

# REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



**In Conversation with**  
Ven. Konchok Tsepel, Nominated  
Councillor for Sangha, LAHDC Leh.

**Expert Talk:**  
Ice hockey and winter sports in Ladakh

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## Chumathang Hot Spring: Unlocking the potential of Ladakh's natural treasure



Chumathang hot spring area.

Stanzin Dasal

**CHUMATHANG:** Ladakh is home to a variety of hot springs, celebrated for their natural beauty and medicinal properties. Among them, the Chumathang Hot Springs, located alongside the Indus River, stand out as one of the region's most promising and significant attractions. Renowned for their therapeutic benefits, these hot springs have the potential to become a major wellness destination.

However, over the years, the area surrounding the Chumathang Hot Springs has fallen into disrepair, plagued by encroachments, poor hygiene, and inadequate infrastructure. The springs, once surrounded by open and pristine landscapes, are now encroached upon by unplanned infrastructure.

An elderly resident of Chumathang, Lundup Gyatso shared his concerns about the overdevelopment of the area. "Earlier, the hot spring

area was open and free from buildings, but now it's cluttered with infrastructure everywhere," he said. "Hygiene is another persistent issue. Being close to the road, the springs attract passersby who often misuse the area, washing vehicles and leaving trash behind. Despite the efforts of the local women's association, which organizes weekly cleanliness drives, maintaining the site has become an uphill battle", he added.

"We've been demanding proper infrastructure to attract more tourists and make the site sustainable," said a local representative.

Recognizing the untapped potential of the site, the Union Territory administration has unveiled an ambitious plan to transform Chumathang into a world-class wellness and tourist destination. With an estimated budget of ₹100 crore, the development will span 95 kanals of land and

include state-of-the-art facilities. Key features of the proposed development include a hydrotherapy center, a Sowa Rigpa center (focusing on traditional Tibetan medicine), a local Amchi station, meditation and yoga pavilions, and spaces for handicrafts, herbal products and culinary experiences, to support local livelihoods and cultural preservation, recreational spaces such as an open-air theater and organic gardens.

Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, highlighted the rare natural phenomenon that makes Chumathang special: the convergence of boiling hot spring water and the cold flow of the Indus River, side by side. "This is an incredibly unique site, not just in Ladakh but across the world. It has immense potential for both tourism and could attract wellness seekers from all over," said Dr. Kotwal.

*...continues on page 2*

## Lokhor-Gi-rGaston: Reviving Ladakh's traditional Losar celebrations

Stanzin Padma

**LEH:** The Lokhor-Gi-rGaston festival, held from December 22 in Leh, brought together the vibrant cultural traditions of Ladakh with great enthusiasm and zeal. Organised by the Ladakh Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (LAACL), in collaboration with the Tourism Department, LAHDC, UT Administration, and local tourism stakeholders, this event was a celebration of Ladakh's unique heritage and rich cultural rituals.

The festival, which aimed to revive the age-old traditions of Losar, attracted a wide audience, with the Chief Guest Adv. Tashi Gyalsen, CEC of LAHDC, along with dignitaries from various walks of life, including the LBA President, members of religious organizations, ALGA, ALTOA, and local community leaders on inaugural day.

Adv. Tashi Gyalsen, in his address, highlighted the importance of preserving Ladakh's cultural legacy. He remarked that the Lokhor-Gi-rGaston was more than just a festival—it was a mission to revive and safeguard the traditions and rituals of Losar for future generations. He stressed that such events are crucial in protecting the identity of Ladakh and ensuring that its customs continue to thrive.

Tsewang Paljor, Deputy Secretary, Culture Academy, Leh stated that the festival was a welcome change, a long-awaited celebration aimed at bringing prosperity and happiness to the people of Ladakh. Reflecting on the significance of the occasion, he noted that the



event provided an opportunity to usher in a year full of good fortune and growth.

The opening ceremony featured the villagers of Leh-Phu-do, who presented traditional Losar rituals, setting the tone for the entire festival. Their vibrant and colorful dances were a visual feast, reminding everyone of the deep-rooted cultural richness of the region.

One of the most touching aspects of the event was the collaborative spirit that emerged, with various villages coming together to showcase their own unique Losar rituals. Rigzin Dorjay, Vice President of LBA, spoke about the diverse cultural and religious observances across Ladakh. He emphasized that Losar, Galden Namchot, and Christmas were all celebrated in close proximity, each carrying its own significance.

Acknowledging the efforts of the CEC, Rigzin expressed gratitude for the initiative to showcase the rich and varied traditions of different villages at the Eco Park, reiterating that the event was essential

for preserving Ladakh's cultural heritage.

Ven Chimba from Culture Academy said that the Lokhor-Gi-rGaston marked the beginning of a larger celebration that brings together the diverse traditions of the region. "Villages across Ladakh have their own special rituals for Losar. Many of these traditions are unknown to the wider public, which is why this festival brings together people from different areas to share their customs," he explained.

Villages such as Leh-Phu-do, Choglamsar, Hemis, Shukpachan, Wanla, Basgo, Matho, and Chuchot participated, each performing their traditional rituals like Apo Api, Skintsas, and Lama Jugi.

Through Lokhor-Gi-rGaston, Ladakh reaffirmed its commitment to preserving its heritage and offering a cultural experience that transcends the seasons, inviting people to witness the magic of the region, even in its coldest months.

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**REACH LADAKH BULLETIN**

Owner, Publisher & Printer: Tundup Dorjey

Editor: Stanzin Dasal

Reporters: Nenzes Chodon, Stanzin Padma

Sales & Marketing: Tsering Morup  
 Contact: +91 9469451102

Designer: Stanzin Rabgyas (CAGO)

Published at: Reach Ladakh, Skara Yokma, Airport Road, near Councillor Quarter  
 Contact: +91 9858394403, +91 8899418322

