

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



In Conversation with
Nusrat Fatima, Pencak-Silat Player

Expert Talk:
Preserving Ladakh's theatrical tradition: A call for action and awareness

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Ten years of rescue, care, and compassion: the journey of Live to Rescue



Dignitaries during their visit to Live to Rescue centre at Nang during 10 year celebration of the centre.

Stanzin Dasal

NANG: The Stray Animal Care and Management Centre, also known as Live to Rescue, stands as a sanctuary of hope for thousands of abandoned, injured, and suffering animals. As the center marks its 10th anniversary on October 4, it not only celebrates a decade of relentless service but also highlights the deeper bond between humans and animals.

In 2014, Leh was gripped by a crisis—stray dog attacks were on the rise, and the resulting human-animal conflict began to take a dark turn. The growing fear among locals led to desperate measures: many dogs were poisoned, discarded into rivers, or left to die, victims of the community's frustration and helplessness. It was a time when the stray dog population was seen as a threat, not only to people but also to the balance between humanity and compassion.

This heart-wrenching situation deeply saddened His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa, who called for urgent action to address the feral dog population through Animal Birth Control (ABC) measures. He envisioned a compassionate approach—rescuing, treating, caring for, and sheltering injured, sick, and abandoned dogs. Under the guidance of His Holiness and His Eminence Thuksey Rinpoche, the Stray Animal Care and Management Centre (Live to Rescue) was established in Nang village, with the land generously donated by the local villagers.

From its humble beginnings, Live to Rescue grew into a beacon of hope for animals and humans alike—a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together, united by a cause greater than itself. Over the past decade, Live to Rescue has made a remarkable impact,

treating 9,725 dogs, along with 370 bulls and cows, 167 donkeys, 16 horses, and 32 sheep and goats. Beyond that, the organization has facilitated the adoption of 230 dogs, both in India and abroad, helping to find loving homes for animals that had once known only neglect.

For Rigzin Dorjey Yarma, Project Coordinator of Live to Rescue, the past ten years have been a journey of love and resilience. Having worked with the center since its inception, Rigzin has seen firsthand the transformation that compassion can bring. "The center has become a beacon of hope for many suffering animals," he shares. "It has provided a brighter future for those who would otherwise have had no one to care for them."

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Hunger strike and rallies signal growing discontent in Ladakh,



Peace protest rally at Leh market on October 13.

Nenzen Chosdon

LEH: In solidarity with Sonam Wangchuk and the padyatris currently on hunger strike at Ladakh Bhavan since October 6, a peace protest rally was held in various parts of Leh district on October 13. The rally aims to amplify the 4-point demands and bring attention to the pressing issues facing the region. The hunger strike follows a prolonged standstill in dialogue between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Apex Body Leh, and the Kargil Democratic Alliance. The Apex Body has urged the government to resume discussions on the 4-point agenda, which addresses key concerns for the people of Ladakh.

Jigmet Rafstan, President of the LBA Youth Wing, remarked, "The peace rally was organized in Leh and other parts of the district to show support for the volunteers who have been on hunger strike in Delhi for more than a week, and to press the importance of our 4 demands." He emphasized the urgent need for the government to take the concerns of the people seriously and resume meaningful dialogue.

"We remain hopeful that the government will listen to our concerns and restart discussions to resolve these issues," Rafstan added, voicing optimism despite the tense situation.

Sonam Wangchuk, along with around 150 padyatris, embarked on a significant march from Leh to Delhi on September 1. Their primary objective was to demand the inclusion of Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which would grant the region greater autonomy and self-governance. However, their journey faced a setback when they were detained by Delhi Police at Singhu Border on September 30. The group was released on the night of October 2.

The protesters are seeking a meeting with top leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Their demands also include statehood for Ladakh, the establishment of a public service commission, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts. The march was organized by the Leh Apex Body, which, together with the Kargil Democratic Alliance, has been spearheading the ongoing agitation.

The Apex Body's appeal for resumed talks underscores their commitment to engaging with the authorities and advocating for the rights of the Ladakhi people. Regional leaders and the broader public continue to closely monitor these developments as the struggle for Ladakh's rights intensifies.

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New sustainable livelihood programme set to benefit 7,500 families in Ladakh

Initiate by Axis Bank Foundation, Himmothan Society, and Leh Nutrition Project



During the launch of the Sustainable Livelihood Programme.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Axis Bank Foundation (ABF) launched a multi-year project under its Sustainable Livelihood Programme, in Leh & Kargil, along with Himmothan Society and Leh Nutrition Project (LNP) on October 10. This marks ABF's first livelihood project in the Ladakh region, aimed at enhancing the incomes of rural communities through a combination of farm-based and non-farm-based activities.

The 5-year programme (April 2024 – March 2029), implemented by the Himmothan Society and LNP, aims to benefit 7,500 tribal families across 60 villages in three clusters: Sham Valley in the west, Changthang in the east, and Kharu & Rong Valley in central Ladakh. The project covers 14 blocks in the Leh and Kargil districts, helping households enhance their incomes and living standards.

Chotak Gyatso, Executive Director of LNP, said, "Axis Bank Foundation is committed to enhancing livelihoods in Ladakh. Together with LNP, we are implementing sustainable livelihood projects through farm-based and non-farm-based initiatives that empower local communities and foster economic growth."

A key objective of the project is the development of value chains for apricots, high-value crops like vegetables, horticultural orchards/nurseries, woolen handicrafts, and dairy products with backward and forward integration. The programme will also experiment with innovative approaches in agriculture (buckwheat, rajma, local peas, apples, apricots), livestock development (yak/goat cheese, churpey), IT

(graphic and web design, animation), handicrafts (woolen products), skill-based activities (plumbing, tailoring, electrical work), and food crafts (local bakery, pickle-making). The initiative is designed to address the challenges of climate change and geographical isolation, offering solutions tailored to Ladakh's unique needs.

Santosh Sukhadeve, Deputy Commissioner/CEO of LAHDC, Leh, the Chief Guest at the launch event, emphasized the importance of the programme in promoting sustainable livelihoods. He highlighted the administration's focus on skilling the youth, promoting seabuckthorn, pashmina, and apricots for trade, and using greenhouse technology for off-season vegetable produc-

...continues on page 2

New district committee begins work, invites public suggestions for formation of new districts



The newly constituted committee assessing various aspects related to the formation of five new districts in Union Territory of Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A newly formed District Committee, chaired by Pramod Kumar Jain, IAS (Retd), along with members Kacho Asfandyar Khan, IAS (Retd), Tsering Angchok, IAS (Retd), and ex-officio members Shrikant Balasaheb Suse, IAS (Deputy Commissioner, Kargil), and Santosh Sukhadeve, IAS (Deputy Commissioner, Leh), has commenced operations as per Union Territory of Ladakh Order No: 444-LA(GAD) of 2024 dated September 25, 2024. The committee is actively engaging with stakeholders through tours and meetings in the newly proposed districts.

The newly constituted committee assessed various aspects related to the formation of five new districts in Union Territory of Ladakh held their first meeting at camp office, Silk Route guest house on October 3.

The committee has established its office at Silk Route Guest House, near the Tourism Office in Leh, and can be reached via email at chairman.ndc@ladakh.gov.in. Citizens and residents of the Union Territory of Ladakh are encouraged to submit memorandum, suggestions, and viewpoints on the forma-

tion and operationalization of the following new districts:

1. Zanskar
2. Nubra
3. Sham
4. Drass
5. Changthang

The committee has already conducted a four-day tour of Zanskar and Kargil, meeting with several deputations and individuals to hear their representations. These inputs are currently being processed for further action.

Ministry of Home Affairs announced five new districts Sham, Nubra, Changthang, Zanskar and Drass. A committee was formed by General Administration Department, UT Ladakh with the approval from Ministry of Home Affairs to review the formation of these new districts. The committee has to submit their recommendations in the form of a report within three months.

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Fortnightly News

Ten years of rescue, care, and compassion: the journey of Live to Rescue

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Today, the center is home to approximately 177 dogs and 113 other animals, including donkeys, horses, goats, bulls, cows, sheep, hens, and rabbits—each with its own story of struggle and survival. But beyond just offering shelter, the center is a space where animals are given a new lease on life, surrounded by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure their well-being.

His Eminence Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche, addressing the gathering during the 10th-anniversary celebration, emphasized the spiritual significance of caring for animals. “We all celebrate various special days in our lives, but it’s rare to hear about people observing a day for animals, despite our direct or indirect dependence on them,” he said, reflecting on the significance of World Animal Day. “It’s important to show

kindness and empathy to the most vulnerable.” His Eminence’s words echoed the Buddhist principles of compassion that form the bedrock of Live to Rescue. The center is not just a physical space—it’s a symbol of the spiritual duty to care for all sentient beings, to recognize that every life, no matter how small or voiceless, has the right to live free from harm.

