjuman Imamia, Sajjad Kargili, President of Ladakh Gompa Association, Chairman of the Christian Association Leh, Sonam Parvez, Ven. Tsering Wangdus, and other key social, political, and religious leaders.

Chering Dorje noted that the meeting lasted three hours, included a detailed discussion on future strategies. Both LAB and KDA remain committed to their four-point agenda, with no changes made to their demands.

Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs brought attention to Ladakh's needs, including empowering the Autonomous Hill Development Councils, creating four new districts, establishing an additional battalion under the Ladakh Scouts, and incorporating the Bhoi language into the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

Despite these developments, LAB and KDA reiterated their commitment to the four-point agenda, emphasizing that they would not accept any alternatives. A follow-up meeting among the core members will be held to discuss future strategies, including sustained agitation if the government fails to meet their demands.

Nasir Munshi, President of the District Congress Committee Kargil, noted that while talks between LAB-KDA and the Ministry of Home Affairs were lengthy, they ultimately failed at the last moment. However, he expressed hope that discussions would resume. He also highlighted that a joint resolution or memorandum had been submitted to the Prime Minister of India during his visit to Kargil, but no response was received. Instead, the government appeared to be considering other demands. When questioned by the media about the reduced

involvement of Apex Body Leh Chairman Thupstan Chhewang, it was explained that he is currently dealing with health issues and undergoing treatment.

Regarding contrasting statements made by members of LAB and KDA on various platforms, it was clarified that members are aligned with other organizations and are not using the platform of LAB and KDA exclusively. Nasir Munshi explained that the delays in taking further action are strategic, ensuring that no sector suffers losses during the course of their agitation. He added that it is now up to the government to respond to their actions, including possible agitations, curfews, and hunger strikes.

It was also clarified that the announcement by Sonam Wangchuk to go on a climate fast from August 15 is his personal choice and is not related to KDA and LAB. The organizations will decide on their own actions if they choose to initiate a hunger strike as part of their agitation.

Member of Parliament Ladakh, Haji Mohamad Haneefa Jan, emphasized that any issues in the Union Territory of Ladakh should be resolved through peaceful dialogue. He stated that while talks had taken place, they had not yet resulted in a concrete outcome. He reaffirmed his commitment to advocating for Ladakh's four-point agenda, noting that these demands were made with Ladakh's future in mind and with the goal of empowering the people of Ladakh. He stressed that the struggle for these demands has been ongoing for the past five years and will require continued effort and sacrifice.

"I have faithfully acted as a bridge, making efforts to convey our message to the government through parliament, social media, and other platforms," he said. "But since the government has not responded, today's meeting between KDA and LAB was crucial."

"Ladakh has made enormous sacrifices for the country, and if the government does not support us, we hope that the citizens of the country will. But we remain hopeful that all issues and demands will be resolved peacefully through dialogue," he concluded.

10,700 feet to Khardung La Pass at 17,618 feet, higher than Everest Base Camp. This year, 68 elite ultra-runners will take on this formidable challenge, with historically less than 50% completing it. The Khardung La Challenge will feature a record 311 participants, including 40 women, highlighting the marathon's growing global appeal. In addition to the ultra-distance events, the marathon offers various distances to accommodate runners of all levels.

Chewang Motup Goba, Founder and Race Director of the Ladakh Marathon, remarked, "The evolution of the Ladakh Marathon into a major event is inspiring. We are proud to see Ladakhi runners

rise to prominence, representing India internationally and excelling in various marathons."

Chairman/CEC Tashi Gyalsong, LAHDC Leh, praised and congratulated the team on the launch of the marathon's official T-shirt. He emphasized Ladakh's growing global impact and its reputation as a prestigious and challenging marathon. CEC Gyalsong also highlighted his personal commitment to the marathon, noting his participation in the 11.5 km event and expressing his intention to run again. The LAHDC and UT administration remain dedicated to providing comprehensive support for the marathon.

## L-G Mishra launches POWERGRID's distribution sector revamp in Ladakh



During the foundation laying ceremony of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) by POWERGRID in Union Territory of Ladakh.

### Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:LEH:** Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) laid foundation stone of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) by POWERGRID in Union Territory of Ladakh, at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on August 9.

LG inquired from C&MD, POWERGRID, RK Tyagi about the reach of the transmission line, the tariff plan

for electricity in Ladakh, the duration of power supply and the transmission losses. He emphasized the need to ensure minimal transmission losses and provide power to remote and strategically important areas in Ladakh.

LG directed POWERGRID officials to meet with the Chairmen of LAHDC Leh and Kargil to address local needs and requirements. He

highlighted the need to use minimal agricultural land for erection/installation of transmission lines due to paucity of agricultural land in Ladakh. He also asked the POWERGRID officials to provide electricity to the villages from where their transmission lines are passing. He also asked them to follow the timeline to ensure that there is no escalation in the cost of the

project due to delays.

LG asked POWERGRID officials to make necessary arrangements to procure transformers for Ladakh well in advance on a priority basis. He also highlighted the need to grow fodder at the site of the Solar Power Project at Pang so that the fodder could be used by the villagers and nearby villages for their livestock.

Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalsong highlighted the need to include the 33 KV transmission line for Lingshed village in RDSS. He stated that contractors of the project, who sublet their work to local contractors, have not made their payments. He requested C&MD, POWERGRID to ensure payment of the work for the said project to the sub-contractor.

Chairman, LAHDC Kar-

gil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun highlighted Kargil's potential in renewable energy and requested POWERGRID authorities to conduct a survey to tap the potential of renewable energy in the district. He also requested POWERGRID officials to provide electricity to villages along the Drass-Zanskar transmission line route.

Chairman & Managing Director, POWERGRID, RK Tyagi assured the LG that the ongoing projects, including the Leh-Nubra Transmission line and other key transmission projects, would be completed on time. He also highlighted the significance of Ladakh's contribution to the nation's green energy initiatives, particularly the large-scale renewable project at Puga in Changthang.

Executive Director, POWERGRID, Rajesh Kumar provided an up-

date on the status of the projects in Ladakh. A video presentation on the progress of projects was also presented.

Chairman, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun; Chairman, LAHDC, Leh, Tashi Gyalsong; Advisor, Dr Pawan Kotwal; Secretary, PDD, Ladakh, Vikram Singh Sukhadeve; Chairman & Managing Director, POWERGRID, RK Tyagi; Chief General Manager, POWERGRID, Arindam Chakraborty; Executive Director (PESL), POWERGRID, Anoop Singh; Executive Director, POWERGRID, Rajesh Kumar besides other officers and officials of POWERGRID and Power Development Department (PDD) Ladakh were present during the foundation stone-laying ceremony.

## REWAY OTZER 2024: Interaction session for UPSC aspirants held in Leh



Qualified aspirants for the UPSC-CSE Coaching under the "REWAY OTZER 2024" program.

### Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Interaction session with the qualified aspirants for the UPSC-CSE Coaching under the "REWAY OTZER 2024" program by LAHDC Leh was held on August 6.

Former Commissioner Secretary Rigzin Samphel and DC Santosh Sukhadeve shared their personal experiences and provided valuable tips on how to succeed in the UPSC CSE. They emphasized the critical im-

portance of strategy and discipline, encouraging students to overcome self-doubt and embrace confidence. Their journey and insights served as an inspiration to the aspirants.

The students are scheduled to depart for Delhi on August 10 to commence their coaching. Chairman Tashi Gyalsong extended his heartfelt best wishes to all the candidates and

expressed hope that each of them will excel in their endeavors and qualify the exam.

Dy. Chairman Tsering Angchuk, Executive Councillor for Minority Ghulam Mehdi, Executive Councillor for RDD Tashi Namgyal Yakzee; Private Secretary to Chairman Jigmet Raftan, and Deputy Director of Employment were also present.