Printed at: Ala Printing Press  
 3636 Katra Dina Baig  
 Lal Quan Delhi -110006

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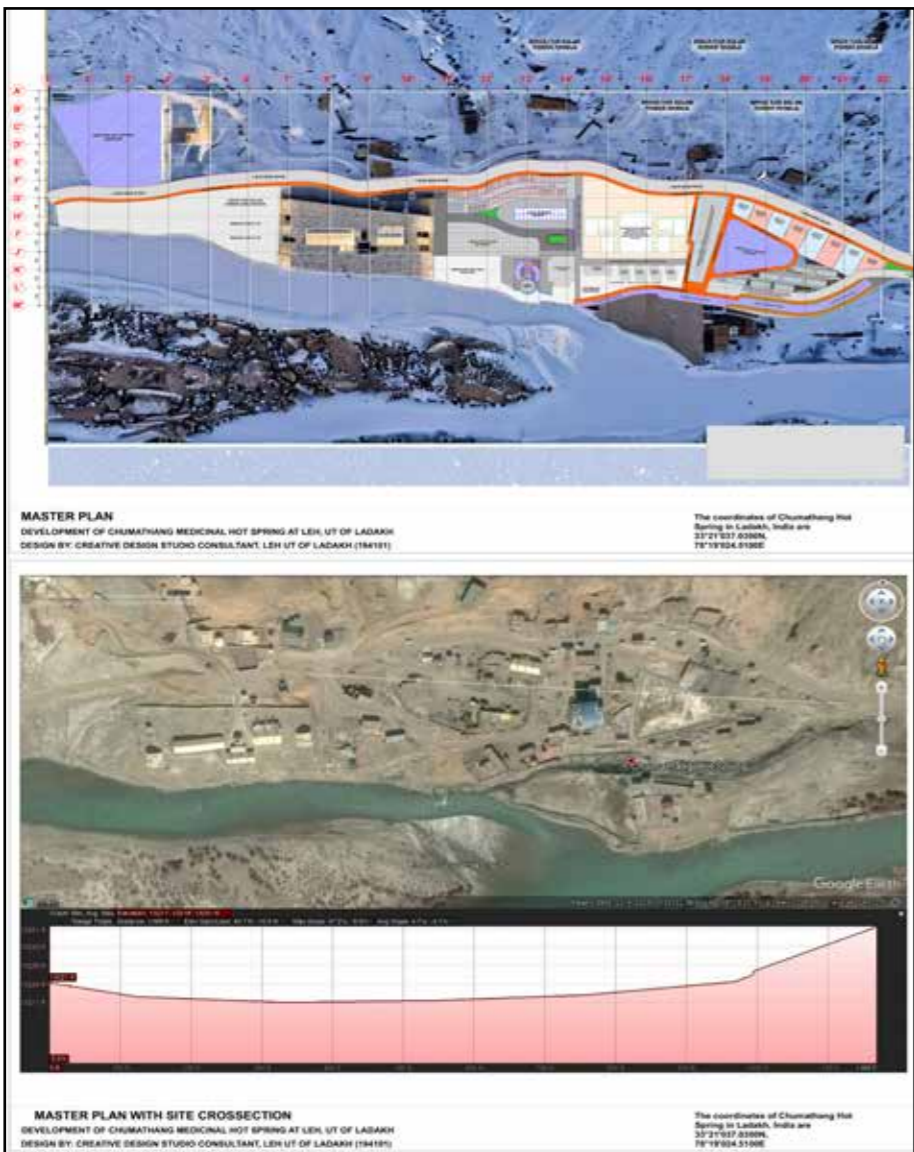
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## Fortnightly News

### Chumathang Hot Springs: Unlocking the potential of Ladakh's natural treasure

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UT administration's master plan for Chumathang hot spring development.

Dr. Kotwal highlighted the medicinal properties of the hot springs, which have long been used to treat skin conditions and other ailments. The new plans aim to capitalize on this potential by introducing modern hydrotherapy facilities in conjunction with traditional healing methods like Sowa Rigpa.

"The focus is to position Chumathang as a premier wellness destination while preserving its cultural and natural heritage," he added.

Despite the grand vision, challenges remain. Out of the 95 kanals designated for development, 60 kanals are currently under unauthorized occupation. Dr. Kotwal pointed out that these encroachments were enabled by previous revenue department officials.

"The fault lies with those who encouraged this situation, but we are committed to resolving it without imposing decisions against the will of the people," he assured.

However, the administration is keen to ensure that the development plan is implemented with the full cooperation of the local community. "We will not proceed without the will and support of the people,"

Addressing concerns about the impact on local livelihoods, Dr. Kotwal emphasized that small business in the hot spring area, such as shops and restaurants, would not be displaced. "A proper complex will be built to accommodate these businesses, ensuring that the community continues to benefit from the site's development," he said.

Kunzes Dolma, a geothermal energy consultant, emphasized the need for sustainable planning in the developmental initiatives for Chumathang. She pointed out that the hot spring eruptions in the area are not confined to a single location but emerges from multiple spots. "Therefore, constructing more cemented structures such as

pavements and buildings should be avoided," she said. Dolma stressed that the development or beautification projects must be executed carefully, ensuring that the natural space remains undisturbed.

Chumathang Hot Springs are more than just a tourist attraction—they are a testament to the healing power of nature and the rich cultural heritage of Ladakh. With careful planning and the involvement of the local community, this natural treasure could emerge as a beacon of wellness tourism, drawing visitors from near and far.

For now, the hot springs continue to bubble quietly along the Indus, carrying with them the hope of renewal. With the right blend of vision, effort, and care, Chumathang's best days may yet lie ahead—a future where its therapeutic waters heal not just bodies, but the community and environment that surround them.

### Chadar Trek 2024 to begin on January 7

Key stakeholders discuss logistics for Chadar Trek



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson chaired a review meeting with key stakeholders on December 21 at the Council Office to finalize preparations for the upcoming Chadar Trek 2024.

After detailed discussions, it was decided that the Chadar Trek will officially begin on January 7, 2024. CEC Gyalson emphasized the need for close coordination among departments to ensure smooth opera-

tions and a safe experience for trekkers. He directed all stakeholders to provide the necessary resources and support systems to facilitate the event successfully.

The meeting was attended by ADC Ghulam Mohd, General Secretary Nurboo Angchuk, CMO Leh, Presidents of LATTA, ALGHA, and ALTOA, the Vice President of the Ladakh Winter Sports Club, Dy. Superintendents of UTRF and Hq Leh, and other officials.

### Three-day "Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi" training program kicks off in Leh



Deputy Chairman, Tsering Angchok distributing cell phones to Anganwadi workers to enhance the "Poshan Tracker" system.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A three-day refresher training program on the "Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi" initiative was inaugurated on December 26 at the DC Conference Hall in Leh. The training was organized

by the Social & Tribal Welfare Department, UT Ladakh, in collaboration with the 17000 ft Foundation.

Deputy Chairman LAHDC Leh, Tsering Ang-

chok, graced the event as the Chief Guest. Attendees included Director of Social and Tribal Welfare, Tashi Dolma (JKAS); District Programme Officer ICDS, A.G. Zargar (JKAS); Director of 17000 ft Foundation, Sonam Dawa; and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs), Supervisors, and Anganwadi workers.

Director of Social and Tribal Welfare, Tashi Dolma, highlighted the significance of the "Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi" training for Anganwadi workers. She noted that while Anganwadi workers are proficient in the "Poshan" (nutrition) aspect, there is a need to strengthen their knowledge in the "Padhai" (education) component. To

### Tourism stakeholders raises alarm over decline in tourism and lack of promotion in Ladakh



During the press conference of Ladakh Tourist Trade Alliance (LTTA).

Nenzen Chodon

**LEH:** Since Ladakh opened its doors to tourism in 1974, the region has witnessed a significant increase in tourist arrivals, drawing visitors from across the globe, along with a growing number of domestic travelers. However, the Ladakh Tourist Trade Alliance (LTTA), comprising key stakeholders in the tourism industry such as ALTOA, ALHGA, Taxi Union, Tempo Union, and Bikers Union, held a joint press conference on December 21 to express concerns over the declining fortunes of Ladakh's top revenue-generating sector.

PT Kunzang, Chairman of LTTA, voiced frustration on behalf of the tourism stakeholders, pointing to a lack of effort in promoting Ladakh as a tourist destination. He noted that marketing efforts have been insufficient, and events aimed at tourism promotion have seen a steady

decline in recent years.

In previous years, stakeholders were provided opportunities to represent and promote Ladakh at prominent travel events such as the Outbound Travel Mart in Mumbai and South Asia's Travel and Tourism Exchange in Delhi. However, Kunzang expressed disappointment as both events have been canceled, depriving Ladakh of participation and limiting exposure in these vital platforms. "This is a major setback for tourism in Ladakh," he said.

While UT Ladakh's initiatives like the Winter Conclave and Ladakh Literature Festival have previously attracted tourists, stakeholders have expressed concern that these efforts are no longer being pursued with the same vigor. They also lament the

lack of new destinations, innovative initiatives, and promotional platforms, pointing out that

the tourism department has yet to introduce fresh initiatives or support for the sector.