Supporting the center’s mission are the Animal Husbandry Department, volunteers from across Ladakh, and local establishments like the Grand Dragon Hotel, which donates leftover food to help feed the animals. The wider community also plays a vital role, offering donations and support, ensuring that the center continues to thrive.

As part of its 10th-anniversary

celebration, Live to Rescue inaugurated a newly built visitor center—a facility designed to enhance public engagement and educate visitors about animal welfare. A documentary titled ‘Live to Rescue: A Decade of Impact’ was also screened during the event, providing an in-depth look at the organization’s work over the past decade. Presented by Rinchen Wachar, former President of YDA Leh, the film highlighted the center’s unwavering dedication to animal welfare and the countless lives it has touched.

The event’s chief guest, CEC Tashi Gyalson, extended heartfelt congratulations to Live to Rescue and commended the community’s support in establishing the center back in 2014. He acknowledged the critical role the center has played in preventing what could have been a major crisis in the re-

gion. “Without Live to Rescue, Leh would have faced a significant challenge in addressing the care of abandoned and injured animals,” he remarked, praising the leadership of His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa for his efforts across various fields, from education to environmental protection and animal rescue.

As Live to Rescue looks ahead to the future, its mission remains the same: to be a safe haven for the voiceless, place where every animal, no matter how broken, can find comfort and care. It is a reminder that in our shared world, compassion for the most vulnerable is not just an act of kindness—it is a responsibility we all bear.

For the animals of Ladakh, Live to Rescue is more than just a shelter. It is hope, compassion, and the promise of a better tomorrow.

New sustainable livelihood programme set to benefit 7,500 families in Ladakh

...continuity of page 1

tion. He urged government officials to work in close collaboration with implementing agencies to ensure the programme’s success and avoid duplication of efforts.

The event brought together 60 participants, including key stakeholders and decision-makers from various sectors. Tsewang Phunchok, Director of Horticulture and Floriculture, was the Guest of Honour. Representatives from government depart-

ments (Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Handicraft and Handloom), research institutes (DIHAR, KVK, SAST), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and NGO partners (LNP and Himmothian Society) also attended.

Prominent attendees included Abhinav Sen, Vice President of Axis Bank Foundation, Isha Ayyer, Senior Manager of ABF, Gowher Sheikh, Vice President and

Cluster Head for Axis Bank in Kashmir and Ladakh, and Rinku Gupta, State Head of Government Business, Axis Bank. Representatives from Tata Trusts, Himmothian, and other local cooperatives also participated.

The project launch marks an important step in empowering rural communities and promoting sustainable economic development in Ladakh.

8th National School Games U-19 Table Tennis championship concludes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The four-day 68th National School Games 2024-25 Table Tennis Championship for Under-19 Boys and Girls, organized by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, concluded on October 8 at the NDS Sports Complex.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) B.D. Mishra (Retd), attended the closing ceremony, where he commended Secretary of DYSS UT Ladakh, Vikram Singh Malik, and former Rajya Sabha MP, Tarun Vijay, for their efforts in organizing the championship.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to the participants from various states and Union Territories, highlighting their contributions to the event’s

success. He emphasized the importance of a healthy mind and body, noting that while studying and knowledge keep the mind fresh, engaging in sports is vital for physical fitness.

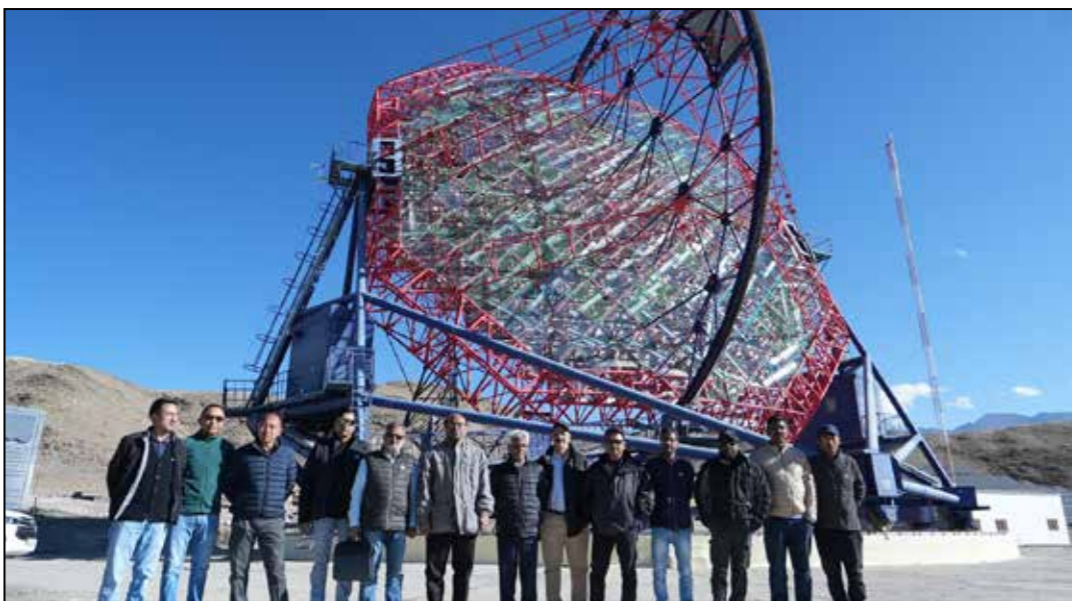
In a notable statement, the LG remarked that this is the first time the National School Games Table Tennis Championship has been held in Ladakh, marking a significant achievement for the region. He urged players to train aspiring table tennis athletes, encouraging them to focus on collective success rather than individual glory. He also called upon participants from different states and UTs to promote sportsmanship and adhere to the Fundamental Duties outlined in the Indian Constitution.

During the ceremony, he

presented trophies to the winners of the U-19 Table Tennis Championships, including Vanshika Mudgal from Delhi (U-19 Girls Singles Champion), S Das from West Bengal (U-19 Boys Singles Champion), Team Delhi (Winners of U-19 Girls Team Event), and Team Maharashtra (Winners of U-19 Boys Team Event). He also recognized officials from the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) and the President of the Table Tennis Association of UT Ladakh.

Earlier, Secretary of Youth Services and Sports, Vikram Singh Malik, IAS, welcomed the audience and highlighted the participation of approximately 300 players from 19 states and 5 Union Territories in the four-day event.

DAE inaugurates Asia’s largest and world’s highest imaging Cherenkov Observatory at Hanle



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

HANLE: The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) inaugurated the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory, the largest imaging Cherenkov telescope in Asia and the highest of its kind in the world, situated at an altitude of approximately 4,300 meters in Hanle, Ladakh on October 4. The inauguration was led by Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Secretary of DAE and Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Built indigenously by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) with support from ECIL and other Indian industry

partners, the MACE telescope stands as a milestone in India’s cosmic-ray research efforts. Its unveiling was a highlight of the DAE’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations, with commemorative plaques being unveiled by Dr. Mohanty, officially marking the observatory’s inauguration.

Ajay Ramesh Sule, Additional Secretary of DAE, emphasized the need to balance tourism with scientific activities within the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve (HDSR) and encouraged young students to pursue careers in science and technology.

Dr. Annapurni Subramaniam,

Director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), praised the collaborative efforts between DAE and IIA units that made the project possible. Sajjad Hussain Mufti, Chief Conservator of Forests, UT Ladakh, further emphasized community involvement and the UT Administration’s support for scientific research in the region.

Dr. S. M. Yusuf, Director of BARC’s Physics Group, welcomed attendees and highlighted the significance of the MACE telescope in boosting India’s space and cosmic-ray research capabilities.

The event also featured a pictorial compilation documenting the MACE project’s journey and a screening of a film showcasing the telescope’s scientific and technological milestones. Dr. Mohanty honored local village leaders, school officials, and the Lama of Hanle Gompa during the ceremony.

Concluding the day’s proceedings, dignitaries and attendees were treated to a guided tour of the MACE Observatory and its state-of-the-art control room. The observatory’s inauguration places India firmly on the global map of advanced astronomical research.

Dr. K. K. Yadav, Head of BARC’s Astrophysical Sciences Division, delivered the vote of thanks, followed by interactions between the dignitaries and the team of astronomers and technicians responsible for the observatory.