## Official T-Shirt launched for 11th Ladakh Marathon; event set for September 2024

PUMA India, the official sportswear partner, will also provide performance gear



During the official launch of the official T-shirt of 11th Ladakh Marathon.

### Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Ladakh Marathon is gearing up for its 11th edition, scheduled to take place from September 5th to 8th, 2024. This year, 6,218 runners from around the world will compete across six categories, showcasing the event's global appeal.

The official T-shirt launch event was held on August 8 at Hotel Grand Dragon, with Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalsong, LAHDC Leh, as the chief guest, and ADGP Dr. S.D. Singh Jamwal as the guest of honor. The vibrant T-shirts, avail-

able in "Glowing Red" and "Yellow Alert," will be distributed to 6,000 participants. PUMA India, the official sportswear partner, will also provide performance gear.

Karthik Balagopalan, Managing Director of PUMA India, expressed enthusiasm about the partnership, stating, "Running is rapidly growing globally, and PUMA is committed to supporting this trend."

The event was also attended by Dy. Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk; Sec-

retary, Tourism, Ladakh, Vikram Singh Malik; Deputy Commissioner/CEO, Santosh Sukhadeve; SSP, Leh, Shruti Arora; Founder and Race Director of the Ladakh Marathon, Chewang Motup Goba; Air Force Officers; Managing Director of The Grand Dragon, Ladakh, Ghulam Mustafa, and other dignitaries.

The Ladakh Marathon is renowned for its challenging courses, especially the Silk Route Ultra, a 122-kilometer race that ascends from Nubra Valley at

## Fortnightly News

### CEC Tashi Gyalson advocates for enhanced funding and autonomy in meeting with Finance Commission



Officials of 5th Finance Commission and Hill Council Leh after the meeting.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** 5th Finance Commission, led by Chairman Anil Kumar Jha, IAS (retired), with members Prashant Goyal; Dr. Amey Sapre, Associate Professor; and Binay Bhushan, Secretary, convened a meeting with Hill Council Leh on August 9.

Chairman/CEC Adv Tashi Gyalson, Executive Councillors, Deputy Commissioner/CEO Leh, and representatives from the Rural Development Department, Urban Local Bodies, and various District Officers were also present.

The meeting began with CEC Tashi Gyalson recounting the history of the council's formation, highlighting the progress made since it became a union territory and reflecting on its development prior to attaining that status. He highlighted the significant progress in various sectors since attaining union territory status.

Hill Council Leh submitted an extensive set of recommendations to the Finance Commission, aimed at addressing critical local needs and enhancing governance.

The council has advocated for a dedicated Grant-in-Aid to support the maintenance of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) infrastructure, emphasizing the need for consistent funding to ensure its sustainability. They have also highlighted the importance of routing Grant in Aid and other funds directly through the council to streamline distribution and ensure effective utilization.

A significant part of the proposal includes funding for special projects tai-

lored to LAHDC's unique requirements, alongside mechanisms for Councillors to retain revenue generated locally. This revenue, combined with funds from land premiums and other sources, is seen as vital for supporting development initiatives and managing rising costs of living in the region.

Addressing the challenges faced by local farmers, the council has proposed waiving Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans due to adverse agricultural conditions. In addition, the need for a transport subsidy was put forward to alleviate high transportation costs, while special incentives for the tourism industry were recommended to boost economic growth and create employment opportunities.

The council has also emphasized the necessity for enhanced social security support, particularly given the lack of adequate medical facilities. They called for measures to ensure proper care and evacuation in serious health situations.

On the financial front, the council has requested an increase in financial autonomy to LAHDC, Leh and proposed streamlining processes for Technical Sanction and Administrative Approval to expedite project implementation. Additionally, they have sought grants for sustainable agriculture, horticulture, and livestock rearing to promote self-sufficiency and environmental stewardship.

To better manage locally generated revenue, the council has recommended creating a deposit head for

LAHDC, Leh. They also called for an enhancement of the District Capex Budget, aiming to support extensive infrastructure and development projects.

The discussion also emphasized the need for advancing organic farming in Ladakh and strengthening micro enterprises. The council proposed that the region should utilize more local products. On the topic of revenue, the council suggested that revenue generated by local councils should remain with them to serve as an additional funding source for community projects and welfare activities. CEC Gyalson raised concerns about tendering practices and strongly advocated for reserving tenders valued below 5 crore INR for local businesses. This approach is also intended to prevent delays and enhance project effectiveness. Moreover, recognizing the high literacy levels in Ladakh, there was a call for increased employment opportunities through the filling of gazetted and other posts to better meet the needs of local departments.

Deputy Commissioner Santosh Sukhadeve acknowledged these recommendations, offering explanations regarding ongoing projects, schemes, and addressing concerns about delays.

The Finance Commission assured the Chairman and the Councillors that all recommendations and concerns would be thoroughly reviewed and considered. This engagement marks a collaborative effort to address regional developmental needs and enhance local governance.

### LAHDC and Wall Art Projects Japan host vibrant Forest Art Festival in Ladakh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Forest Art Festival, organized by Wall Art Projects, Japan, in collaboration with the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, took place in Matho village on August 10-11.

Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson, and Executive Councillor for Art & Culture, Stanzin Choshpel, were present on the inaugural day. The ceremony began with a traditional reception at Matho Monastery, followed by an exhibition showcasing vibrant artworks by Japanese and Ladakhi artists. The festival drew a large crowd

of local residents, artists, and visitors.

Hamao, the festival's coordinator, provided an insightful overview of the projects, emphasizing the powerful impact of art on local communities and its role in fostering cultural exchange.

In his address, CEC Tashi Gyalson praised both Japanese and Ladakhi artists for their exceptional contributions and the beautiful display of their work. He underscored the importance of their efforts in enriching cultural heritage and promoting tourism in the region. Gyalson also acknowledged the

artists' commitment to sustainable development.

Executive Councillor for Art & Culture, Stanzin Choshpel, highlighted the significance of the festival and expressed gratitude to the organizers and community members for their dedication in making the event a success.

The festivities continued with the inauguration of the Forest Art Land plantation site by CEC Gyalson. The event concluded with a lively cultural performance by local villagers and a captivating handpan dance by a Japanese artist, adding a unique and enchanting touch to the celebration.

### LG Ladakh inaugurates 10th National Handloom Day exhibition in Leh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), inaugurated the 10th National Handloom Day exhibition at Main Market, Leh on August 7.

LG inspected the stalls displaying spinning, weaving, knitting, wood carving, tailoring, silver filigree and pashmina products of the Handloom and Handicraft Departments, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Brand Ladakh and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

National Handloom Day is celebrated on 7th August to honour the handloom weavers and provide motivation and sense of pride to the handloom industry by appreciating their contribution to the cultural,



Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), inaugurating the 10th National Handloom Day exhibition at Main Market.

traditional and economic landscape of the country. The celebrations aim to generate awareness about the importance of the handloom sector and its contribution to the socio-economic development of the country.

LG expressed his best wishes and commended the Department of Industries and Commerce for organising the event. He emphasised the significance of National Handloom Day and appreciated the participating artisans, stating that the event supports

artisans in promoting their products. He highlighted the UT Administration's commitment to showcasing achievers' products on national and international levels and encouraged local people to join the handloom industry to improve their economic and social status.

Highlighting Ladakh's connection with pashmina, LG stated that brand pashmina is integral to Ladakh's identity. He also stated that UT Administration has constructed around 1,000 pashmina kid pens to reduce the mortality rate of pashmina goat kids by 10 percent this year.