The consequences of this neglect are already apparent. According to stakeholders, the number of tourists visiting Ladakh has sharply decreased from 525,374 in 2023 to just 364,161 in 2024. Many hotels and camps have had to close their businesses earlier than usual, and if the current trend continues, they fear that the entire tourism service industry could collapse. Despite the drastic decline, the tourism department has failed to initiate any review meetings with stakeholders to address the issue, Kunzang added.

With over 50% of Ladakh's population dependent on tourism, this downturn has become a significant concern for the region. Many locals, having entered the tourism sector as a reliable source of income, now face an uncertain future. Stakeholders highlighted that neighboring regions like Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir-Srinagar have seen an increase in tourism, while Ladakh has experienced a 40% reduction in footfall.

To rectify the situation, LTTA members called for immediate action. They emphasized the need for renewed promotional efforts, citing the success of previous delegations sponsored by LAHDC Leh to countries like Vietnam and Thailand, which resulted in a surge in visitors from

these regions.

Stakeholders warned that if tourism is neglected further, the industry in Ladakh could collapse entirely. Those with loans or investments in tourism-related businesses could struggle to repay them, leading to widespread financial difficulties. The LTTA appealed for the revival of travel exchanges like OTM, WTM, and SATTE, alongside fresh promotional activities and the publication of an updated tourism calendar.

The LTTA's message was clear: without prompt and focused intervention, Ladakh's tourism industry could face irreversible damage.

The LTTA's message was clear: without prompt and focused intervention, Ladakh's tourism industry could face irreversible damage.

### 10,000 new M-PACS, Dairy, and Fisheries Cooperative Societies inaugurated nationwide



During the inauguration of 10,000 newly registered Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), Dairy, and Fisheries Cooperative Societies across the country.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated 10,000 newly registered Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), Dairy, and Fisheries Cooperative Societies across the country on December 25. To mark the occasion, a district-level program was organized at the Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies' conference hall in Leh, with Stanzin Choshpel, Executive Councilor of LAHDC Leh, presiding as the chief guest.

The event was attended by the District Development Manager (DDM) NABARD Leh, Managing Director of UT Dairy Federation, along with

presidents, secretaries, and members of various cooperative societies, including PACS, Marketing Cooperative Societies, and Consumer Cooperative Societies, as well as officials from the Cooperative Department, Leh.

In his address, Stanzin Choshpel emphasized the need to strengthen the cooperative sector in Leh district and assured stakeholders of LAHDC Leh's full support. He commended the diverse activities and services offered by cooperative societies, particularly in marketing agricultural, horticultural, and livestock products under the guidance of the Cooperative Department.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks by District Audit Officer Skarma Tashi, while Auditor Rigzin Angchok hosted the proceedings.

Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies, Leh, Dr. Mohd Abass, presented an overview of initiatives introduced by the Ministry of Cooperation and schemes by the UT Administration and LAHDC Leh aimed at bolstering the cooperative sector. A detailed Power-Point presentation on the computerization of PACS and updates on onboarding approved PACS was shared with the participants.

Tsewang Dorjey, DDM NABARD, highlighted the significance of PACS computerization and the support provided by NABARD through grants to enable cooperative societies to undertake business activities.

Managing Director of Ladakh Milk Federation, Manoj Solenki, showcased the federation's achievements in milk procurement, processing, and marketing. He also highlighted the successful commissioning of a milk pasteurization plant at Agling, a collaborative initiative of the Cooperative Department and Animal Husbandry Department, Leh.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks by District Audit Officer Skarma Tashi, while Auditor Rigzin Angchok hosted the proceedings.

### Ladakh's SIDCO signs landmark loan agreements for empowerment of minorities and disabled persons



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** In a major step towards promoting employment and self-reliance among Minorities, Backward Classes, and Persons with Disabilities in Ladakh, the Sindhu Infrastructure Development Corporation (SIDCO) signed multiple General Loan Agreements (GLA) and a Government Revolving Guarantee worth ₹10 crore with the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), ₹5 crore with the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC), and ₹5 crore with the National Divyangyan Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC), a Government of India enterprise.

The agreements were signed in the presence of Dr. Abha Rani Singh, IRS, Chairman and Managing Director of NMDFC; Rajan Sehgal, IFOs, Managing Director of NBCFDC; R.K. Mishra, General Manager/CS of NDFDC; and Bhupesh Chaudhary, IAS, Managing Director of SIDCO. This landmark partnership aims to implement Employment Generation Schemes across Ladakh, providing interest-subsidized loans at concessional rates to empower

Minorities, Backward Classes, and Persons with Disabilities. The initiative is designed to help individuals transition from being job seekers to job creators, enabling them to become self-reliant and contributing members of society.

The agreements focus on uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the targeted population by enhancing their income through support in key sectors such as Transport, Tourism, Agriculture, Service Industry, and Education.

This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to fostering sustainable development and enhancing opportunities for Minorities, Backward Classes, and Persons with Disabilities in Ladakh. By addressing financial barriers and encouraging entrepreneurship, the initiative aims to unlock the potential of Ladakh's communities and contribute to the region's economic growth and prosperity.

Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS, to convene a meeting with BSNL and IT officials to expedite the 4G saturation project and improve connectivity in remote areas.



## Fortnightly News

### EC Tashi Namgyal Yakzee reviews border grazing facilities and interacts with nomads



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Executive Councilor Tashi Namgyal Yakzee conducted an extensive tour of the border areas on December 24 to review winter grazing facilities and engage with herders from Dungti, Koyul, Nyoma, Mudh, Nidar, and Tsaga.

Accompanying him were Councilor Nyoma Ishey Spalzung, District Sheep Husbandry Officer Dr. Tsewang Murup, and officials from the Sheep Husbandry Department, Nyoma. The team visited the

the leadership of the Prime Minister.

As part of the visit, EC Yakzee traveled to remote grazing sites in Lekha Nyonpo and Dookbuk, situated along the extreme border. There, he met with personnel from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and commended the harmonious relationship between the ITBP jawans and the civilian nomadic community.

Kakjung area in Tumtsele to assess conditions on the ground.

EC Yakzee inquired about winter grazing practices, livestock management, and the overall well-being of the border communities. Villagers expressed satisfaction with recent developmental initiatives implemented by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, the Union Territory Administration, and the Government of India under

In a gesture of support for the nomads, EC Yakzee distributed Hill Council-subsidized livestock feed at Kakjung, reaffirming LAHDC Leh's commitment to the welfare and livelihood of the region's nomadic population.

The visit underscores LAHDC Leh's ongoing efforts to ensure development, security, and prosperity for border communities while fostering strong bonds between civilians and security forces.

### Leh district marks Good Governance Week with district-level workshop



During the district-level workshop to commemorate Good Governance Week.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** A district-level workshop was held at the Conference Hall of the DC Office in Leh on December 23 to commemorate Good Governance Week. The event was graced by Deputy Commissioner Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve, who attended as the Chief Guest.

During the workshop, Heads of Departments presented their achievements and activities carried out during Good Governance Week. This included updates on various camps organized at

the village, block, tehsil, sub-division, and district levels, highlighting services provided to the public and grievances addressed.

In his address, DC Leh emphasized the significance of Good Governance Week and underscored the importance of continuous public service throughout the year. He stressed the need for delivering services directly to the people, eliminating the necessity for them to travel long distances. DC Leh also highlighted the

role of online services and announced plans to extend 4G connectivity to every village in the district by next year. Additionally, he urged public servants to remain grounded and humble in their dedication to meeting the needs of the community.

Good Governance Week, initiated by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, is celebrated nationwide to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

### Sustainable livelihoods: Handloom training benefits 58 women in Changthang



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGYAM:** A one-month intensive handloom training program under the Darwin Initiative successfully concluded on December 20 in Kargyam.