The MACE telescope, capable of observing high-energy gamma rays, marks a significant advancement for Indian astrophysics and cosmic-ray research. Its strategic location will contribute to global efforts to unravel the universe’s most energetic phenomena, such as supernovae, black holes, and gamma ray bursts, complementing international observatories and elevating India’s position in multi-messenger astronomy.

Ladakh’s Pashmina wool receives GI Tag: Union Minister presents certificate to Lt Governor



Union Minister of Textiles, Giriraj Singh, presenting Geographical Indication (GI) Registration Certificate for Ladakh’s Pashmina Wool to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Union Minister of Textiles, Giriraj Singh, presented the Geographical Indication (GI) Registration Certificate for Ladakh’s Pashmina Wool to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD

Mishra (Retd), in a ceremony held at the Lieutenant Governor’s Secretariat on October 5. The event was attended by officials from the Ministry of Textiles, Central Wool Development Board, Textiles

Committee, Industries and Commerce Department of UT Ladakh, Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs), artisans, and entrepreneurs.

During the event, the Lieu-

tenant Governor also handed over the application of authorized users to the Minister of Textiles.

Giriraj Singh thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh, following the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir, which allowed Ladakh to establish its distinct identity and showcase its unique products, such as pashmina, sea buckthorn, and apricots, on both national and international platforms. He highlighted the significance of GI tagging for Ladakh’s Pashmina, also known as “Soft Gold,” which had been previously misrepresented by others. This development, he said, would benefit the region’s pashmina herders and

promote economic growth.

The Minister emphasized the importance of increasing pashmina wool production in Ladakh to boost the income of pashmina goat herders, SHGs, and entrepreneurs, contributing to the region’s GDP growth. He also suggested measures such as encouraging stall feeding for pashmina and merino sheep, involving women in these practices, and reducing the mortality rate of pashmina goat kids.

Giriraj Singh proposed several initiatives, including the establishment of pashmina breeding farms in Leh and Kargil, artificial insemination programs, and efforts to curb inbreeding among sheep. He recommended projects on selective breeding, farmer competitions with

incentives, pashmina goat milk testing for nutrients, exposure visits for animal husbandry directors, and feed pellet production from stored fodder. He assured the Lieutenant Governor of the Ministry’s full support in these initiatives.

In his address, Lieutenant Governor BD Mishra called the GI registration of Ladakh’s Pashmina wool a historic achievement. He emphasized that the certification guarantees the authenticity and premium quality of pashmina, which had been previously compromised by counterfeit and inferior products. The LG outlined the efforts made by the UT Administration to promote Pashmina, including meetings with pashmina herders, distributing pashmina kid pens to reduce goat mortality,

installing a pashmina dehairing plant in Leh, and establishing the Directorate of Sheep Husbandry in Ladakh.

The LG also highlighted the plantation of fodder at the solar power plant site in Pang to meet winter fodder needs, and plans to brand mountain goat meat for better market prices. He sought the Ministry’s continued cooperation in advancing Ladakh’s pashmina industry and attracting youth to traditional pashmina goat herding.

The event also featured PowerPoint presentations on the wool industry in India and abroad, a presentation by the Textiles Committee, and the screening of a short video on the pashmina sector.



Lt Governor BD Mishra reviews Green Hydrogen roadmap for Ladakh-2030

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), chaired a meeting at the Lieutenant Governor’s Secretariat to discuss the Green Hydrogen Roadmap for Ladakh-2030, an initiative being implemented by NTPC Ltd.

Chief General Manager (Renewable Energy-Hydrogen), DMR Panda, briefed the LG on plans to establish a Green Hydrogen Fuelling Station, a solar plant, and the procurement of five fuel cell buses for Ladakh. He explained that this initiative is aimed at supporting Ladakh’s goal of becoming a carbon-neutral region. Panda highlighted the four pillars of

Ladakh’s Green Hydrogen Vision: energy security, employment generation and diversification, carbon neutrality, and self-reliance (Atma Nirbhar Ladakh).

During the meeting, the LG raised key questions regarding the potential of green hydrogen to replace conventional electricity, the scale of green hydrogen production, and whether the entire region of Ladakh would benefit from the project. He also inquired about the project’s funding, the land required for its implementation, and whether it might interfere with local agricultural land. Additionally, the LG

asked about the fare for public transport on the fuel cell buses and the need for specialized drivers for these vehicles.

DMR Panda informed the LG that the solar plant would be established in Chushul, with approximately 12 acres of land already allotted by LAHDC Leh for the project. He explained that the solar plant would provide round-the-clock electricity and that hydrogen-based energy could replace diesel generator (DG) sets.

It was further disclosed that NTPC Ltd has signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UT Administration and LAHDC Leh. NTPC has

invested around Rs 75 crores in the project, with each fuel cell bus costing approximately Rs 2.5 crores. Panda also requested that the UT Administration reimburse the operational costs of the fuel cell buses.

Terming the project as futuristic and a valuable asset for Ladakh, given its potential for pollution-free energy generation, the LG approved the project.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Sanjeev Khirwar; Commissioner/Secretary to the LG, Dr. L. Franklin; officials from NTPC Ltd and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC); and Chief Engineer of the Power Development Department (PDD) UT Ladakh, Tsewang Paljor.

Fortnightly News

New districts committee starts consultations in Zaskar, gathers views on district reorganization



The new districts committee consulting with delegations from the Zaskar Subdivision.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ZASKAR: The new districts committee, Ladakh, commenced its tour and consultations on October 7 by engaging with delegations from the Zaskar Subdivision to discuss the formation of new districts.

Led by Chairman Pramod Kumar Jain, the committee—along with members Kacho Asfandyok Khan, Tsering Anghok, and Deputy Commissioner/CEO LAHDC Kargil, Shrikant Balasahb Suse—held discussions to gather views and demands from local communities.

The outreach began in

Parkachik, where the committee listened to concerns and received written representations from local delegations. The consultations continued in Rangdum and Abran, with villagers presenting their submissions outlining their views on the proposed district reorganization.

Earlier, on October 8, a comprehensive delegation representing the entire Zaskar Subdivision gathered at the Tourist Reception Centre. This group, which included Executive Councilor Phunsuk Tashi, local

councillors, religious leaders, women's representatives, and youth leaders, submitted a range of representations articulating their preferences and concerns regarding the creation of new districts.

The committee engaged in detailed discussions, carefully considering the various submissions and consulting with administrative officials. The aim is to ensure that voices from different sections of society are taken into account during the district formation process.

Indian Air Force celebrates 92nd anniversary with static display at Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: To commemorate the 92nd anniversary of the Indian Air Force, a static display was organized at Air Force Station Leh on October 9. The event showcased a range of fighters, transport and helicopter fleet aircraft, as well as indigenous surface-to-air weapon systems. The purpose of the display was to highlight the professionalism and capabilities of the IAF while instilling a sense of patriotism among the youth of the country.

Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh, Dr. BD Mishra (Retd), was the chief guest at the event. The gathering included the Corps Commander of 14 Corps, officers from sister services, and civil dignitaries, and was hosted by Air Commodore Dharminder Singh Handa, Air Officer Commanding, along with personnel from Air Force Station Leh.

The marquee event began with students and the general public observing the displayed aircraft and mis-

sile systems, during which they received briefings on the strengths and capabilities of each system. Attractive posters, stickers, and other publicity materials were distributed among the students in attendance, fostering curiosity, particularly among the younger generation.

The successful execution of the event demonstrated the effective coordination between the personnel of Air Force Station Leh and the Civil Administration.

Thangdumbur By-election results: Syed Ahmad Razvi declared winner with 1,395 votes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Syed Ahmad Razvi, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference candidate, secured 1,395 votes to win the by-election for the Thangdumbur constituency of the LAHDC, Kargil. Independent candidate Mohd Javad received 788 votes, while 17 votes were cast for NOTA. A total of 2,201 valid votes were counted.

The District Administration of Kargil successfully completed the vote counting for the by-election on October 9 at Suru Valley SubDivision.

The counting process was overseen by Additional SP Kargil, Nitin Yadav, along

with Election Officers, Magistrates, Counting Supervisors, Observers, and Returning Officers/Assistant Returning Officers from the respective constituencies.

The counting began early in the morning at the Counting Room in Suru Valley SubDivision, Sankoo. All standard procedures and protocols were followed to ensure a smooth and transparent process, culminating in the official declaration of results.

The Election Authority congratulated the winning candidate and expressed appreciation for the co-

operation of voters, political parties, candidates, Ladakh Police, polling and counting personnel, observers, transport stakeholders, senior officers of the UT Administration, and the media. Their collective efforts ensured the election was conducted smoothly and transparently.