LG also stated that the UT Administration is committed to support the artisans to boost the Handloom

Industries and urged the people to join and set targets to improve the Handloom Industry. He stated that two officers have been posted as Assistant Directors of Handloom and Handicraft Department in Leh to enhance the production of handloom and handicraft products in Ladakh. He said that next year when we meet for National Handloom Day, we should have ensured 25 percent enhancement in women empowerment. He also stated that UT Administration has established two Brand Ladakh showrooms in Leh and New Delhi to showcase and sell local products.

LG urged the Department to visit remote areas and encourage the people to join the industry to boost their economy.

### University of Ladakh signs MoU with EDII to foster Innovation and Entrepreneurship



(Right to Left) Prof. S K Mehta, Vice Chancellor, University of Ladakh, Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal and Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII).

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Prof. S K Mehta, Vice Chancellor, University of Ladakh, and

Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), in the presence of Dr. Pawan

Kotwal, Advisor to the Lt. Governor, UT Ladakh on August 9.

The purpose of this MoU is to support the UT of Ladakh in becoming one of the most entrepreneurship-friendly destinations in India by promoting entrepreneurship education, training, policy research, and incubation support across the region. Under this MoU, EDII will implement various Entrepreneurship Development Activities such as:

- Creating project profiles on emerging business opportunities (such as ethno-religious tourism, handicrafts, AYUSH and wellness, food processing, pashmina, wood carving,

copper utensils, etc.) and making these available to students.

- Establishing a pool of startup mentors and industry experts to mentor and support existing and future startups/ventures.

- Conducting Entrepreneurship Development Programmes for students in UT Ladakh.

- Promoting startups and innovations through training, counseling, mentoring, and handholding interventions.
- Supporting the creation of a 'Startup, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Policy.'

In addition to these ini-

tiatives, EDII will also establish and support the 'Entrepreneurship Development Institute of Ladakh (EDIL)' in collaboration with the UT Administration of Ladakh. This institute aims to create startups, innovative enterprises, and traditional businesses that can sustain, grow, and create jobs.

During the signing ceremony, Dr. Amit Kumar Dwivedi and Shri Pravir Krishna (Retd. IAS) from EDII, and Dr. Subrat Sharma, Dean of Research, and Dr. Mohd Rafee, Assistant Professor from the University of Ladakh, were present.

### Stakeholders in J&K and Ladakh discuss protection of Children with Disabilities in annual consultation



UT Ladakh stakeholders virtually participating in the one-day annual Consultation of Stakeholders in the UTs of J&K and Ladakh themed, "Protection of Children with Disabilities."

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** One-day annual Consultation of Stakeholders in the UTs of J&K and Ladakh themed, "Protection of Children with Disabilities, 2024", held at SKICC, Srinagar on August 3.

The day was organised by Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh in collaboration with Department of Social Welfare, UT J&K and Department of Social & Tribal Welfare, UT Ladakh, UNICEF and AIVC.

UT Ladakh stakeholders, from both the districts, virtually participated in the consultation headed by Commissioner/Secretary, Social & Tribal Welfare Ladakh, Padma Angmo in the presence of officers/officials and representatives from the other concerned departments, civil societies, and NGOs.

The day-long deliberation had 4 technical sessions on important topics with resource persons and experts from different departments and fields. The first technical session focused on an Overview of the Schemes and Services and Provisions for Children with Disability across various departments, Challenges, Gaps and Recommendations

for strengthened support to Children with Disabilities.

The second technical session highlighted the need of synchronization of Juvenile Justice and Children with Disabilities with focus on identification semantics hard and soft skills and infrastructure. The third session deliberated on the Way forward with challenges and opportunities on Children with Disabilities and Child Protection with special stress on children in conflict with law and Children in need of Care and Protection and skilling.

The consultation thoroughly acknowledged the need of dedicated collaboration between different departments such as Education, Medical and Police to address the issues of Children with Disabilities and to provide them an environment of equal opportunity and to safeguard their rights and to redress their issues with a rights-based approach.

In this context, the fourth technical session focused on Police Perspective in implementation of schemes and rehabilitation services. Commissioner Secretary, S&TW, Padma Angmo presented a detailed pre-

sentation on the schemes, services and provisions for Children with Disabilities in the UT Ladakh region. Director, School Education, Tsering Palden also gave an overview of schemes and provisions for Children with Disabilities under the Education Department and the need to strive collectively to achieve and ensure a holistic and inclusive development of all.

After successful and open discussion on the different themed sessions among the stakeholders, the one-day consultation ended with the valedictory session entailing a summary of the action points and outline for action plan 2024-25, felicitation of the resource persons and a vote of thanks.

Director, Social & Tribal Welfare Ladakh/ State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Tashi Dolma; Principal Magistrate, JJB Leh, Wangail Tsering; District Social Welfare Officer, Leh and Kargil; Chief Education Officer, Leh/Kargil; Deputy Chief, Legal Aid Defence Counsel, District Court Leh; officers and officials from Ladakh Legal Services Authority, Education, Medical and Police Department; officials of Social Welfare Department, District Child Protection Unit and other concerned stakeholders.

### Himalayan Women Health Project: CEC Tashi Gyalson and Dr. Quek plan next steps in Cervical Cancer fight



Chairman/CEC Adv Tashi Gyalson of LAHDC, Leh with Dr. Swee Chong Quek and his team at Council Secretariat.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Chairman/CEC Adv Tashi Gyalson of LAHDC, Leh, held a productive meeting with Dr. Swee Chong Quek and his team on August 10 to discuss the ongoing Himalayan Women Health Project.

This initiative, a collaborative effort between the Council and Mahabodhi, aims to enhance women's health in the Himalayan region through essential cervical cancer screenings. During the meeting, it was noted that Dr. Quek and his team have conducted extensive cervical screenings in Leh, including remote areas such as Zanskar.

CEC Tashi Gyalson expressed his appreciation for their dedication and annual visits, acknowledging their crucial role in providing health services. He also extended sincere gratitude to Dr. Nordan Otzer for his years of dedicated work in assisting women with screenings and raising awareness about cer-

vical cancer through the project.

The discussion also covered future steps in combating cervical cancer, including potential vaccination programs. CEC Gyalson emphasized the need to address gaps in vaccination coverage, particularly for excluded groups who have not yet received this essential preventive measure. He proposed providing supplementary budget support to enhance these efforts and ensure broader access to vaccinations.

A roadmap for eradicating cervical cancer was outlined, focusing on strategic planning and community engagement to achieve long-term health improvements. Chairman Gyalson commended Dr. Quek and his team for their invaluable contributions and expressed his commitment to advancing collaborative efforts to fight cervical cancer in the region.

## Expert talk:

## Ladakh's Apricots: Traditional crop with global potential

Nenzes Chodon



**Dr. Tsering Stobdan, Agriculture scientist, DIHAR:** Apricot, locally known as Chuli, is a traditional fruit crop of the Ladakh region. The apricots from Ladakh are exceptionally sweet and unique in quality. Due to the climatic conditions, they range in color from yellow to deep orange, often with red or rosy touches. The Ladakhi apricot variety, Raktsey Karpo, has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, and an application has been submitted for the Halman apricot as well. The Halman apricot thrives best in the Sham Valley due to its suitable temperature and

environment, while Raktsey Karpo is of superior quality in Leh. Ladakh's high-altitude environment is ideal for apricot cultivation, as it enhances the fruit's sweetness. However, if the seed of Raktsey Karpo is sown in places like Himachal Pradesh or Uttarakhand, the sweetness of the apricots is not as pronounced. Attempts to grow Raktsey Karpo in the Kashmir Valley have also resulted in a diminished taste.

The initial export of apricots from Ladakh began in 2021 to Dubai. In the 2022 season, 35 tonnes of fresh apricots were sent to domestic markets outside Ladakh and exported to Singapore, Mauritius, and Vietnam. While Ladakhi apricots have significant potential in the global market, it is crucial to meet domestic demand first. Currently, in cities like Mumbai or Pune, apricots are sold at around Rs. 600 per kg. This suggests that there is strong potential for Ladakhi apricots to capture the Indian domestic market, making export less essential.