Organized by WWF-India in collaboration with Charkha Ladakh Phyang, the training witnessed enthusiastic participation from 58 women representing the villages of Sato, Barma, and Khera Pullu.

This initiative marks another milestone in WWF-India's livelihood development efforts in Changthang. Similar training programs have been conducted in ten other villages, including Hanley (Pungok and Buk-Shado), Nyoma, Chumathang, Angkung, Phulak, and Tsokar. Over the course of the training, participants crafted an impressive collection of 70 items, including shawls, stoles, and mufflers, high-

lighting their growing skills and dedication.

The closing ceremony was graced by dignitaries, including Ex-Executive Councilor and Councilor of the Chushul Constituency, Konchok Stanzin; Nominated Councilor Venerable Konchok Tsephel; Senior Programme Officer, WWF-India, Rigzin Dawa; Nambardar of Kargyam, Thinles Angchuk; and Ex-BDC Chairman, Konchok Phuntsog. Master trainers Madam Thinley Gyamo, Madam Chamba Angmo, and Madam Rigzin Spaldon were also present. Community members and the women beneficiaries joined the celebrations, showcasing their achievements with pride.

The training aimed to empower local women by providing alternative livelihood opportunities while fostering leadership skills and a deeper con-

nection to environmental and wildlife conservation. Participants expressed gratitude for the initiative, which not only enhanced their income potential but also inspired them to take active roles as stewards of Ladakh's delicate ecosystem.

Speaking at the event, Councilor Konchok Stanzin emphasized the significance of such initiatives in promoting sustainable livelihoods and reinforcing conservation efforts. He commended the women for their dedication and creativity.

WWF-India reiterated its commitment to supporting Changthang communities through innovative programs that align with conservation goals. This training stands as a testament to the resilience and talent of the women of Kargyam and the collaborative efforts of stakeholders to build a sustainable future for Ladakh's rangelands.

### L-G reviews key projects and issues with Ladakh administration officials



L-G, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) convening a review meeting with Department Secretaries, Directors, and Heads of Departments (HODs) at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), convened a review meeting with Department Secretaries, Directors, and Heads of Departments (HODs) at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on December 17. The meeting focused on reviewing ongoing projects, upcoming initiatives, and addressing issues related to the smooth functioning of various departments under the UT Administration.

At the outset, the LG referred to the attendees as his team working on the ground for the welfare of the people of Ladakh. He sought their cooperation to achieve a "Corruption and Delay-Free Ladakh," emphasizing that delays are a form of corruption. He urged all departments to clear pending files promptly and ensure timely release of salaries for permanent, outsourced, and daily-wage employees.

The meeting covered a wide range of topics, including, latest status of gazetted posts to be sent to UPSC and Ministry of Home Affairs; the illegal naka points of Transport Association; the status of the tendering process for helicopter services in Ladakh; the possibility of operating chartered aeroplanes for stranded passengers during the winter months; the current status of the airport at Kargil and Thoise; the appointment of nodal officers along with their training for the smooth movement of stranded Ladakhi passengers from Chandigarh/Srinagar/Jammu to Leh; the raising of an additional battalion of Ladakh Scouts in Ladakh; the status of winter classes for students of UT Ladakh during the winter break; the current

status of Jal Jeevan Mission scheme and status of BSNL 4G saturation project in Ladakh, etc.

Other key discussions included the Industrial Policy, accommodation arrangements for officials such as chairpersons, members, and judges, vehicle permits (UT and national), participation of Ladakhi artisans at the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 in Prayagraj, and strengthening the manpower of Ladakh Police.

After detailed deliberations, the LG issued several directives:

- Education:** The Secretary of School Education was directed to organize winter classes until board examinations to ensure better academic outcomes. The LG also emphasized zero attachment of teaching and non-teaching staff to non-educational duties.

- Employment:** Highlighting the urgency of employment opportunities, the LG urged the framing of Recruitment Rules for gazetted posts at the earliest to benefit Ladakhi youth.

- Transport:** He called for a ban on illegal checkpoints set up by the Transport Association.

- Agriculture and Horticulture:** The Secretary of Agriculture and Horticulture was instructed to implement measures to enhance the income of Ladakhis through improved agricultural and horticultural practices.

- Telecommunication:** The LG directed Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS, to convene a meeting with BSNL and IT officials to expedite the 4G saturation project and improve connectivity in remote areas.

- Sports Development:** The LG instructed the Youth Services and Sports Department to promote sports such as ice hockey to encourage maximum participation of Ladakhi youth at national and international levels. Additionally, he asked for the preparation of a Ladakhi polo team and the organization of a polo tournament featuring teams from other states.

- Tourism:** To boost Kargil's tourism sector, the LG emphasized implementing practical projects and ensuring basic infrastructure to attract more tourists to the district.

- Stranded Passengers:** He stressed the importance of training appointed nodal officers to professionally manage the movement of stranded passengers from Chandigarh, Srinagar, and Jammu to Ladakh during the winter months.

- Water Supply:** The Secretary of PHE was instructed to resolve water supply issues under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) on a mission mode, ensuring every household has access to safe drinking water.

- Police and Fire Safety:** The LG directed the DGP Ladakh Police to train existing personnel and prepare for a manpower increase, anticipating the creation of five new districts in Ladakh. He also discussed deploying fire tenders to address fire emergencies effectively.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the LG, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Principal Secretary, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS; DGP Ladakh Police, Dr. S.D. Singh Jamwal, IPS; and other senior officials, including Commissioner/Secretaries and Directors from various departments.

### DC Leh chairs meeting on land acquisition for Leh bypass road



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve, chaired a meeting to review the land acquisition process for the proposed Leh Bypass Road, a key infrastructure project aimed at enhancing connectivity in the region.

Consultancy M/S Yuksel presented a detailed plan outlining the alignment of the bypass road, including its technical specifications, proposed route, and expected benefits. The discussion also covered the modalities of land acquisition under the National Highway framework.

DC Sukhadeve emphasized the significance of the bypass road in easing traffic congestion and improving connectivity for vehicles traveling to and from Leh towards Himachal Pradesh and Jammu &

Kashmir. He stressed the need for expediting the land acquisition process to ensure timely implementation of the project.

The DC directed all stakeholders to work in close coordination to resolve challenges and streamline the process. He highlighted the project's potential to enhance transportation efficiency, stimulate local economic growth, and benefit both residents and visitors.

The meeting concluded with a call for swift and collaborative efforts to achieve the project's early completion.

Key officials present at the meeting included SDM Kharu, Tehsildar Leh, Officer Commanding 111 RCC (GREF, Project Himank), and Naib Tehsildar Chuchot.

### Administrative Secretary Shashanka Ala reviews with Rural Development Department



Shashanka Ala, Administrative Secretary convening meeting with staff members of the Rural Development Department.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Shashanka Ala, Administrative Secretary for Rural Development, Panchayat Raj, IT, and Disaster Management, chaired a review meeting with staff members of the Rural Development Department at the Council Secretariat's Conference Hall in Kargil on December 26.

The meeting was attended by key officials, including Director of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, Ladakh, Syed Sajjad Qadri; Assistant Commissioner Development, Kargil, Razia Khatoon; Assistant Commissioner Development, Leh, A.G. Zargar (virtually); Block Development Officers (BDOs) from Kargil and Leh; Executive Engineers; Junior Engineers; Accounts Officers; Assistant Director of Planning; SPM/DPM, and other concerned officials.