The by-election for the 21-Thangdumbur LAHDC Constituency, held on October 5, 2024, saw a voter turnout of 75.52 percent, highlighting strong public participation in the electoral process.

Vision Himalaya initiative: Mobile hospital on wheels to transform health-care in Ladakh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson of LAHDC Leh met with a delegation led by Founder-President Lama Konchok Samstan and General Secretary Dr. Thinles Dorje to discuss the Vision Himalaya initiative, launched in 2012 to enhance healthcare access and overall well-being for the people of Ladakh.

The focus of the meeting was on Project Smile Himalaya, a key component of the Vision Himalaya

initiative aimed at improving healthcare accessibility in the region. A notable development under this project is the arrival of a specially customized multi-purpose diagnostic bus, which will operate in collaboration

with the LAHDC. CEC Gyalson accepted the delegation's request to partner on this initiative, ensuring that the mobile health unit provides essential services. This innovative unit is equipped to offer vital medical services, including cancer screening, cervical cancer screening, and mammography. Gyalson praised the efforts to drive meaningful change, noting that the introduction of this mobile hospital represents a significant step forward by reaching the most remote and inaccessible areas of Ladakh. It will conduct specialized screening camps in villages that have previously lacked access to vital healthcare services. By bringing medical expertise directly to these communities, the initiative aims to address pressing health issues and promote early disease detection.

with the LAHDC.

CEC Gyalson expressed his support for this collaborative effort and highlighted the council's plans to acquire an additional mobile health unit to further enhance healthcare outreach, ensuring even the most isolated populations receive necessary medical attention. He acknowledged that such initiatives are critical for improving the health landscape of Ladakh, where geographical barriers often limit access to healthcare.

The Vision Himalaya initiative, along with Project Smile Himalaya, represents a transformative effort to build a healthier future for the residents of Ladakh. By prioritizing accessible healthcare and fostering partnerships, the initiative aims to create a lasting impact on public health in the region.

Health Department launches comprehensive health initiative in Leh schools



Department of Health, Ladakh, introducing comprehensive health initiative in schools.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Department of Health, Ladakh, has introduced a comprehensive health initiative in schools across Leh district on October 9, aimed at enhancing the physical and mental

well-being of children and adolescents.

This initiative integrates key national programs, including the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram

(RBSK), Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), National Mental Health Program, and National Tobacco Control Program.

At an event held at Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School, Dr. Iqbal Ahmad and Dr. Tundup Dawa, Medical Officers and pediatric health experts, outlined the significance of RBSK, which screens children from birth to 18 years for 32 health conditions, including birth defects, deficiencies, diseases, and developmental delays. They emphasized the importance of early

detection and intervention, with screenings conducted by Mobile Health Teams to ensure free and equitable access to treatment.

Psychologist Phunchok Diskit spoke on the National Tobacco Control Program, highlighting the dangers of tobacco use, cancer risks, and harmful chemicals. RKSK Counselor Diskit Angmo addressed puberty-related challenges, while Clinical Psychologist Mariyah Samreen discussed mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse, stressing the need for early inter-

vention. One-on-one counseling sessions were provided for students identified by the School Health and Wellness Ambassadors. A total of 37 students received individual counseling from Tanveer Ahmad, AFHC Counselor, Diskit Angmo, AFHC Counselor, and Mariyah Samreen, Clinical Psychologist.

This initiative underscores the Department of Health's commitment to fostering the overall well-being of Ladakhi youth by integrating vital physical and mental health services in schools.

Advisor Dr. Kotwal stresses transparency in CPWD project execution and budget utilization



Meeting on reviewing the progress of developmental projects being executed by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) for various departments.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal reviewed the progress of developmental projects being executed by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) for various departments during a meeting at the UT Secretariat Conference Hall, Leh, on October 8.

Director of Finance, Dr. Safdar Ali, briefed the Advisor on the budget allocations provided to different departments to carry out developmental works through the CPWD.

Dr. Kotwal emphasized the need to expedite the budget allocation process and directed the CPWD

to ensure that projects are completed within the set timelines. He also urged the concerned departments to utilize the funds effectively, ensuring that they are properly allocated to complete the developmental projects.

Highlighting the importance of transparency, accountability, and efficiency, Dr. Kotwal stressed the collective responsibility of all officers to ensure that public resources are used judiciously. He noted that every rupee spent must contribute meaningfully to the overall development of Ladakh and directed the concerned officials to ensure that all projects are carried out

with integrity, maximizing the impact of public funds.

Among those present at the meeting were Commissioner/Secretary of Health & Medical Education, Dr. Vasantha Kumar N; Commissioner/Secretary of Planning & Monitoring Department, Dr. Lalitkhuma Franklin; Administrative Secretary of PWD, Michael M. D'Souza; Deputy Commissioner Leh, Santosh Sukhdeve; Chief Engineer, CPWD; Chief Engineer, PW(R&B), Abdul Mutalib; Additional Secretary of Finance, Dr. Safdar Ali; and Directors of various departments. Officials stationed outside Leh attended the meeting virtually.

LAHDC Leh donates buses to LBA schools in partnership with ONGC



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: LAHDC, in collaboration with ONGC, donated buses to two schools under the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA)—Lamdon Jamyang School, Khal-

tse, and Riglam School, Leh—as part of its CSR initiative on October 9.

The official handover ceremony was led by CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson and

ONGC Director General, Ravi, in the presence of LBA President, Chering Dorje Lakrook, Vice President, Kunzes Dolma, Chairperson of Jamyang Khatse School, Eshey Tundup, Chairperson of the LBA Education Committee, and other executive members.

This initiative underscores LAHDC's commitment to supporting education and community development in Ladakh.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates 75 infrastructure projects nationwide, including 11 in Ladakh

Lt. Governor virtually joins the inauguration ceremony



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), virtually attended the inauguration of 75 infrastructure projects across 8 States and 3 Union Territories, including 2 roads and 9 bridges in Ladakh, led by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh from Gangtok, Sikkim.

The 75 infrastructure projects, comprising 22 roads, 51 bridges, and 2 miscellaneous projects, have been developed at a total cost of Rs 2,236 crore. The Chief of Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, and senior officials from the Army and Border Roads Organisation (BRO) were present at the event held in Sheraathang, Sikkim.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) executed all of these projects. Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Col. Tarun Kalita from Project Himank; and Col. Rupam Chatterjee from Project Vijayak also attended the virtual inauguration at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat. Out of the 11 projects in Ladakh, Project Vijayak completed seven, including two National Highway double-lane (NHDL) roads and five Class 70 R bridges. These projects include the following:

- A 4 km-long NHDL road on the Zoji-La-Kargil-Leh National Highway
- A 15 km-long NHDL road on the Leh-Chalunka axis
- The 42.67m span steel modular Drass Bridge on Drass-Umba La-Sankoo Road
- The 42.67m span steel modular Astakappa Bridge on Drass-Umba La-Sankoo Road
- The 42.67m steel modular Sapi-I Bridge on Sankoo-Kunnore Sapi-La-Mulbekh Road
- The 20m steel superstructure Skurbuchan Bridge on Khatse-Batalik Road
- The 60m steel superstructure Hinachi Bridge on Sasoma-Warshi-Snout Road

Additionally, Project Himank completed two projects including, 80m steel superstructure Hemya-I Bridge on Leh-Loma Road and 21m concrete beam Kayamlungpa Bridge on Leh-Upshi-Sarchu Road. These roads and bridges aim to enhance connectivity and drive socio-economic development in the region.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised the BRO's dedication to improving connectivity in remote areas and ensuring the timely completion of these infrastructure projects. He emphasized the government's commitment to bolstering infrastructure in border regions to meet the country's security requirements.

•A 4 km-long NHDL road

Expert Talk:

Preserving Ladakh's theatrical tradition: A call for action and awareness

NENZES CHODON

In Ladakh, theatre and theatre education are often perceived as modern, acculturated phenomena. As society evolves, the value and importance of theatre have diminished over the years. What was once a fundamental aspect of community life is now struggling to re-establish its place. There is an urgent need for theatre to make a comeback and address the social evils that have been concealed within society.



Mipham Othsal, Former Director, Ladakh Theatre Organisation and Sangeet Natak Awardee:

Theatre has long been an integral part of Ladakh's cultural fabric, deeply intertwined with its historical and religious roots. Traditionally, theatre in Ladakh was more than just an art form—it was a vessel for the transmission of Buddhist knowledge, societal values, and community bonding. Historically, staging dramas persisted longer in Ladakh than the actual concept of theatre as we know it today, which never reached the same level of prominence. Over time, theatre in Ladakh began to diminish, overshadowed by other forms of entertainment and social engagement. Yet, there remains a strong cultural and historical connection that calls for its revival.