Last year, the target was to sell 100 metric tonnes of apricots, but only about 57 metric tonnes were transported to the market. The demand for apricots is higher than the supply. Historically, apricots were grown without much focus on improving their yield, as their significance was not fully recognized until recently. Now, with increased attention on Raktsey Karpo and Halman apricots, more focus and care will be required in the future.

In August, Ladakh is the only region globally where apricots are available for sale, giving it a unique market advantage. A farmer can earn a livelihood by selling apricots, as a full-grown tree can produce anywhere from 100 kg to 300 kg of apricots. Some companies pay Rs. 110 per kg just by inspecting an apricot tree, and they bring their own harvesters, sparing the farmer from the harvesting process.

Historically, apricots were a key commodity traded between Tibet and Ladakh, known as Nyari-Khambu in Tibetan and Phating in Ladakhi. Growing apricots is relatively effort-

less, but care is needed during harvesting. Ladakhis traditionally use long sticks to beat the tree, causing the fruit to fall to the ground. However, this method damages the fruit, making it unsuitable for long-distance transportation. Buyers from outside prefer to hand-pick each fruit or use picking poles to avoid damage.

In Ladakh, there is a lack of education in areas like training and pruning for harvesting, converting apricots into economically valuable products, and insect-pest management. Two insects that can harm apricot trees are Yellowtail moths and Aphids. While insects cannot be eradicated, their populations can be controlled. The Yellowtail moth has been successfully managed using specific techniques, and its nests can be removed and destroyed during the dormant season. Aphids should be controlled before they proliferate, as one aphid can reproduce hundreds more. When attacked by aphids, the tree's leaves curl, making the infestation visible. The affected leaves should be removed and destroyed.

Ladakh produces nearly 64% of India's apricots, with a combined production of 15,000 metric tonnes in Leh and Kargil, including lower-quality apricots used for apricot seed oil extraction. Despite this, production is still insufficient to meet global demand.

One of the problems in Ladakh is the absence of a large-scale nursery. Such a nursery could provide non-variety plants tailored to individual demands, ensuring the production of high-quality apricots. Old, unproductive trees could be replaced, as an apricot tree can produce quality fruit for over 60 years.



**Rigzin Tsewang, Business Manager, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APE-DA) Leh:** Ladakh is home to several apricot varieties, but Raktsey Karpo and Halman are particularly notable for their export quality. Among these, Halman is more suitable for export due to its ability to withstand transport without significant damage, retaining its quality, shape, and color. On the other hand, Raktsey Karpo is more delicate, with skin that is prone to blemishes and injury, making it challenging to transport without incurring damage.

Halman apricots are predominantly grown in lower areas such as Sham Valley and parts of Kargil District, while higher elevations are more suitable for Raktsey Karpo, enhancing its taste. Apricots are naturally cultivated in Ladakh with minimal effort. The export of apricots from Ladakh was banned when it was part of Jammu and Kashmir, but the ban was lifted after Ladakh became a Union Territory. A small trial shipment was first sent to Dubai in 2021, with the support of APEDA, the horticulture

...continues on page 6

## The World of Juniors

## WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY DAY

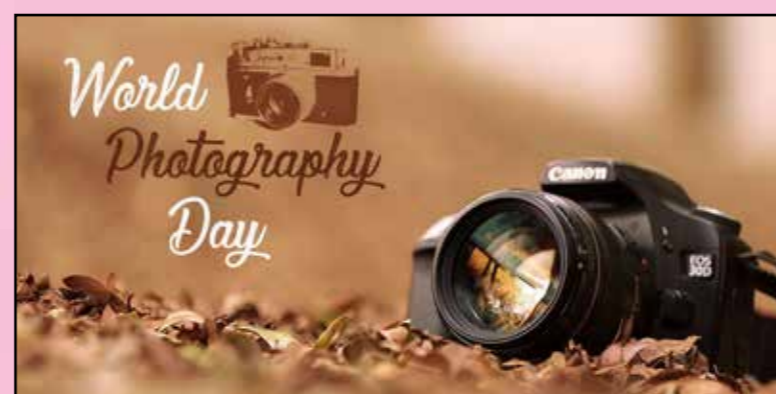
Every year on August 19 we celebrate World Photography Day to celebrate the art, craft, science, and history of photography. The day also encourages photographers from around the globe to share a single photo that encapsulates their world.

World Photography Day commemorates the invention of the Daguerreotype, one of the earliest photographic processes, which was announced as a gift to the world by the French government on August 19, 1839. The Daguerreotype, developed by Louis Daguerre and Joseph Niépce, marked a significant milestone in the history of photography, revolutionizing how images were captured and preserved.

World Photography Day honours this invention and celebrates photography as a medium that has evolved over centuries, influencing art, science, journalism, and personal expression. It serves as a global platform for photographers and enthusiasts to come together, share their passion, showcase their work, and promote the appreciation of photography worldwide.

**World Photography Day 2024: Date and Theme**

World Photography Day will be celebrated



on August 19th, 2024, which falls on a Friday. This global event honors all forms of photography and each year carries an optional theme. The theme for World Photography Day 2024 is "AN ENTIRE DAY".

COURTESY: INDIANEXPRESS.COM

## DID YOU KNOW



Courtesy: www.savit.in

1. Avocados are a fruit, not a vegetable. They're technically considered a single-seeded berry.
2. The Eiffel Tower can be 15 cm taller during the summer, due to thermal expansion meaning the iron heats up, the particles gain kinetic energy and take up more space.
3. Trypophobia is the fear of closely-packed holes. Or more specifically, "an aversion to the sight of irregular patterns or clusters of small holes or bumps."
4. Allodoxophobia is the fear of other people's opinions. It's a rare social phobia that's characterised by an irrational and overwhelming fear of what other people think.
5. Australia is wider than the moon. The moon sits at 3400km in diameter, while Australia's diameter from east to west is almost 4000km.
6. 'Mellifluous' is a sound that is pleasingly smooth and musical to hear.

7. Human teeth are the only part of the body that cannot heal themselves. Teeth are coated in enamel which is not a living tissue.

8. It's illegal to own just one guinea pig in Switzerland. It's considered animal abuse because they're social beings and get lonely.

9. The Ancient Romans used to drop a piece of toast into their wine for good health - hence why we 'raise a toast'.

10. The heart of a shrimp is located in its head. They also have an open circulatory system, which means they have no arteries and their organs float directly in blood.

11. People are more creative in the shower. When we take a warm shower, we experience an increased dopamine flow that makes us more creative.

12. Baby rabbits are called kits.

COURTESY: cosmopolitan.com

## SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

### Making sense of life with books



*I do not know what could my life be like had there had been no books. I suppose that could be an equally pertinent issue with you too. In one of my 'Good Morning' musings recently, I had written this: You need to be serious and careful about what you learn as you are bound to become what goes into your head. Well, that could be relevant even with any other external factor that determines your thoughts, but I had written that keeping mainly the effects of books on our mental functioning.*

*One of my readers has asked me whether that had a reference to books or persons who mattered in my life. Yes, the statement stands equally good in either case, books or persons. To make that more clear the next day, I wrote: If you take books as faithful and exceptional companions, they will stand by you in all circumstances to make a good sense of your life.*

*It is not that those who do not read books are good-for-nothing fellows. But I can say that they could be better off with books as additional 'companions'. That is because books are 'great friends' that never abandon you, come what may. They not only keep you busy and happily absorbed but make you knowledgeable and wiser too. They take you into a world different from the one you live in, and widen your horizon of looking at things in a broader and more positive manner.*

*Books can 'carry you' to your dreamy places that you could not visit physically because of various factors. And, as a result, you become a more understanding and reasonable kind of person because you stand to gain a universal outlook.*

*I have an obsession with books, but not that I am a book-worm. I have a slow and easy habit of reading books. That is because I like the idea of enjoying reading over a longer period for maximum 'connect' with the characters or the author!*

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

**Fortnightly News**

**In Conversation with  
Jigmet Rafstan, LBA Youth wing President**

*Interviewed by Stanzin Padma*

**Q. Congratulations on becoming the president of the LBA youth wing. Tell us about yourself.**

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. My name is Jigmet Rafstan, and I hail from the beautiful village of Stok in Ladakh. I pursued my higher education at Punjab University, where I gained valuable knowledge and experiences that shaped my outlook on life. After completing my studies, I returned to Ladakh with a strong desire to contribute to my community and the region.