Shashanka Ala began by asking all officials to introduce themselves, provide details about their postings, and give updates on the status of ongoing projects.

Director Syed Sajjad Qadri provided a comprehensive briefing to the Secretary, addressing key topics such as the department's structure, staff strength, manpower shortages, Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) status, and issues related to promotions. On the developmental front, he outlined the progress of major projects, financial constraints, Panchayat Raj institution funding, and challenges with schemes such as the Integrated Watershed Management Program, Swachh Bharat Mission, Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, MGNREGA, PMAY, and NRLMs.

Shashanka Ala instructed Engineers and BDOs to submit checklists for all newly constructed Common Facility Centers (CFCs), Panchayat Ghars, and BDO offices. She emphasized that these checklists should be verified and signed by the respective Junior Engineers. During her recent visits, she noted discrepancies in some areas and requested explanations from the concerned BDOs regarding non-functional blocks under the SWAN scheme. She further directed all BDOs to develop micro-level plans tailored to the specific needs and priorities of each block for the effective implementation of government schemes.

She highlighted that these schemes are designed to benefit the targeted beneficiaries and urged officials to ensure that Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are able to enjoy the rewards of their hard work. Ala stressed that every effort should result in tangible, meaningful outcomes.

Additionally, she called on officers to ensure that locally produced goods by SHGs gain broader market access, especially in cooperative supermarkets. She underscored the importance of branding and improved packaging to enhance the marketability of these products.

Administrative Secretary expressed her commitment to closely monitoring both ongoing and completed projects. She conveyed her confidence that with collective efforts, the department would achieve substantial results and maximize the benefits of government schemes for the people of Ladakh.

### DC Leh assesses and review expenditure under LAHDC subsidy program



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**LEH:** The Deputy Commissioner of Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve assessed and reviewed expenditure under the LAHDC Subsidy Scheme at the Conference Hall, DC Office, Leh on December 24.

During the meeting, HoDs from various departments provided insights into the expenditure incurred on various subsidy schemes. The departments also informed about the reasons for surrendering the provided expenditure.

DC Leh directed all departments to formulate structured guidelines for their respective schemes that are already approved. He emphasized the inclusion of the department's role, the beneficiaries' role, and the expected outcomes in these well-structured guidelines. He added that these guidelines will be scrutinized by a committee and approved by LAHDC Leh.

Furthermore, DC Leh stressed the importance

of optimizing fund utilization for the betterment of the community. He urged all departments to expedite the efficient utilization of funds for the benefit of the populace.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development, A.G. Zargar; Chief Controller of Finance LAHDC Leh Zulfikar Ali, AO to DC Leh, and all Heads of Departments and officials from various departments.



## Expert Talk:

## Ice hockey and winter sports in Ladakh

By Stanzin Padma



**Tundup Namgail, Former Captain of Ice Hockey India:**

The roots of ice hockey in Ladakh trace back to the early 1970s when the Ladakh Scouts, an army battalion stationed in Chushul, introduced the game. They adopted it after

observing the sport in China or Russia. By the 1980s, ice hockey began gaining ground in Ladakh, with matches taking place on the Karzoo pond involving two to three teams, including army and civilian teams. During this period, Shimla Club also participated in games held in Ladakh.

Initially, people lacked proper equipment and gear. A significant transformation occurred post-2000 when the Winter Sports Club established connections with embassies, particularly from Canada. These efforts brought professional equipment to Ladakh, replacing the figure skates that players previously used.

## Scopes and Potential

• **Winter Sports in Ladakh:** While winter sports like speed skating and curling are growing, ice hockey remains the most prominent sport. The recognition of Ladakh as a Union Territory (UT) has expanded opportunities, including recruitment in the army and other departments through sports quotas.

• **Focus on Speed Skating:** The younger generation is encouraged to consider speed skating due to its individual nature and potential to reach Olympic levels.

• **Future Developments:** With the completion of the NDS ice hockey rink, more winter games like curling and figure

skating can gain prominence in Ladakh.

## About Ladakh Winter Sports Club

Founded in 1995 by a group of 15-16 enthusiasts, the Ladakh Winter Sports Club played a pivotal role in developing ice hockey in the region. Through their international contacts, coaches and resources were brought to Ladakh, and the club began offering training to children as young as three.

The club also focused on empowering women in the sport, sending female teams abroad for advanced coaching. Many of Ladakh's current players are alumni of this club, highlighting its success in nurturing talent.

I served as the first captain of the Indian Ice Hockey team for 4-5 years. Since stepping down from active play two to three years ago, I have been volunteering with a group of like-minded individuals to support and guide the next generation of players.

## Challenges in Ice Hockey Development

• **Availability of Ice Hockey Gear:** In the early days, ice hockey gear was not readily available in Ladakh or even in India. Only a few individuals with international contacts could access it. However, numerous well-wishers from Europe, Canada, Germany, and various NGOs stepped in to bring gear and equipment to Ladakh. While new equipment is still not frequently supplied, older branded gear continues to be used effectively, ensuring there is no significant scarcity.

• **Support from the Army and Administration:** Over the past 4-5 years, the army and ITBP have started procuring their own equipment. Additionally, the UT administration has been providing equipment on subsidy. For example, last year, under a special fund from the HDP, 20 sets were distributed to Kargil and another 20 to Leh. These efforts have significantly reduced the challenges faced earlier. Back in 2000, when I began playing, Rimo Expedition was the first to provide brand-new gear to a team.

• **Impact of Climate Change:** Climate change has greatly affected ice formation in Ladakh. In earlier years, natural ice used to form by October 25th, allowing for early practice sessions. Now, however, ice formation is delayed until mid-December, drastically shortening the playing season and highlighting the profound impact of changing weather patterns.

## Current Efforts and Solutions

To address these challenges, multiple stakeholders, including the Ice Hockey Association of Ladakh, Winter Sports Club, LAHDC, and UT Ladakh, are working together. A world-class NDS rink is under construction and is expected to be completed by July next year. The rink will provide a reliable facility for two months of practice and tournaments.

The plan also includes inviting international clubs for the inauguration of the rink. The UT administration has allocated the necessary budget, but the short working season in Ladakh poses a challenge. Cooperation among players, local authorities, and the community is essential to further develop winter sports, as ice hockey remains Ladakh's most popular winter game.



**Tsering Tashi, District Youth and Sport Services officer:**

The Department of Youth and Sports Services was established after the 1970s. According to senior officials, the department initially lacked sufficient staff and operated under the Education Department. Over time, it became an independent entity in both Leh and Kargil, with increased staffing to support its operations.

Since 2000, ice hockey has flourished as a prominent sport in Ladakh. The transition to Union Territory (UT) status brought

...continues on page 6



Global Family Day 2025 is observed on 1st January. Global Family Day welcomes the new year by spreading a message of peace and harmony. Every year, it is celebrated to encourage the idea of peace and unity in the world. Additionally, it highlights the notion that everyone on the planet related to one another regardless of nationality, borders, or ethnicity.

In 1997, the United Nations General Assembly launched the International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World. In 1999, the members of the United Nations received a formal invitation to dedicate the first day of the year to developing strategies to bring peace to the world.

Since then, Global Family Day has been celebrated every year on the same date. Global Family Day is also known as World Peace Day as it speaks of the importance of bringing harmony and unity in diversity. One of the best ways to celebrate Global Family Day is by making people aware of the wars and conflicts and how we can come together to bring peace and happiness. We can also organise an informative webinar with our immediate community and urge people to come together and celebrate peace and hope.

## Global Family Day



## DID YOU KNOW



1. India is the Bengal tiger capital of the world with 60% of the wild tiger population. India has 3,167 wild tigers, the only country with more than 1000.