The legendary Drupthup Chenpo, Thang Tong Gyalpo, is credited with the development and spread of Tibetan theatre. His contributions to the art form are monumental, particularly through his introduction of Ache Lamo (a classical Tibetan opera), Maneypa (spiritual storytellers), and Tropa (clowns or comic performers). These genres not only flourished in Tibet but also made their way to Ladakh, where they thrived for a time before eventually fading into obscurity.

Post-independence evolution of theatre in Ladakh

After Independence, as theatre evolved outside Ladakh, the idea of staging Namthar (Buddha's hagiography) took root in the region. Namthar depicted thousands of significant

events from the life of Buddha, bringing together religious teachings and dramatic storytelling. The tradition of performing dances and dramas during Losar, such as Apo-Api, Lama-Jogi, Karokpa, and Pa-Timo, in traditional attire, traces back to the early theatre performances in Ladakh. These cultural performances hold deep significance.

The performances followed during Losar are symbolic and meaningful, which can be considered the theatre of Ladakh.

The Ladakh Theatre Organisation and its legacy

In 1995, recognizing the need to preserve and promote theatre, the Ladakh Theatre Organisation (LTO) was founded. In its early years, the LTO flourished, staging plays at both national and state-level theatre festivals. These performances received widespread acclaim, winning prizes and gaining recognition. LTO's members would often cover their own expenses to keep the organization running, with occasional contributions from the centre. Despite these challenges, the passion for theatre sustained their efforts.

In the 1990s, the LTO staged several thought-provoking plays, one of the most notable being Gyurja (meaning "Change"), which reflected the sweeping transformations Ladakh was undergoing in terms of language, lifestyle, and social norms. This play became a mirror to society, encouraging self-reflection on the rapid changes affecting Ladakhi identity. Audience reactions were mixed—some understood the deeper message of the play, while others did not fully grasp its significance. Nevertheless, it was essential for the youth to understand the shifts in their society and culture. In response, LTO conducted workshops and training sessions, focusing on moral education, which was traditionally gained at home but was becoming increasingly important to instill in young people through other mediums.

Challenges facing Ladakhi theatre today

Despite the early successes, LTO has faced significant challenges in recent years. Due to a lack of support from both the administration and the public, the organization is struggling to reclaim its position in society. Theatre is a powerful medium because it is performed and staged live, focusing on active social issues. But in Ladakh, it has not received the attention it needs from both the administration as well as the public.

Several years ago, theatre performances were a central part of every festival and celebration in Ladakh. LTO's plays were eagerly anticipated, drawing large crowds. Nangsa od bum Namthar during the Ladakh Festival, attracted so many people that some audience members left their shoes behind in the rush, and several were injured due to overcrowding. LTO also performed Silk Route, a play that ran for several days during one of the Ladakh Festivals, further showcasing the potential of theatre to engage and entertain the masses.

However, public interest in theatre has since waned. It's difficult to pinpoint exactly why the appreciation for theatre has diminished, but the lack of support and interest from both the administration and the public has led to its decline. Theatre acts as a mirror to society, reflecting it the way it is. Today, representatives and the public are educated enough to understand its importance—it is not playful or a mere fling. Theatre holds a purpose in society, displaying and transmitting the issues that exist.

Theatre as a tool for social awareness

Theatre is unique in its ability to bring together a large number of individuals to work collaboratively on a single production. Directing and staging a play requires input from actors, directors, stage designers, and many others. It is a collective effort that engages both the intellect and creativity of those involved. Despite this, theatre in Ladakh has struggled to receive the fi-

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Mental health matters: Why awareness and open dialogue are essential



By Ramesh Singh Rawat, Counsellor & Psychologist, JNV, Leh

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, the rapid changes in lifestyle have contributed to a surge in mental health issues. Mental health awareness has become a necessity for everyone. Observed annually on October 10, **World Mental Health Day** is a vital reminder of the importance of mental well-being. This day encourages individuals to recognize mental health challenges and raises awareness about the resources available for those in need. It also serves as a call to break down the stigma surrounding mental health problems, enabling people to seek help without fear or hesitation.

Mental health is impacted by various factors, including negative thoughts, anxiety, fear, stress, and overthinking. In the hustle and bustle of modern life, mental health often takes a back seat, which can lead to serious conditions such as depression. Alarmingly, there has been a growing number of cases involving serious mental health disorders, including **bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, dementia, and OCD**.

Neglecting mental health issues can have dangerous consequences. If someone feels mentally unwell or faces challenges, it is crucial to communicate openly with family members and friends. Early identification and timely treatment are essential for improving mental health outcomes. A holistic approach to mental well-being involves a balanced diet, mindfulness practices, yoga, regular exercise, pursuing hobbies, and ensuring adequate sleep—all of which contribute to enhanced physical and mental health.

Understanding the unique mental health challenges faced

by people living in high-altitude regions like Leh is critical. A recent study revealed that female students, in particular, suffer from mental health issues such as **anxiety, stress, overthinking, depression, panic attacks, and hallucinations**. Contributing factors include emotional vulnerability, social pressure, excessive use of smartphones and social media, parental expectations for academic success, poor time management, and substance abuse. Moreover, the psychological and physiological effects of living at high altitudes, including hypoxia, can also trigger anxiety and panic symptoms. However, the peaceful environment of mountainous and rural areas, coupled with physical activity and participation in community tasks, can have a positive impact on mental health. Parents play a crucial role in fostering a supportive and understanding environment for their children. By recognizing their children's psychological and emotional needs, parents can help them navigate challenges effectively. Building strong relationships and spending quality time with children can greatly improve their ability to cope with mental stress.

It is equally important for both parents and teachers to ensure that children do not develop feelings of fear, worthlessness, or self-loathing. While addressing mistakes is necessary, excessive criticism can damage a child's self-esteem. Encouraging self-confidence and providing emotional support can empower children to lead purposeful lives.

In conclusion, mental health should be treated with the same level of importance as physical health. We must work together to address mental health challenges, foster open conversations, and support one another. Only by doing so can we build a healthier, more resilient society.

SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

The one-step success mantra



There is nothing big that can be achieved in one big jump. We all know that, yet we do not go into the action part of it. One has to take small steps everyday so that there is no stop in the 'daily progression' towards one's target. As they say, one small step a day goes to make a definite and substantial progression towards one's goal.

To go for such a progression, one has to get ready to take certain steps that are crucial for carrying out the plans.

One has to have a clear mind and single-minded with a passion to do or die. A good and solid plan backed with hard work and consistency make the whole process simpler.

It does a great good to rise early in the morning and take at least an hour in one's daily essential routines like meditation, prayers and exercise. An 'early-morning wake-up' gives one many advantages. First, one is able to start the day in a good and positive way. Second, one has the time to plan for the day and see how best the objectives can be best carried out. Fourth, an early wake-up also gives one a head-start in building up a positive minds-set because everything around is fresh and calm to think of the good and the greater things of life.

And then nature has its best 'bloom' early in the morning and one who gets to share some moments in the morning glory gets a clear vision. One gets to do something better every day.

While on the route to one's target, one will come across many obstacles. As someone had said it so beautifully, the man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones. What a 'to-the-point' and inspiring saying! And, as the great philosopher, Confucius, had said: It does not matter how slow you go as long as you do not stop. All that we have said so far can be summed up with the saying that the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

Fortnightly News

In Conversation with Nusrat Fatima, Pencak-Silat Player

Interviewed by Stanzin Padma

Q. Congratulations on your selection for the World Championship! Tell us about yourself.

Firstly, thank you so much. My name is Nusrat Fatima, and I am a student at Islamia Public School and a resident of Murtsey Colony.

Q. Can you tell us about Pencak Silat and what motivated you to pursue it?

Pencak Silat is a relatively new sport in Ladakh, so many people here may not be familiar with it. It's an Indonesian martial art that was introduced in Ladakh by Madam Shainaz Parveen, and it has been played here for the past three years. Pencak Silat is a full-body sport involving kicking, punching, and grappling—essentially, it's a type of martial art. Competitions are held in various states like Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, and Odisha, but there are fewer participants from Ladakh compared to other regions.

The sport also emphasizes self-defense, which is particularly important for women.