Upon my return, I was fortunate to become an active member of the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) youth wing. My journey within the organization began under the mentorship and leadership of Mr. Rigzin Dorjay, where I served as the General Secretary. This role allowed me to work closely with the youth and understand the challenges and aspirations of our generation.

This year, the LBA made history by holding its first-ever democratic elections to select its leadership. I participated in this election and, with the support and trust of my peers, was elected as the President of the LBA Youth Wing for the next three years. This election marks a significant step towards democratizing the Ladakh Buddhist Association, ensuring that the voices of the youth are heard and represented in shaping the future of our community.

I am deeply honored to take on this responsibility and am committed to working tirelessly to uplift and empower the youth of Ladakh, promoting our cultural heritage, and addressing the challenges we face in today's rapidly changing world.

**Q. Brief us about the LBA Youth Wing Association. What are its roles and objectives?**

The LBA Youth Wing is an integral part of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, functioning under the guidance of the parent body. It maintains connections with associations across all Buddhist villages in Ladakh. The Youth Wing is responsible for organizing various programs related to the Buddhist community, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

The roles and objectives of the LBA Youth Wing include:

**1.Connecting with the Community:** The primary role of the Youth Wing is to engage with people from Ladakh who follow the teachings of Buddha. We aim to support them in



resolving any issues they encounter in their lives, providing a platform for dialogue and assistance.

**2.Promoting Social Reforms:** The Youth Wing is dedicated to bringing about social reforms that promote equality within the Buddhist community. We strive to address social issues and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

**3.Preserving and Promoting Buddhist Heritage:** A crucial objective is to maintain, preserve, and promote our rich Buddhist heritage. We focus on inculcating Buddha's teachings in the young minds of our community, ensuring that our cultural and spiritual traditions are passed on to future generations.

Through these roles and objectives, the LBA Youth Wing aims to foster a strong, supportive, and enlightened community, deeply rooted in the teachings of Buddha and committed to the welfare of all its members.

**Q. As the newly elected President of the LBA Youth Wing, what are your plans and priorities? What changes do you aim to bring during your tenure?**

My priorities are clear and focused, with education being at the forefront. Youth in Ladakh are in dire need of the right guidance to lead their lives judiciously. The LBA Youth Wing will serve as a bridge between the dreams and realities of our young people, helping them navigate the challenges they face.

Alongside modern education, I plan to place a strong emphasis on inculcating the teachings of Buddha in our youth. We will organize workshops that cover the basic teachings of Buddha, aimed at fostering spiritual values. By doing so, we hope to provide our youth with the right direction, enabling them not only to confront worldly challenges but also to lead meaningful and peaceful lives.

**Q. What are the major challenges faced by the LBA Youth Wing, and how do you plan to tackle them?**

The major challenges we face include unemployment, stress, anxiety, depression, migraines, drug addiction, and the loosening of family values due to the influence of Western cultures. The LBA Youth Wing is committed to addressing these issues to alleviate the pain and suffering of our youth, helping them to become valuable assets to both the community and society.

**MESSAGE TO THE READERS**

**“As modern education fosters individualistic thinking, it's crucial for youth to balance personal progress with family values and community well-being. I urge parents to guide their children, ensuring they grow into assets for the community. The LBA Youth Wing welcomes all passionate young people eager to contribute to the Buddhist community's welfare. Together, we can shape a better future.”**

*...continues on page 6*

**Fortnight Highlights**



*Thupstan Chhewang (President of Ashoka Mission and former MP) and Tashi Motup Kau (General Secretary) receiving financial assistance of ₹20 lakh to the Ashoka Mission, New Delhi by Hill Council, Leh.*



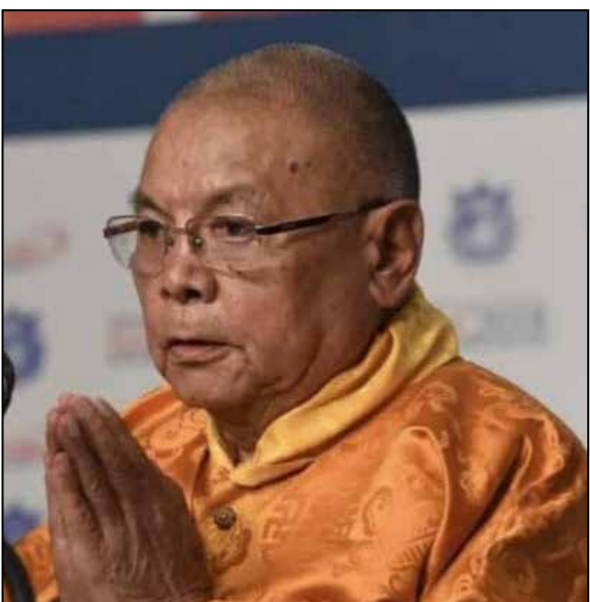
*Head coach of Team India is leading a distinguished contingent of 22 elite skaters from 11 states, including three talented girls from Ladakh, to the prestigious Asia Cup competition in Jakarta. This follows an intensive 12 day training camp in Seoul, Korea, where the team sharpened their skills and prepared rigorously for the upcoming event*



*In response to the devastating flash floods that struck Lingshed village, Chairman/CEC, Adv Tashi Gyalson, LAHDC, Leh conducted an on-site inspection to assess the damage and coordinate relief efforts.*



*Abdul Ghani Sheikh received the Ladakh Spal rN-gam Duston Award 2024 for his exceptional work as a writer and historian. Your contributions have significantly shaped the cultural and historical landscape of Ladakh.*



*Venerable Lama Lobzang, posthumously honored with the LAHDC Lifetime Achievement Award, 2024. This prestigious accolade reflects enduring commitment to the welfare of Ladakh's people, especially in providing healthcare to those in need.*



*A charitable medical camp for screening of cervical cancer was organised by Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in collaboration with Himalayan Women's health project and Mahabodhi Hospital at Mahabodhi hospitals Saboo Dho. More than 300 female patients were screened.*



*The Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Nyoma led a successful "Har Ghar Tiranga" rally at Nyoma. The rally commenced from the SDM office, with a large gathering of residents, HOD of various departments, government officials and school students, carrying the Indian National Flag.*



*Culture and Seminar Committee, Government Degree College Kargil hold a pledge ceremony at Seminar Hall under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan, a flagship campaign to enhance the evidence-based approach towards substance abuse.*

## Fortnightly News

### In Conversation with Jigmet Rafstan, LBA Youth wing President

...Continuity of page 5

We will focus on creating support systems and initiatives aimed at tackling these challenges head-on. Additionally, we will work towards resolving social issues such as family disputes and land conflicts through amicable negotiations.

**Q. Many youths in Ladakh are engaging in anti-social behaviors like drug addiction and alcohol abuse. What steps is the LBA Youth Wing planning to take to address this?**

Anti-social behaviors such as drug addiction and alcohol abuse often reflect a lack of emotional intelligence and resilience. Youths, and indeed many people in Ladakh, may turn to drugs and alcohol as a way to cope with stress and anxiety. This is one of the biggest challenges we face.