2. India is tied for most populous country in the world. The most recent population projection for India in July 2024 puts the population at 1,404,910,000, within half a percent of China.

3. India is the world's largest producer of milk. It produces over 200 million tons of milk a year, double that of the United States, and is the world's largest producer of cows milk. But it might not be the milk you are used to.

4. India is the most vegetarian country in South Asia (and the world). In India, there are an estimated 276 million vegetarians, making it the most vegetarian country in the world.

5. India produces 75 out of 109 recognized spice varieties. It produces 75 of the 109 varieties of spices listed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

6. The Kumbh Mela Festival in Northern India is the largest religious gathering in the world. The festival in Northern India is a popular pilgrimage in the Hindu religion that occurs once every 12 years and is attended by more than 100 million people over the 55-day festival.

7. India is the wettest inhabited place on earth. The town of Mawsynram, located in the Meghalaya State of India, is the wettest place on earth. It receives an annual rainfall of about 467.4 inches.

8. There are 43 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India. It is home to 43 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including one of the new Seven Wonders of the World, the Taj Mahal.

9. India is the second largest English-speaking country in the world. There are 129 million English speakers in India making it the country with the second-most English speakers in the globe.

## SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

## New Year wishes and greetings

One can't but greet the New Year with great hopes and excitement. We pray that it comes out to be different and great. As such, New Year writings invariably have to touch several things but the most important of them all is to wish one's column-readers a very happy and prosperous time ahead. One wishes that they succeed in every endeavour they get into so that they could get to say: 'Wow, what a year it was!'



Yes, that sort of a year is quite possible to happen provided you change your attitude and endeavour in a manner that is aligned well with the changes you want. Remember, always, before any change outside, you need to bring in the corresponding changes inside.

And it is quite a routine with many of us to make some resolutions that include several important and crucial issues for having a better and happier year. Talking of myself, I write down 12 resolutions for 12 months, half of them new and crucial, and the other half are those 'brought forward' from last year's unfulfilled resolutions' list.

I say 'crucial' because the first few resolutions in the list could be changing the very nature of life in the next one year. Even if some of them are achieved, life will take better wings.

Whatever the other ones in the list of resolutions, I make it a point not to miss one point, every year: To go globe-trotting. It may or may not happen, but the chances are greater on the happening side. But for the Covid-19 times, there were no obstacles in getting footloose beyond the country's borders.

One must admit that many of the resolution are left out unfulfilled. It is quite likely that some of them are 'outrageously too difficult' to fulfil in one single year. In such a case, I give myself the assurance that a day will come when 'this too' is done! It is also true that there are so many unfulfilled resolutions over the years that one never goes to fight over. After all, it is not necessary that one gets everything in life. What matters most is that one should try hard.

One of the good things that happened in the just-gone year was that I got to see several of my old friends after decades. Though 'down with age', physically, all of them are 'young in mind and heart', and that gave them the strength to live happily and hopefully despite so many old-age limitations they had to face. They hold the philosophical view that life is not all roses but of thorns as well. And that kind of attitude has helped them live quite well.



**Fortnightly News**

**In Conversation with  
Ven.Konchok Tsepel, Nominated Councillor for Sangha, LAHDC Leh.**

*Interviewed by Nenzes Chodon*

**Q. Can you introduce yourself and highlight the key initiatives during your tenure as the Nominated Sangha Councillor?**

Jullay! I am Konchok Tsepel, I work for the welfare of monks and nuns in Ladakh as their representative, as a councillor at Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh. Earlier, no monk or nun representative procured a seat; I am the first nominated Sangha Councillor at LAHDC, Leh.

In the previous year, five-day camp called Seva for Sangha held during Ladakh Monlam Chenmo where the difficulties faced by Ladakhi monks and nuns residing and studying at different monasteries in parts of India discussed and specially the issue related to ration and Aadhar card update were solved altogether.

Many Gompa schools were clubbed together and training program for 10 to 15 days were organised. Seminars regarding Buddhism and Bhoti language-script were also organised time to time. One of the oldest and traditional practices of Tsekthik Dultson and formation of skilkhor (the Wheel of Life), mandalas, and other important aspects of Buddhist art and teachings were taught at Dharma Centre.

In terms of Infrastructure development, my services may not have reached all monasteries equally including 16 major and above 300 minor ones but I have given my best to ensure welfare of all without any partiality. I also worked for necessary renovations at Gompa Schools and monasteries all over Ladakh.

Recently, after the announcement five new districts in Ladakh, I along with representative from Ladakh Gompa Association met with New District Committee to restate the importance of a representative at council level considering whatever future changes the formation of new districts may bring.

**Q. Is having a representative from the Sangha Community impactful in bringing changes to the community?**

Having a representative for monks and nuns provides a platform to voice their concerns and secure rightful services. It allows us to address the challenges faced by the Sangha community and advocate for solutions. Monks and nuns dedicate their lives to studies within monasteries, starting with foundational practices such as the use of the conch shell and the Rgya-gling (a traditional oboe) and progress-



ing to attain the esteemed seat of Lobon. However, monasteries do not receive direct financial assistance or funding from the government, which poses significant challenges.

The Sangha community has taken steps to procure these rights and advocate for necessary support. Additionally, monks and nuns are deeply connected with the Bhoti language, as their education is primarily conducted in Bhoti and Tibetan. To preserve and promote the Bhoti language and script, a resolution has been put forward to secure its recognition and ensure its longevity.

**Q. Recently, Scholar Nawang Tsering Shakspo filed a case regarding the Bhoti language. What is your view on that?**

Historically, scholars and Rinpoches from Ladakh and the broader Himalayan region have come together to research the Bhoti language, its origins, and its recognition. After much struggle and extensive discussions, the term "Bhoti" was finally accepted as a language. It is believed that the word Bhoti is derived from Acharya Thumi Sambhota, who is considered the inventor of the Bhoti language.

Many books have been collectively written by scholars and leaders from five to six states regarding the recognition of the Bhoti language. These works emphasize the importance of linguistic development alongside external progress.

The development of language is just as crucial as any other form of growth. Language is a precious gem that forms an integral part of our identity, and preserving it is essential for maintaining our cultural heritage.

**Q. What is the importance of modern education for monks and nuns, and what role do Gompa schools play?**

In addition to preserving native languages, modern education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' lives. Gompa schools ensure that monks and nuns across Ladakh receive modern education, which has become a valuable asset today. These schools provide a unique blend of practical and technical experiences alongside traditional academic learning, setting them apart from other institutions.

In a recent meeting with the Vice Chancellor of CIBS and the LG of Ladakh, the LGA and LAHDC appealed for the recruitment of teachers in Gompa schools to enhance the quality of education. I strongly believe that Gompa schools and institutes

*...continues on page 6*

**MESSAGE TO THE READERS**  
**“As a monk and a representative of the community, I urge you to help prevent the decline of the monk and nun population. Birth control should be avoided, as it disrupts the cycle of reincarnation. While poverty is rare, families facing difficulties can seek support from organizations and the government. Monks and nuns are essential in spreading and preserving Buddhism for future generations.”**

**Fortnight Highlights**



Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, welcomed Dr. Akun Sabharwal, IPS, Inspector General (IG) of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). They discussed various issues related to the security of the region, border management, and enhancing coordination between the ITBP and local authorities.



Dr. Padma Gurmet, Director, National Institute of Sowa Rigpa, Leh met Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Ayush in New Delhi to discuss various issues pertaining to the promotion and development of Sowa Rigpa system of medicine.