I was inspired by my schoolmates, who performed this martial art so well, and our coach, Sir Rasul, who dedicated his time to teaching us. His guidance and the techniques he shared—especially for self-defense—sparked my interest. As I practiced, I realized how much more I could learn, which motivated me to pursue it further.

Q. Tell us about your experiences in previous matches. How do you prepare for competitions?

I've mostly competed in Leh, participating in district, state, and Khelo India events. In the district-level competition, I won a bronze medal, which motivated me to aim for more. I set my sights on winning silver and was able to achieve that in the Khelo India competition. After being selected from Khelo India, I traveled to Maharashtra, where I earned a bronze medal. Unfortunately, due to bad luck, I couldn't perform as well as I'd hoped. In another All-India Pencak Silat competition, also held in Maharashtra, I reached the finals but was defeated by an international player.

Later, the 8th Pencak Silat Championship was held in Leh, and we had a one-month training camp to prepare. Our routine was intense—we practiced from 4 a.m. to 6 a.m. every day, and the training was quite challenging. About 40 students from Leh participated, and 15 of us won medals. I was fortunate to win a gold medal. After that, I, along with other



gold medalists, went for trials in Srinagar, where I was selected for the World Championship.

Despite his busy schedule, our coach makes time to train us both in the mornings and evenings. We practice at 5 a.m. indoors and then again in the evening after school.

Q. What are your goals and expectations for the World Championship?

My primary goal is to bring a gold medal to Ladakh. With the training I've received from our coach, Sir Rasul, I feel confident that I have a strong chance of achieving this. However, the main challenge we face is the lack of financial support from the government. Competing at this level costs nearly 2 lakh rupees, and my family cannot afford such a high expense. I plan to request financial assistance from the government so that I can represent Ladakh at the World Championship.

Q. How do you handle setbacks or losses in competition?

Losing is a natural part of any game. After a loss, I focus on building my confidence and learning from the experience, so I can perform better next time. While everyone understands the happiness that comes with winning, the pain of losing teaches valuable lessons. It strengthens my resolve and gives me even more courage to aim for victory in the future.

Q. As a woman, what challenges do you face in this profession?

The main challenge I encounter is securing funding for my competitions. For my last tournament, I had to pay for my own travel to Srinagar, and I'm uncertain if I'll receive financial support for upcoming events. This puts a strain on my family, as they can't afford such high expenses, which also affects my studies. Fortunately, I receive tremendous support from my school, which allows me to take leave when needed. Madam Shainaz works hard to help secure funds, and thanks to our coach's dedication and support, I don't face many significant challenges.

Q. How do you balance Pencak Silat with other aspects of life?

Everyone has their own goals and aspirations, and for me, Pencak Silat has become a passion. Winning a gold medal has turned into my dream, especially with the sport becoming an Olympic event in 2026. I manage my time by studying late at

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“**In today's era, many people focus solely on academics, but I firmly believe that, alongside studies, there are numerous other aspects—such as sports and extracurricular activities—that deserve equal attention and importance.**”

...continues on page 6

Fortnight Highlights



The Department of EVS and English, Sankoo Campus, Government Degree College, Kargil organized a cleanliness drive to educate students about the importance of a clean environment.



A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between University of Ladakh and Himalayan Museum of Ladakh Culture and Heritage Garkon under Preservation of Aryan Culture and Educational Society UT Ladakh.



Mukul Beniwal, IAS assumed charge of Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Nubra on October 10, 2024.



Team India has made a remarkable mark in the world of ice short track speed skating by securing an impressive 33 medals, including 10 from the Union Territory of Ladakh, at the SEA TROPHY competition.



Tar Village recognized as one of the Best Tourism Villages of India 2024 in the Responsible Tourism Category. The award ceremony took place at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.



The Asmita Khelo India National Women's League/Ranking Judo Tournament held at the VKN Menon Indoor Stadium. Stanzin Deachen emerged victorious, claiming the 1st prize in this prestigious tournament.



District Police Kargil organised a district-level quiz and debate competition as part of the Civil Action Program. Students from various blocks and tehsils across Kargil participated in the event.



Union Minister for Textiles, Giriraj Singh paying tribute to martyrs of the 1999 Kargil War at Drass War Memorial.

Fortnightly News

In Conversation with Nusrat Fatima, Pencak-Silat Player

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night, and I'm very grateful for my family, who has been my strong supporters from the beginning.

Q. How does Pencak Silat serve as a self-defense method for women?

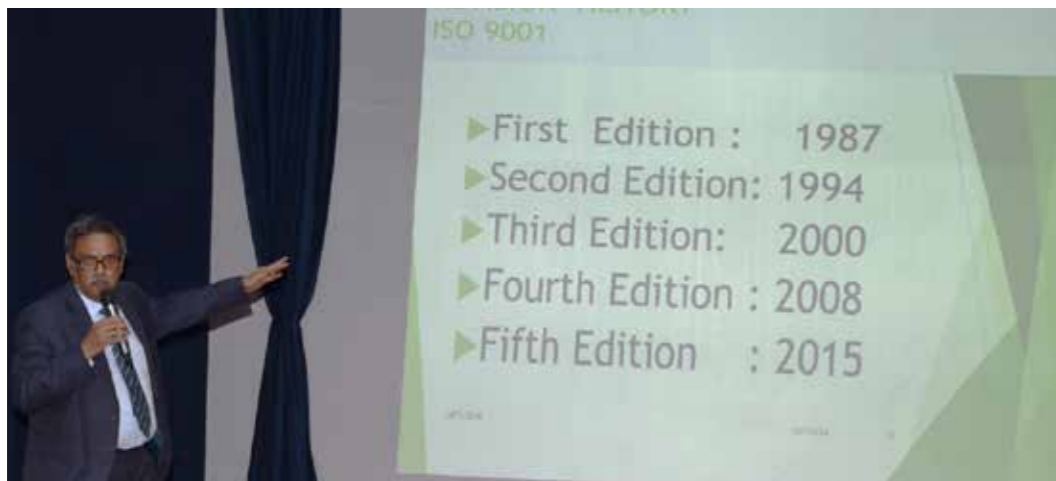
As I mentioned earlier, Pencak Silat is particularly important for women because it teaches effective self-defense techniques, including kicking and punching. In recent times, Ladakh has become less safe for women, with reports of incidents like rape. By learning this martial art, women can protect themselves against potential threats. The techniques involve grappling and takedowns, allowing individuals to defend themselves effectively, regardless of their size or age.

Participating in such sports empowers women and helps them avoid negative influences. Through Pencak Silat, they can gain confidence and skills that contribute to their safety and well-being.

Q. What suggestions would you like to give to upcoming athletes?

My advice to aspiring athletes is to take some time for themselves and steer clear of drugs, focusing instead on sports. Engaging in athletic pursuits can lead to personal growth and fulfillment. If you dedicate yourself to your goals, it will ultimately lead to great success.

ISO standards awareness programme held in Kargil by Police and BIS



During the awareness and facilitation program on ISO standards and quality assurance at the Syed Memorial Auditorium Hall in Kargil.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The District Police, in collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Northern Region, Chandigarh, organised an awareness and facilitation program on ISO standards and quality assurance at the Syed Memorial Auditorium Hall in Kargil on October 10.

The event featured Vishnu Gupta, former DDG of BIS, and Sahil Samdhan, a Young Professional from BIS's Northern Regional Office, Chandigarh, as resource persons. Senior Superintendent of Police, Kargil, Shree Ram R; Additional Superintendent of Police, Mujeeb ur Rehman, and representatives from various

government departments were present at the session.

The resource persons provided a detailed overview of the Quality Management System (ISO 9001), explaining its significance and benefits. BIS, the National Standards Body of India, develops and publishes Indian standards, implements conformity assessment schemes, recognizes and operates laboratories for conformity assessments, enforces hallmarking, advocates for consumer empowerment, conducts capacity-building programs, and represents India in international bodies like ISO and IEC.

ISO 9001 is a globally recognized standard for quality management that helps organizations across all sectors enhance performance, meet customer expectations, and demonstrate a commitment to quality. It outlines requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continuously improving a quality management system (QMS).

By implementing ISO 9001, organizations ensure effective processes and well-trained staff, enabling the consistent delivery of high-quality products and services.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh visits Kargil, highlights women entrepreneurship and livelihood projects



Union Minister for Textiles, Giriraj Singh interacting with Kargil's local entrepreneurs and SHGs.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Union Minister for Textiles, Giriraj Singh, visited Kargil on October 6, making stops at the Kargil headquarters, Drass Subdivision, and Heniskote. During his visit, he interacted with women entrepreneurs involved in the handloom sector, members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and various stakeholders.