To address this, the LBA Youth Wing will organize comprehensive awareness campaigns focusing on emotional intelligence, aiming to educate individuals about healthier coping mechanisms. These campaigns will be conducted at all levels, reaching out to communities across Ladakh. Additionally, we will seek sustainable remedies by providing support systems, counseling, and rehabilitation programs to help those struggling with addiction. Our goal is to foster a stronger, more emotionally resilient community that can face challenges without resorting to harmful behaviors.

**Q. What initiatives will you implement to attract and retain young talent?**

The LBA Youth Wing is committed to nurturing and retaining young talent in Ladakh. We organize workshops and seminars aimed at identifying and developing the skills and talents of our youth. By providing them with the necessary platforms, we help them excel in their respective fields, whether it be in academics, arts, sports, or any other area of interest.

Moreover, we actively advocate for our youth by forwarding recommendations to relevant authorities when additional support or resources are needed. This ensures that talented individuals receive the opportunities they deserve to grow and succeed. Our goal is to create an environment where young people feel valued, supported, and motivated to contribute to the community.

### CEC Jaffer Akhooon inaugurates 7-day National Handloom Day celebrations in Kargil



CEC and DC along with other district officers, inspecting stalls of the artisan showcasing a wide array of handloom and handicraft products.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhooon along with Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC, Kargil, Shrikant Suse inaugurated the 7-day long National Handloom Day celebrations on August 7 at Husaini Park, Kargil.

The day was organised by Handloom Department, Kargil.

During the inauguration, the CEC and DC, accompanied by district officers, inspected various stalls of the artisan showcasing a wide array of handloom and handicraft products.

Approximately 50 stalls were set up by artisans, along with additional stalls by the Industries Department and J&K Bank, aimed to inform the public

about various beneficial schemes.

CEC commended the Handloom Department for organizing such events and praised the artisans for their dedication and skill in producing quality products. He noted the remarkable improvements in the artisans' work and encouraged them to focus on achieving superior finishing and quality.

CEC also urged artisans to take advantage of the Minority Loan provided by the Jammu and Kashmir & Ladakh Finance Corporation.

Highlighting a major achievement, the CEC mentioned that, upon his request, a stall was installed at the War Memorial Drass, which has gen-

erated around Rs 7 lakh in sales till date.

The CEC assured that the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Kargil will continue to support unemployed youth and the new start-ups in the region.

District Superintendent Handloom, Arifa Lone extended a warm welcome to all guests and shared various achievements of the department.

Councillor Town; Joint Director Sports; SE R&B; ASP Kargil; Chief Controller Finance; CMO Kargil; DSHO Kargil; Assistant Registrar Cooperative; CPO Kargil; AO to KDA, along with other officers and officials attended the event.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Chairman of the Reservation Commission for Actual Line of Control (ALC) Ladakh, Justice Bansilal Bhat (former Judge of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh), visited several villages near the Line of Control (LoC) on August 9, including Garkone, Darchik, Sanachay, Hordass, Gururdo, Batalik, Silmo, Chulichan, and Lalung. He interacted with local residents to assess basic facilities in these remote areas.

During his visit, Justice Bhat focused on identifying essential services and infrastructure needs in villages adjacent to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Union Territory of Ladakh. He

emphasized the role of the Indian Constitution and the justice system in advancing social justice and ensuring the welfare of marginalized groups.

Justice Bhat highlighted the commitment to justice and inclusivity as central to the ethos of the Indian Constitution. He stressed that no one should be left behind in the nation's progress and underscored the importance of making justice accessible to every individual.

In his discussions, Justice Bhat addressed concerns raised by local residents regarding hardships over the past seven decades. The villagers reported feeling overlooked in development efforts, with

issues related to education and economic resources impacting the youth. They also expressed dissatisfaction with the slow process of identifying areas adjoining the ALC for extending reservation benefits, pointing out that similar benefits have been provided to residents in analogous areas of J&K.

The visit was accompanied by former CEC, LAHDC, Kargil/Councillor Silmo, Feroz Khan; ADC Suhail Ahmad; Tsering Mutup, Additional Secretary to the ALC Commission; Hamid Ahmad, Private Secretary to the Chairman for ALC; and Naib Tehsildars Sajjad Hussain and Mohd Ibrahim.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**ZANSKAR:** Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh Finance Corporation (JKLFC) in collaboration with National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) organised the 3rd day of the Minority Loan Scheme Awareness Camp cum Loan Mela at Padum, Zanskar on August 10.

The event was chaired by Suhail Qadri, Gen. Manager, JKLFC with Jigmet,

District Incharge, JKLFC Leh and Kargil, overseeing the proceedings. Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Kargil, Er. Phunchok Tashi was the chief guest, Councillor Cha, Stanzin Lakpa and Councillor, Karsha, Stanzin Jigmet were the guests of honour. Incharge SDM Padum, Hassan; President of ZBA and President of Muslim Association were also present.

The event saw the partic-

ipation of around 100 villagers, including youth, merchants, and members of Taxi Association. They were all eager to gain awareness about the Minority Loan Scheme and to register themselves for loan purposes.

In his address, EC Tashi emphasized the crucial role of these schemes in fostering economic growth for start-ups and promoting sustainable develop-

### Minority loan scheme awareness camp cum loan mela held in Padum



ment in the community.

He raised concerns about the practical and ground-level applicability of these schemes in Zanskar and suggested the establishment of a JKLFC extension counter in the area to ensure the scheme's effective implementation.

He also discussed various challenges faced during the submission of Form C or shop establishment for new start-ups seeking financial assistance.

Additionally, he urged the NMDFC/JKLFC to consider including government contractors as guarantors and encouraged young entrepreneurs and unemployed youth to explore the scheme initiated by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India.

He highlighted the importance of such schemes in empowering the minority section of society, enabling them to earn livelihood with minimal interest

loans. He assured full support to the participants in case of any difficulties/assistance in accessing these schemes.

Earlier, Suhail Qadri, Gen. Manager, JKLFC, presented welcome speech, outlining the various loan schemes offered by the corporation. He also addressed doubts regarding the schemes during the question and answer session.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Jigmet Namgail, District Incharge, JKLFC Leh and Kargil. He acknowledged the challenges of conducting a series of awareness camps continuously in Kargil district, especially the long 8-hours journey to Padum Zanskar.

However, he expressed satisfaction with the large turnout, noting that the enthusiastic participation and the lively Q&A session made the efforts worthwhile.

### Justice Bansilal Bhat visits villages near LoC, focuses on basic facilities and constitutional justice



Chairman of the Reservation Commission for Actual Line of Control (ALC) Ladakh, Justice Bansilal Bhat interacting with the villagers of Line of Control (LoC).

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

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### KVK-1 hosts melon crop field day with CEC Dr. Akhooon emphasizing local agriculture



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**ZANSKAR:** Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, Chairman/CEC of LAHDC Kargil, attended a field day focusing on melon crops at Kriishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kargil-1 on August 8.

During his visit, Dr. Akhooon was briefed on the various melon varieties cultivated at KVK and toured the seed production units for newly introduced kale and Swiss chard under the DST project.

He underscored the need to revive mulberry cultivation and develop techniques for growing strawberries, emphasizing their high nutritional value.

Dr. Akhooon highlighted agriculture's crucial role in sustainable development and the local economy. He urged the adoption of sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices to generate employment opportunities for youth.

The CEC also requested

that the achievements of Zanskar KVK be shared with his office. Addressing the high prevalence of anemia among lactating mothers in Kargil, he suggested that organic farming and products could play a significant role in addressing this issue.

Additionally, Dr. Akhooon commended local entrepreneurs for their mushroom spawn production and pledged to provide three BOD incubators on a subsidy basis to support their efforts.