Tashi Namgyal Khamsarpa, a true patriot and hero from Garkon village passed away. His courage and vigilance during the 1999 Kargil War, played a critical role in alerting the Indian Army at a pivotal moment, were instrumental in the defense of borders.



CEC, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, convened a meeting with key officials from Khelo India to discuss preparations for the upcoming Khelo India Winter Games 2025. The discussions focused on key aspects including venue selection, equipment requirements, and other logistics necessary for the smooth execution of the event.



Dawa Tashi, son of Padma Rigzen and Rigzen Dolma of Shenam Tsangbu, became first Ladakhi Assistant Commandant in the Indian Coast Guard.



Stanzin Daechan, proud athlete from Ladakh, secured gold medal in the -63 kg category at the prestigious 68th National School Games 2024-25 held in Ludhiana.



A week-long program of Veer Baal Diwas was organised and celebrated with great enthusiasm at Bal-Ashram, Baroo, Kargil. Students from Az-Zahra Orphanage, Kargil, Jawadiah Project Care, Minjee, and Bal-Ashram participated in the events, showcasing their talents and skills.



Bhanu Prabha Secretary of the Education of Union Territory of Ladakh, and Piyush Fulzele-IPS, SSP Security Ladakh Police called on Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson, at his office.



## Fortnightly News

### ...Continuity of page 4 Ice hockey and winter sports in Ladakh

significant improvements, including increased funding. Previously, under Jammu & Kashmir, limited funds hampered event organization. Now, with UT administration support, large-scale events such as the LG Cup, with expenditures in lakhs, are regularly held. Teams from Leh, Kargil, ITBP, and the army actively participate. The prestigious CEC Cup, which started during the LAHDC era, continues, with the 18th edition set to open this season as the first major tournament.

#### Scopes and Potential

- **Opportunities Post-2020:** Since 2020, numerous Ladakhi youths have represented India on international platforms, with around 95% of players coming from Ladakh. The future holds promising opportunities for local talent.
- **Training Duration:** Winters in Ladakh are brief, with ice in Leh typically lasting about one and a half months, depending on the climate. This year, ice formed earlier, extending the training period to approximately two months.

- **NDS Ice Rink:** The under-construction NDS rink, built to international standards, will feature artificial ice, making it available year-round. From next year, players will have access to artificial ice for continuous training in addition to the natural ice available for two months. This development will professionalize players and attract outside talent, generating revenue for the region.

#### Infrastructure Development

- **Progress in Infrastructure:** Earlier, Karzoo pond was the sole venue for ice hockey, where players from all parts of Ladakh gathered. Recognizing this, the NDS rink is being developed as a world-class facility, expected to be completed next year.

- **Zonal Rinks:** The UT administration is constructing rinks in various zones. Many, such as in Khamti and Likir, are already completed, with plans to extend facilities to remote areas like Nubra, Changthang, and Durbuk, ensuring wider participation in events like the LG Cup and other tournaments.

#### Impact of Climate Change

In the past, ice lasted longer due to colder weather. However, global warming has shortened the natural ice season, delaying ice formation until mid-December. The NDS rink, with artificial ice, will address this issue, ensuring players have adequate practice facilities throughout the year.

#### Contribution to Economic Development and Tourism

- **Winter Tourism Growth:** Events like the Khelo India Winter Games, introduced last year, have drawn participants from across India. While ice hockey participation remains limited, speed skating attracts numerous players. These events bring players, officials, audiences, and parents to Ladakh, even in harsh winters, contributing to the local economy. Last year, around 500 tourists visited during winter, benefiting taxi services, hotels, and other businesses.

- **Upcoming Events:** This year's Khelo India Winter Games, scheduled for January, is expected to further boost winter tourism.

Challenges

- **Short Ice Duration:** The limited natural ice season has necessitated artificial ice rinks.

- **Costly Equipment:** Ice hockey gear is expensive, with a full set costing around ₹1 lakh per player. To address this, LAHDC offers a 75% subsidy on equipment, reducing costs for clubs and players.

#### Future Plans

- **Expanding Facilities:** The department plans to complete the NDS rink and construct additional rinks in zones like Kargil and Changthang. Changthang's natural ice forms earlier, allowing extended practice periods. High-altitude rinks are also being considered under the SDP scheme to maximize ice duration.

- **Sports Policy:** A sports policy is in the works, aiming to provide job opportunities for players excelling at national and international levels.

#### Solutions and Recommendations

- Ice hockey, akin to horse polo, is a traditional sport in Ladakh and deserves greater attention.
- Increasingly, parents are encouraging their children to take up the sport alongside academics, recognizing its health benefits.
- With 95% of Ladakhi players representing India at the international level, the region holds immense potential.
- The NDS rink and other initiatives will ensure players can train consistently, fostering professionalism and growth in the sport.

#### NOTICE

Whereas, Mohammad Saif Ullah S/o Abdul Rahman R/o Shey, Leh UT Ladakh has claimed that his name has been wrongly entered as Mohd Saifullah instead of correct and actual name Mohammad Saif Ullah and also his Date of Birth as 03-10-1997 instead of actual and correct Date of Birth 15-10-1997 in the Driving Licence bearing No. LA02-20220003056 and produced an affidavit duly verified by Notary, UT Ladakh with Certificate No. IN-LA08012592681231W to this office for making 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.

#### NOTICE

An application has been received from one Bashir Ahmed S/o Mussa Ali R/o Chuchot Yokma, Leh, UT Ladakh to transfer the vehicle No. JK 10 A4797 owned by Tashi Dorjai S/o Tashi 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 10 days from date of publication of this notice.

No: ARTO/ UTL/2024-25/ 113-114  
Date: 12-12-24

Asstt. Regional Transport Officer  
Leh Ladakh

### In Conversation with Ven.Konchok Tsepel, Nominated Councillor for Sangha, LAHDC Leh

#### ...Continuity of page 5

like CIBS serve as vital centers for learning, particularly in preserving the Bhoti language. We have also made efforts to establish a branch of the school in Dehradun and have submitted a list of 21 branch schools to the Ministry of Culture, hoping the ministry will consider the request to expand the educational network further.

#### Q. Is the declining population of monks and nuns in Ladakh a threat?

Today, monasteries in Ladakh are well-equipped with modern facilities and financially stable enough to meet their essential needs. The total population of monks and nuns in Ladakh is approximately 7,000. However, the Sangha population is declining, and this decline could be attributed to various factors, such as modern or scientific developments or a growing disinterest in Buddhism.

Ill practices like foeticide and birth control are prevalent in society, and I would like to use this platform to advocate for the elimination of such practices. I urge families with three or four children to consider encouraging one of their children to become a monk or nun.

The Sangha community plays a vital role in preserving and expanding Buddhism. Recently, the Pali language—which is believed to be the language spoken by Buddha—was conferred classical language status by the Government of India. This highlights the ongoing relevance of Buddhism in the modern world and its potential to address global issues, such as the ongoing wars and conflicts. The increasing global interest in Buddhism further underscores its importance as a path toward peace and understanding.

### Book launch: Kacho Hassan Khan's 'Simplified English Grammar' unveiled in Kargil



During the launch of Simplified English Grammar for 9th to 12th standards, authored by Senior Lecturer Kacho Hassan Khan

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo, CEC, LAHDC Kargil, attended the launch of Simplified English Grammar for 9th to 12th standards, authored by Senior Lecturer Kacho Hassan Khan on De-

ember 23.

The event, organised by the Lecturers Forum Kargil, saw participation from several dignitaries, including the Chief Education Officer (CEO) of Kargil, the In-

charge Principal of DIET, former Executive Councillors, and prominent educationists.