The Minister engaged with Pashmina growers and artisans in Heniskote and Drass and paid tribute to the martyrs of the 1999 Kargil War at the Drass War Memorial.

During his interactions, he encouraged local entrepreneurs and SHGs, particularly in the development of the pashmina sector. He emphasized the Indian government's commitment to serving the people of Ladakh by bringing gover-

nance to their doorsteps.

Giriraj Singh noted significant improvements in Ladakh since its transition to a Union Territory, including enhanced water supply, road and telecom connectivity, and job creation.

Deputy Commissioner/CEO of LAHDC, Kargil, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse; Senior Superintendent of Police, Shree Ram R; District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Dr. Mohd Ismail; Assistant Director of Handloom, Dr. Kacho Niyazul Hassan; and other officials accompanied the Minister during the visit.

Speaking to women artisans, the Minister reiterated the Ministry's commitment to providing dedicated marketing spaces in Delhi and other major cities to showcase their

work. He also highlighted the RWANDA model, which focuses on expanding livelihoods through the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and increasing the population of pashmina-yielding sheep through improved sheep husbandry practices.

During the event, a woman entrepreneur and other stakeholders submitted a memorandum requesting additional handloom and handicraft training and protective shelters for livestock from brown bears.

The Minister also interacted with mushroom producers, expressing optimism about their progress. He urged officials to involve more women in mushroom cultivation and create clusters to boost production.

Expert Talk:

Preserving Ladakh's theatrical tradition: A call for action and awareness

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nancial and moral support it needs to thrive.

As Ladakh faces a host of contemporary issues—ranging from environmental challenges to cultural erosion—theatre can serve as a vital medium for raising awareness and sparking social change. It provides a platform for hidden talents to emerge and can inspire individuals to act for the benefit of society. In this way, theatre is more than just entertainment; it is an educational tool, informing and educating the unlettered while engaging the intellect and emotions of its audiences.

Preserving Ladakh's theatrical heritage

The preservation of theatre in Ladakh is crucial to maintaining the region's cultural and heritage identity. Ladakhis frequently lament the loss of cultural practices and traditional values, yet theatre offers a means to revive and preserve one of Ladakh's oldest traditions. If theatre is nurtured and developed, it can once again become a powerful force in Ladakh society, contributing to the cultural richness of future generations.

The administration and representatives in the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) have largely failed to uplift the condition of theatre in Ladakh. For theatre to survive, it requires significant support in terms of infrastructure, funding, and public awareness campaigns. Without this support, the art form risks being lost entirely.

The role of theatre in education

Parents in Ladakh often express concern over their children's involvement in unhealthy habits. Introducing theatre into the school curriculum could serve as a remedy, providing students with a constructive and educational outlet. Around the world, schools have successfully integrated 'Theatre in Education' programs, which not only help to develop performers but also encourage students to explore other professions and interests. Many schools, however, mistakenly equate theatre education with mere drama, overlooking the broader developmental benefits of theatre.

Theatre nurtures a child's mind, body, and soul, enhancing skills such as concentration, observation, perception, and emotional intelligence.

Addressing youth misconduct through theatre

Ladakh has long been known for its dignified and ethical culture, but in recent years, there has been a rise in youth misconduct. This is a serious issue that requires immediate attention. Religious organizations can play a pivotal role in addressing the root causes of these problems by collaborating with theatre practitioners. Together, they can stage performances that carry strong ethical messages, encouraging young people to reflect on their actions and make positive changes in their lives.

Kala Utsav in Kargil: EC Feroz encourages promotion of Ladakh's cultural talent



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Executive Councillor for Tourism, LAHDC Kargil, Kacho Mohd Feroz, attended the concluding ceremony of the UT-level Kala Utsav on October 9 at TFC Kargil.

The event was graced by Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Haji Mohd Hanifa Jaan; Director of the Sports Authority of India (SAI), Manjushree Dayanand; Chief Education Officer, Kargil; Principal DIET, and several renowned artists from Leh and Kargil.

In his address, EC Feroz congratulated the organiz-

ers for hosting the Kala Utsav in Kargil and emphasized the importance of education in enhancing students' skills and potential.

He praised the participants for their exceptional talent and encouraged efforts to take such programs to national and international platforms to showcase Ladakh's rich cultural heritage.

He also assured that the Hill Development Council, Kargil, would continue to support opportunities for students to nurture their abilities. EC Feroz requested MP Ladakh to allocate

financial assistance from the MPLAD scheme to promote art and culture across educational institutions in Ladakh.

Responding to the demand for a dedicated gallery for exhibitions in Kargil, he promised to engage with the Deputy Commissioner of Kargil to explore the possibility. He also assured full support from LAHDC in promoting such cultural initiatives and encouraged the media to amplify Ladakh's cultural richness.

MP Ladakh, Haji Mohd Hanifa Jaan, congratulated the students for their performances and expressed confidence in

Kargil's youth representing Ladakh at the national level. He urged them to seize every opportunity to develop their talents.

During the event, district topers from Leh and Kargil showcased six art forms: visual arts, drama, storytelling, folk dance, and vocal music.

Nodal Officer for Kala Utsav, Sajjad Agha, delivered the vote of thanks, stating that the event provided a valuable platform for students to express their creativity and hone their skills.

17 advocates become Ladakh's first Notary Public post-abrogation



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal, accompanied by Secretary of Law & Justice Shashi Kant Bhagat, distributed certificates to 17 advocates appointed as Notary Public for the Union Territory of Ladakh under the Notaries Act, 1952.

This event marked the certification of Ladakh's first batch of Notary Public

since the region became a Union Territory. The ceremony took place at the Civil Secretariat in Leh on October 7.

During the event, Advisor Ladakh commended the contributions of the newly appointed Notaries and extended his best wishes for their future endeavors.

NOTICE

No JC812646Y Rank SUB Dorjay Angchuk at present R/o Qtr No.108, Sector D, Chandi Mandir Cantt. Panchkula Haryana has claimed that his wife namely Deachen Yangdol has been wrongly entered as Dechean Yangdol instead of Deachen Yangdol and also her Date of Birth 10-04-1985 has been wrongly entered as 10-04-1986 instead of 10-04-1985 in the Army record and produced an affidavit duly verified by Notary public Panchkula 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.

Fortnightly News

Hill Council and Live to Love International discuss climate action initiatives in Ladakh



Delegation from Live to Love International with CEC Tashi Gyalson.
Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Delegation from Live to Love International discussed various initiatives aimed at addressing climate change in the region with CEC Tashi Gyalson on October 7.

The delegation included Carrie Lee (Advisor), Rigzin Angmo (On ground Lead, Leh), Simran Gulati (Communications Officer), Tashi Angmo (Finance), Padma Tashi (Director, Live to Love India), and Mahima Shiva (Program Lead).

The discussion focused on raising awareness about climate change and exploring effective mea-

sures to mitigate its impact on Ladakh's unique environment.

CEC Tashi Gyalson highlighted various initiatives taken by LAHDC which included significant plantation drive in locations such as Chushul, Kuyul, Takmachik, and Nyoma. He emphasized the council efforts to support irrigation projects and climate resilience measures which includes hosting the Climate Cup and the Climate 11 Summit, alongside providing subsidies and support for electric vehicles.

Carrie Lee proposed that

Ladakh could serve as a model for climate change initiatives, advocating for the need to attract more experts and identify a local ambassador to represent Ladakh on international platforms.

The meeting highlighted a shared commitment to fostering sustainable development in Ladakh while enhancing community awareness about climate change. Both LAHDC and Live to Love International look forward to collaborating on future projects that promote environmental sustainability in the region.

WWF India and Kargil Wildlife Division organise rally to raise awareness on conservation



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The Wildlife Protection Division Kargil, in collaboration with WWF India, organized a rally on wildlife conservation on October 9. Students of Mutahhary Public School, Suru Valley School, and Jaffaria Academy of Modern Education participated.

Themed "Wildlife Conservation Through Co-Existence," the rally saw students march from Hussaini Park to Circular Road, culminating at the

Cultural Academy. Raza Ali Abidi, Wildlife Warden and Assistant Director of DIPR Kargil, highlighted the importance of wildlife conservation and community involvement, stating, "Our wildlife is an integral part of our heritage, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure its protection."

The event also featured a painting competition, where students showcased their artistic talents

and envisioned a world where humans and wildlife coexist harmoniously. Awards were presented to participants in recognition of their creativity and commitment.

The rally united students, educators, and community members in raising awareness about wildlife conservation, emphasizing the need to preserve the environment for future generations.