Chief Scientist of KVK-1, Dr. Mehdi, also spoke at the event, outlining the department's achievements and initiatives. The event was attended by the Executive Councillor for Agriculture, LAHDC Kargil; Councillor Chiktan; Chief Agriculture Officer Kargil; senior and junior scientists from KVK-1; the former President of Baseej-e-Zaraat; other officials; and progressive farmers.

### Expert talk - Ladakh's Apricots: Traditional crop with global potential

...Continuity of page 4

department, the department of industries, farmers, and exporters.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), established by the Government of India under the 1985 Act, was formed in Ladakh in 2021. Its main objective is to promote the export of fruits, vegetables, and other agro-based products. APEDA has also conducted buyer-seller meetings, where foreign importers, Indian exporters, farmers, and entrepreneurs participated. In 2022, apricot export quantities increased, with around 35 metric tonnes sent to the Philippines, Mauritius, Vietnam, and other countries. In addition to fresh apricots, APEDA has begun exporting value-added products such as jam, jelly, juice, and dried apricots, which show promising market potential.

A recent buyer-seller meeting in Leh attracted many exporters who took samples of value-added and processed products. These meetings are beneficial as they allow exporters to better understand the quality of Ladakh's products and give local farmers and entrepreneurs insights into business and market dynamics. Plans are underway to host an international buyer-seller meeting, bringing together international importers and domestic exporters to discuss other potential products in Ladakh beyond apricots.

The export channel is in progress, in future we are hoping to attract more exporters that will result in good apricot price and eventually rise in the income of farmers involving in selling the fruit. Local farmers are actively engaged in the business, with the Farmer Produce Organisation (FPO) from Sham Valley, which produces fresh fruit and sells dried apricots, and young entrepreneurs also playing significant roles. The response to the first export of apricots was positive, with a display stall in a Dubai supermarket selling out faster than expected. This feedback indicates that the demand for Ladakhi apricots exceeds expectations.

The export process is ongoing, and there are hopes to attract more exporters in the future, which would result in better prices for apricots and increased income for farmers. Apricots from Ladakh have substantial potential in the international market, but there is a need for improvements in processing and packaging technology for the GI-tagged Raktsey Karpo. Ladakh also lacks proper harvesting tools, and technical intervention is necessary during the pre- and post-harvesting stages to enhance processing and extend shelf life.

APEDA regularly initiates programs to expose farmers and entrepreneurs to valued products in foreign markets and showcase the quality of Ladakh's products. Subsidies are available for producers interested in setting up units for processed and value-added products, and machines are also subsidized. Training in pruning and proper cultivation techniques is provided. Besides APEDA, various central departments offer schemes to encourage farmers and entrepreneurs to establish their units and produce high-quality products.

## Fortnightly News

### RLC triumphs at Kargil Football League 2024



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** The Kargil District Football League 2024 concluded on August 10 at the Astro Turf Kur-bathang, Kargil.

The league was organized by the Kargil Football Association with support from the Ladakh Football Association. The closing ceremony was attended by Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo, and Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Mohamad Haneefa Jaan. CEC Dr. Akhoo congratulated the winning team, RLC, and the runners-up, Shaheen FC from Saliskote. He emphasized the Hill Council's ongoing efforts to enhance sports infrastructure and provide necessary equipment for deserving athletes, whether in ice hockey or other sports.

Dr. Akhoo encouraged

the players to view sports not just as a game but as a potential career. He highlighted the talent of Ladakh's youth, both girls and boys, to compete at international levels and urged them to maintain sportsmanship on and off the field.

He announced Rs 20,000 for the winning team, Rs 15,000 for the runners-up, and Rs 10,000 each for the other two teams through Youth Services and Sports Kargil for the purchase of sports equipment. Dr. Akhoo assured continued support from the Hill Council for future initiatives.

MP Ladakh, Mohamad Haneefa Jaan, also congratulated the winners and runners-up. He spoke about the hidden talent in Ladakh and called on political, social, and ad-

ministrative bodies at the UT and district levels to help prepare these talented youth for national and international platforms. He mentioned the ongoing construction of a multi-level indoor stadium in Kargil and the establishment of ice hockey rinks at the block level.

The MP also emphasized the potential of archery in the region and assured full support for its development.

The ceremony was also attended by Councillor Baroo-Minjee, Khadim Hussain; Councillor Saliskote, Sajjad Hussain; Former Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Kargil, Mohd Ali Chandan; Secretary, Ladakh Football Association, Tsering Angmo; and representatives from the 121 Infantry Brigade and 31 Punjab Regiment.

### Territorial Army commemorates platinum jubilee with cycle expedition from Siachen to Indira Point



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** In commemoration of the Platinum Jubilee Year of the Territorial Army, a cycle expedition was organized from Siachen Base Camp to Indira Point, starting on August 3.

The expedition is planned to be conducted in two legs—Mainland Leg and Island Leg—traversing approximately 5,500 kilometers through land, air, and sea. The expedition, comprising 21 Territorial Army personnel, was flagged off from Siachen Base Camp on July 30, 2024, and reached Leh on August 2, 2024.

On August 4, 2024, the General Officer Commanding, 72 Sub Area, interacted with the team members. The expedition will cycle through the en-

tire length of the nation, reaching Chennai, where the team will then move to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. After traveling southwards through the Nicobar Islands, the expedition will conclude at Indira Point, where the Tricolour will be hoisted underwater at the southernmost tip of India.

In addition to cycling, the expedition team will engage in sailing and scuba diving activities as part of their journey. Public awareness campaigns addressing issues such as national integration, environmental consciousness, and "Know Your Army" will also be conducted along the route. The primary aim of the expedition is to foster a civil-military connection, with the Territorial Army having a widespread presence

across the country.

The Territorial Army (TA) was established in 1949 following the enactment of the Territorial Army Act in 1948. Derived from the concept of a Citizen Army, the TA's role has evolved and expanded, now being integral to all spheres of the Indian Army. The TA has actively participated in all major operations undertaken by the Indian Army, earning numerous gallantry and distinguished awards. The TA has also played a significant role in nation-building, environmental management, and ecological restoration. The Ecological Units of the TA have planted approximately 9 crore saplings across 92,000 hectares of land nationwide to address the adverse effects of global warming.

### New Vidya Samiksha Kendra inaugurated at DIET Leh by LG Ladakh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) inaugurated the Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK) at District Institute of Education & Training (DIET) Leh in the presence of Deputy Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk; Advisor to the LG, Dr Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Principal Secretary, School Education, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS and Director, School Education Department, Tsering Paldan, JKAS.

At the outset, LG Ladakh asked the School Education Department led by Principal Secretary, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS, to follow up on the issues flagged by Deputy Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk and try to address these issues at the earliest. Stating that education is the most important basic need of life, the LG asked the teaching staff of the Education Department to work sincerely and intensely with good intentions to improve the education standards.

He informed about the issue of attachment of teaching/non-teaching staff of the Education Department and the steps taken by the UT Administration to frame the policy to ensure that there are no headless schools and rationalisation of posts or resource persons in the Education Department.

Highlighting the job profile of teachers to provide the best possible education to the students through the correct attitudinal approach, the LG stated that the teachers must know the strengths and weaknesses of students along with providing them proper guidance to help them become good citizens of India. He also highlighted the roles of teachers in the success of Vidya Samiksha Kendra.

Deputy Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk congratulated the Education Department and UT Ladakh on the inauguration of the Vidya Samiksha Kendra at DIET Leh and informed about various initiatives taken by the Education Department to improve the education standards in Ladakh. He highlighted the need for a policy for the 10+2 lecturers who teach Education,

Environmental Science and Statistics subjects at different Government Higher Secondary Schools in Ladakh to define their roles due to the exclusion of these subjects, shifting of government schools from JKBOSE to CBSE pattern. He also highlighted the need for the upgradation of DIET along with improving its staff strength. Angchuk stated that qualified teaching staff are required for the proper functioning of the ICT labs in Ladakh.

Director, School Education, Tsering Paldan, apprised the LG of the key elements of Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK), including the digital initiatives taken by UT Administration such as the distribution of YounTabs to students, the establishment of 220 interactive flat panels under Samagra Shiksha, the establishment of 120 ICT labs under Samagra Shiksha, the establishment of 190 DigiLabs in Ladakh with help from 17,000 ft, the conduct of National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) capacity-building programme for teachers and school principals, the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software and the inauguration of Vidya Samiksha Kendra; the implementation, vision, purpose, benefits of VSK along with the 6 A's (Assessment, Administration, Accreditation, APAAR, Attendance and Artificial Intelligence) framework for VSK; the focus areas of the A's Mapping; the implementation status and the starter packs, etc.

Earlier, Principal Secretary, School Education, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS, welcomed the guests and gave an overview of Vidya Samiksha Kendra, first launched in Gujarat in 2021, which will help in administering the education system in a better way along with the MoU signed with Hitachi MGRM Net Ltd as the technology partner.

Chief Education Officers (CEOs), Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs), Principals and Headmasters along with other officials of School Education Department were present during the event.

### 100 patients examined at Sankoo Eye surgery camp; 45 receive surgeries



Mansoor Hosain Beigh

**SANKOO:** A total of 100 patients were examined while 35 cataract and 10 pterygium cases were operated on during a two-day eye surgery camp at the Community Health Centre (CHC) Sankoo on August 8 and 9.

The eye surgery camp was organized by the Block Medical Officer Sankoo

and the Department of Ophthalmology CHC Sankoo in collaboration with Perfect Vision Super Speciality (Eye Hospital Srinagar).

The team was led by Dr. Omar Rashid, a renowned phaco and corneal surgeon from Perfect Vision Super Speciality. Key contributions were also

made by Dr. Shahnawaz, a renowned ophthalmologist, and Dr. Munnawar Hussain Wazir, a senior consultant ophthalmologist at CHC Sankoo.

The camp's success was further ensured by the dedicated support of ophthalmology assistants and OT assistants from CHC Sankoo.

### Degree College Zanskar hosts environmental education workshop on "Exploring Biodiversity and Climate Change in Zanskar"



Caption: Participants during a day-long Environmental Education workshop titled "Exploring Biodiversity and Climate Change in Zanskar".

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Govt. Model Degree College Zanskar, in collaboration with the Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLCIT), hosted a day-long Environmental Education workshop titled "Exploring Biodiversity and Climate Change in Zanskar" on August 8.

Rigzin Yandol opened the workshop by introducing the key speakers and outlining the program's schedule. Mohd Ishaq, Principal of GMDC Zanskar, then delivered a welcome speech and a keynote address highlighting the urgent need for conservation and sustainable development in Ladakh, with a particular focus on Zanskar.

A pre-test assessment was conducted to gauge participants' existing knowledge of local biodiversity.

Dr. Tsewang Namgail, Director of SLCIT, gave an extensive presentation

on Ladakh's natural heritage, focusing on "Ladakh Geography and Climate." His talk covered a broad range of related topics, and he addressed numerous questions raised by students.

Jigmet Dadul, Senior Program Manager at SLCIT, followed with a presentation on "Large Herbivorous Mammals of Ladakh." He detailed various species, their distribution patterns, habitats, identification keys, and conservation strategies.

In the post-lunch session, three keynote speakers presented on their respective themes. Padma Angmo, Project Manager at SLCIT (Birds), provided an overview of "Birds of Ladakh," highlighting both migratory and resident bird species in the region.

Kriti Chawan discussed the impact of climate

change in Zanskar, focusing on glacier-induced lake formation and the associated risks of glacial lake outburst floods.

Dr. Tsewang Namgail concluded the workshop with a talk on the importance of ecological surveys, encouraging students to document new flora and fauna in the Ladakh Himalayas.

Around 24 students registered for an ecological survey scheduled for September. Royal Enfield and the Australian Himalayan Foundation were notable funding partners for the workshop.

The program concluded with a focus on the unique flora and fauna of Zanskar and discussions on the impact of climate change on the region's fragile ecosystem. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions about preserving Ladakh's unique biodiversity.

### Justice Bhat convenes meeting on reservation policy for ALC



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Justice Bansi Lal Bhat, Chairman of the Reservation Commission for Actual Line of Control (ALC), Ladakh, convened a significant meeting with Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson on August 8 in the Conference Hall of the Council Secretariat.

Accompanied by Additional Secretary Tsering Motup, Justice Bhat provided an update on the status and progress of the committee's efforts to formulate a reservation policy for residents living adjacent to the Actual Line of Control.

Justice Bhat emphasized the committee's commitment to inclusive development and alleviating the hardships faced by residents in border areas. The primary aim of the meeting was to inform stakeholders about the committee's work and to gather suggestions and objections from all concerned parties.

He stressed the importance of establishing clear criteria to ensure that reservations benefit the intended recipients and exclude ineligible individuals.

During the meeting, CEC Gyalson, along with Ex-

ecutive Councillors and Councillors, presented their submissions and feedback to Justice Bhat.

Attendees included Dy. Chairman Tsering Angchuk; Executive Councillor for RDD Tashi Namgyal Yakzee; Executive Councillor for Minority Ghulam Mehdi; and Councillors from border areas, including Ishey Spalzung (Nyoma), Karma Namdak (Korzok), Konchok Stanzin (Chushul), Thinles Nurboo (Kungyam), Tsering Sangdup (Panamik), Lhundup Dorje (Skurbuchan), and other concerned officials.

#### NOTICE

No JC 588447A Rank SUB Tsewang Tashi S/o Tashi Rigzen Unit 1137 DAC PL C/o 56APO has claimed that his father's name namely Tashi Rigzen has been wrongly entered as Tashi Renchen instead of Tashi Rigzen in the Army record and produced an affidavit duly verified by Notary public Leh with Certificate No. IN-LA07168827360524W to this office for making necessary correction. Hence the notice is hereby served through press to file objection if any in the concerned office within 7 days from date of publication failing which necessary correction will be made.

#### NOTICE

An application has been received from one Tsewang Norboo S/o Tsewang Rinchen R/o Lakjung Nubra UT Ladakh to transfer the vehicle No. JK 10 9073 owned by Nawang Chosgail S/o Tsewang Morup R/o Skurbuchan UT Ladakh. Now, it is therefore notified for general information that objection if any to the proposed transfer shall be filed in writing in the office of Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) within a period of 07 days from date of publication of this notice.

No: ARTO/ UT/Leh/2022/297-98  
Date: 09-08-24

Asstt. Regional Transport Officer  
Leh Ladakh

#### NOTICE

I, Javed Iqbal S/o Mohammad Javed R/o Shey , UT Ladakh do hereby notify that my father's name Mohammad Javed has been wrongly recorded as Mohd Javed instead of Mohammad Javed in his Resident Certificate bearing No. T-Leh /9166 (R) 22 dated 15/09/2022 duly issued by Tehsil Office Leh UT Ladakh. Now, I am applying for the changes in Resident Certificate and objection if any may be conveyed to the Tehsil Office Leh UT Ladakh within 07 days from the date of publication.

#### NOTICE

I, Tashi Dorje S/o Sonam Tashi R/o Durbuk Leh, UT Ladakh wants to change my name and style of the contractor registration card no.A522 from Tashi Dorje to Youl Construction.. Now, I want to apply for a duplicate card, Objection if any may be report to the Chief Engineer, PWD, Leh within 7 days from the date of the publication of this notice.

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**3D VIEW OF CHOWKHANG VIHARA, LEH**



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