Integrated Communication Programme in Kargil aims to educate public on key initiatives



During the Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme at Syed Mehdi Memorial Hall, Kargil.
Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Chairman/CEC of LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun, attended the Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme held at Syed Mehdi Memorial Hall, Kargil, on October 8.

Organised by the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the event focused on Poshan Abhiyaan, Mission LiFE, and the New Criminal Laws - 2023. The program was attended by Gulam Abass, Director of CBC Jammu & Kashmir, Field Publicity Officer Shahid Lone, FPO Naseer Ahmad Rathar, along with students from various schools, ASHA workers, and community members.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Akhoun praised the CBC for organizing the three-day event, emphasizing its role in educating the public about various government initiatives. He highlighted the Council's efforts to improve education through the establishment of Council Model Schools, describing them as the pride of society. He also mentioned the availability of Boys' and Girls' Hostels in Srinagar and Jammu and the tradition of honoring meritorious students

from Kargil during Independence and Republic Day celebrations.

Dr. Akhoun stressed the importance of education, stating that students in Kargil have a bright future. He discussed the Council's efforts over the past five years to address the recruitment gap for gazetted officers by coordinating with the Central and UT-level governments to establish a separate Public Service Commission. Additionally, he expressed optimism about the completion of the Zojila Tunnel project by the end of 2025, following his recent visit to its East and West Portals.

The CEC announced plans for the Hill Council, in collaboration with the MP Ladakh, to sponsor 8-10 meritorious students from Kargil for UPSC coaching in Delhi after a proper selection process. He encouraged students to prioritize both academic and physical activities.

Dr. Akhoun concluded by thanking the CBC and Kargil's media outlets for their proactive role in disseminating information and raising awareness. Earlier, the Director of CBC, J&K, and Ladakh provided an overview of the program and wel-

Kargil orphanage children participate in 'Clean India, Green India' drawing competition



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The District Child Protection Unit, Kargil, organized an awareness program combined with a drawing competition on the theme "Clean India, Green India" at Az-Zahra Orphanage, Kargil on October 10, under the Mission Vatsalya Scheme.

The Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee, Kargil, addressed issues related to child rights, highlighting concerns under the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection) Act, 2015. The chairperson stressed the importance of protecting children's rights and promoting a clean and green

environment for their overall well-being.

The Protection Officer of Non-Institutional Care from the District Child Protection Unit underscored the significance of child protection, care, and development. Additionally, a supervisor from the District Drugs De-addiction Centre, Kargil, highlighted the dangers of drug abuse and its impact on young lives.

The Legal cum Probation Officer from the District Child Protection Unit discussed children's legal rights under the Constitution and within the Mission Vatsalya framework.

Children from Az-Zahra Orphanage actively participated in the event by creating drawings and paintings on the theme "Clean India, Green India," showcasing their creativity and understanding of environmental issues.

The program was attended by staff from the Child Welfare Committee, District Child Protection Unit, Child Helpline, District Drugs De-addiction Centre, and the Az-Zahra Orphanage. The event aimed to raise awareness about child rights, promote healthy habits, and encourage children's creativity.

L-G attends concluding ceremony of 15-day long Swachhata Hi Seva 2024

Inaugurates WASH facility and honors safai mitras



L-G along with other officials felicitating Safai Mitras for their services.
Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), attended the closing ceremony of the 15-day Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign, themed 'Swabhav Swachhata, Sanskaar Swachhata', at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on October 2. During the event, the L-G inaugurated WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities for the sanitation workers of the Municipal Committee Leh (MC Leh) at the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Plant in Leh. He also felicitated two Safai Mitras, Ghulam Hadi and Deachen Yangzes, with cheques of Rs 20,000 each in recognition of their services.

In honor of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries, the L-G paid floral tributes and reflected on their contributions to the nation. He emphasized the importance of remembering our ancestors, acknowledging their efforts in guiding us on the path of righteousness. The L-G praised Mahatma Gandhi's commitment to non-violence and truth, specifically highlighting his role in the Salt Satyagraha, which was instrumental in India's fight for independence.

He urged that cleanliness, or Swachhata, should become a way of life and stressed the need to instill these values in young children.

The L-G expressed his admiration for the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign, calling it a milestone for India's cleanliness movement. He commended Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his visionary initiatives that aim to advance the nation's development. The L-G appealed to the public to work together, involving children in supporting sanitation workers to keep their surroundings clean. He also encouraged the staff at the Secretariat to reduce pollution by reusing plastics and tetra packs.

Remembering Lal Bahadur Shastri, who served as India's Prime Minister from 1964 to 1966, the L-G lauded his leadership and his famous slogan, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan", which rallied the nation during the 1965 India-Pakistan war.

During the event, Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal provided an overview of the 14-day Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign, which began on September 17, 2024. He acknowledged

the Safai Karamcharis of the Leh and Kargil Municipal Committees as vital contributors to keeping the region clean. He also highlighted health check-ups and the provision of protective gear for the sanitation workers as part of their welfare efforts.

Principal Secretary for Housing and Urban Development, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS, informed the gathering that the campaign kicked off with a Swachhata Pledge at the Leh Main Market on September 17. He outlined the key activities during the 15-day campaign, which included Mega Cleanliness Drives by the Municipal Committees and the Rural Development Department across Ladakh. Other activities included food stalls, sports events, plantation drives, workshops, a Waste to Art exhibition, and the cleaning of water bodies.

Among those present at the event were First Lady Neelam Mishra, Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal, Principal Secretary Sanjeev Khirwar, Director of Urban Local Bodies Moses Kunzang, Executive Officer of MC Leh Stanzin Rabgais, officials, sanitation workers, and staff from the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat and Raj Niwas.

CEC Kargil inspects Zojila tunnel progress, commends efforts of NHIDCL and MEIL teams



CEC of the LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun along with team during their visit to Zojila Tunnel.
Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) of the LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoun, visited the Zojila Tunnel's Western Portal at Neelagarh-Baltal and the Eastern Portal on October 7 to assess the progress of this strategic infrastructure project.

Dr. Akhoun was accompanied by team leader Mohd Yousuf, Resident Engineer (RE) Tunnels, Senior Manager of the Zojila Tunnel Project Habibullah, Syed Burhan, and other key members of the project team.

During the visit, officials briefed the CEC on the tunnel's construction progress, reporting that 4.6 km had been completed from the Eastern Portal and 5.15 km from the Western Portal, bringing the total completed length to 9.83 km out of the planned 13.15 km.

Dr. Akhoun expressed satisfaction with the pace of construction and the effective use of machinery, commending the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and Megha Engineering & Infrastructures Ltd. (MEIL) for their hard

work. He recognized the dedication of everyone involved, from senior officers to on-ground workers.

The CEC also expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister of India, the Government of India, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh for their support in realizing this long-awaited project for the people of Ladakh.

Calling the Zojila Tunnel the "lifeline of Ladakh," Dr. Akhoun highlighted the transformative impact it will have, especially for Kargil, ensuring year-round access to essential commodities and medical facilities, even during harsh winters.

He also shared his hope that both portals would be connected by 2025, with emergency services, including ambulance access, expected to be operational soon.

Dr. Akhoun extended his appreciation to the NHIDCL and MEIL teams, praising their commitment and dedication to making this critical project a reality.

NOTICE

The General public is hereby informed that the constitution of M/S RAJAT FLOUR MILLS Phyang Leh registered with DIC Leh under permanent registration No 07060270 having UDYAM registration No UDYAM-JK-19-0003841 is hereby changed by virtue of duly constituted partnership-cum-dissolution deed dated 20th August 2017 wherein two partners namely 1 Mr Aridaman Singh S/o Sh Ripudaman Singh & 2 Rajat Mahajan S/O Sh Raj Kumar Gupta who were having a share of 20% each have retired and Sh kali das Sharma S/o Sh Tara Chand has joined the partnership business. The new share holding pattern will be as follows

- 1 Sh Raj Kumar Gupta 51%
- 2 Sh Kali das Sharma 49%

Any person having any objection in the said change of constitution may approach the General Manager Districh Industries Leh within a period of 15 Days from the publication of this notice.

Raj Kumar Gupta
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Whereas, Sonam Angchuk S/o Palap Dorjey R/o Nyoma, Leh UT Ladakh has claimed that his name Sonam Angchuk has been wrongly entered as Sonam Angchok instead of Sonam Angchuk in the Driving Licence bearing No. JK-1020130006796 and is applying for necessary correction. Hence the notice is hereby served through press to file objection if any in this office, Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Leh, Ladakh within 7 days from the date of publication.

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