In his address, Dr. Akhoo congratulated Kacho Hassan Khan for his academic contribution and commended his dedication to simplifying English grammar for students. He also praised the role of educators in shaping society's future and expressed gratitude to the Lecturers Forum for recognizing the author's work and organizing the ceremony.

The CEC reiterated the Hill Council's commitment to prioritizing education and referred to the Council's Vision Document-2047, which outlines a roadmap for Kargil's comprehensive development.

He encouraged lecturers to share their insights for the region's growth and assured continued support from the Hill Council to enhance the education sector.

The author Kacho Hassan Khan, shared his experiences in writing the book and emphasised the importance of providing simplified learning materials for students.

The CEO of Kargil commended Kacho Hassan Khan's efforts and lauded the Lecturers Forum for organizing the event. The Incharge Principal of DIET also discussed the challenges in the education sector and acknowledged the dedication of teachers in fostering positive change.

### LAHDC Kargil pays homage to Former MP Haji Ghulam Hassan Khan



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo, expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Haji Ghulam Hassan Khan, a retired DIG, dedicated politician, and senior leader of the National Conference.

Paying tribute to his remarkable legacy, the CEC remarked that Haji Ghulam

Hassan Khan's statesmanship, determination, and unwavering commitment to the people of Ladakh, especially during his two terms as Member of Parliament, will always be cherished.

Recalling his contributions, Dr. Akhoo described him as a towering figure whose sincere dedication and tireless efforts to uplift the under-

privileged set a benchmark for public service.

"His selfless contributions and relentless commitment to addressing the community's needs will remain unparalleled. His loss is deeply felt by the community he served with such devotion," Dr. Akhoo stated.

In this time of grief, the CEC and the Ladakh Autonomous

Hill Development Council, Kargil, expressed solidarity with the bereaved family, extending heartfelt sympathies and support.

The CEC and LAHDC, Kargil, prayed for eternal peace for the departed soul and strength for the grieving family to endure this irreparable loss.

### Cooperative Department Kargil celebrates formation of 10,000 new cooperative societies



During the inauguration of 10,000 new multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), Dairy, and Fishery Cooperative Societies.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** The Cooperative Department Kargil organised a special program to commemorate the inauguration of 10,000 new Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), Dairy, and Fishery Cooperative Societies by the Union Home

and Cooperation Minister on December 25.

The event witnessed the participation of over 100 PACS members from various villages along with cooperative department staff. The Executive Councillor

for Cooperatives, LAHDC Kargil, Er. Punchok Tashi, graced the occasion as the chief guest. Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse, and Registrar Cooperatives, UT Ladakh, Syed Sajjad Qadri, attended as guests of honor. Dr. Zakir Hussain, Deputy Registrar of the Cooperative Department Kargil, delivered a detailed presentation showcasing the department's achievements, activities, and the registration of cooperatives across multiple sectors.

Additionally, the Nodal Officer PACS/ARC Kargil and the ARC Audit shared insights into PACS activities, registration processes, and auditing procedures in the district.

Registrar Cooperatives, Syed Sajjad Qadri, emphasized the importance of self-reliance among cooperative members and encouraged them to uphold high business standards.

He assured continuous support to enhance cooperative operations and achieve their upliftment.

Deputy Commissioner Shrikant Balasaheb Suse highlighted the importance of hard work and self-sufficiency among cooperative members. He assured administrative support at all stages and encouraged collaboration with the Rural Development Department to enhance cooperative development. He also lauded the department's dedication and achievements despite challenges, such as limited manpower.

Executive Councillor Punchok Tashi expressed satisfaction with the program's success and commended the Cooperative Department for its tireless efforts. He assured full support from LAHDC Kargil for the growth and sustainability of cooperative societies.



## Fortnightly News

### 25 students from Kargil flagged off for exposure visit and participation in Rashtra Katha Shivir



A group of 25 students from various Higher Secondary Schools of Kargil for an exposure tour.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon flagged off a group of 25 students from various Higher Secondary Schools of Kargil for an exposure tour and participation in the 25th Rashtra Katha Shivir in Rajkot, Gujarat. Organized under the Rashtriya

Avishkar Abhiyan by Samagra Shiksha of the Education Department, Kargil, the tour includes visits to Delhi, Ahmedabad, and Rajkot, offering the students a unique opportunity to learn and interact in new environments. Two escort teachers will accompany the students throughout the journey.

Addressing the students, Dr. Akhooon congratulated them and extended his best wishes for their journey. He encouraged the participants to proudly represent Ladakh by sharing Kargil's rich cultural heritage, its tourism potential, and other positive aspects of the region during their interactions.

The CEC highlighted the significance of such initiatives in fostering the overall development of students by exposing them to diverse cultures and environments. He emphasized the role of such programs in promoting unity, national integration, and broadening students' perspectives.

### District Administration Kargil organises workshop on Good Governance Week 2024



DC Kargil, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** The District Administration Kargil organized a workshop on Good Governance Week at the District headquarters on December 24.

Kacho Asfandyar Khan, a retired IAS officer, attended the program as the chief guest via virtual mode.

DC Kargil, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse, emphasized that "Good Governance Week" reflects the government and administration's vision to ensure pub-

lic service delivery at the doorstep. He further stressed that the workshop aimed to learn from the best practices of various departments that have brought transformative changes in people's lives while also shaping a vision for a developed Kargil, considering the aspirations of all sections of society.

Kacho Asfandyar Khan expressed his gratitude for the invitation and highlighted that good governance involves transparency, accountability, and

smooth, obstacle-free service delivery. He pointed out that the week, running from December 19 to 25, coincided with the 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a leader celebrated for his legacy in governance.

Khan also addressed the challenges faced by the administrative machinery and discussed the measures needed to prioritize public welfare in the district. He proposed several initiatives for the future, particularly in education, health, tourism, and access to drinking water.

ADC Kargil, Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din, praised the hard work of all departments in achieving targets and delivering quality services directly to the people.

District officers from various departments shared their insights, achievements, and initiatives aimed at improving service delivery and governance in Kargil.

### Mining department guidelines reviewed in LAHDC Kargil meeting



Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon chairing a meeting of the mining department at the Council Secretariat.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** Chairman/CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon chaired a meeting at the Council Secretariat on December 23 to address key issues related to the Mining Department in Kargil.

asaheb Suse; Deputy Director of Mining and Geology, UT Ladakh; District Mineral Officer; and SDMS representatives from Drass, Shakar Chiktan, and Zanskar, along with other officials.

The meeting was attended by Executive Councillors for Tourism, PHE, I&FC; Social Welfare and Animal Husbandry; Rural Development; and Education. Also present were Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Srikant Bal-

The Deputy Director, Mining and Geology, UT Ladakh informed the CEC that the guidelines have already been prepared by the Mining Department which the LAHDC Leh has accepted.

He also informed that the successful bidder shall pay 5% charges in favour of LAHDC Kargil in addition to the total bid amount. The officer further informed the meeting that 30% of the total DMFT shall be placed at the disposal of the LAHDC Kargil for the utilization of the same fund under the PMKKY scheme. Blocks having an area less than 5 hectares shall be reserved for the local and only local bidders will participate in the e-auctioning of the minor mineral blocks.

The CEC Kargil directed the Deputy Director, Mining and Geology to prepare a plan for the execution of the guidelines. Dr. Akhooon also said that the rates of sand and gravel should not rise abruptly and people should not suffer. He also said that the Supreme Court has passed a direction that should be followed in letter and spirit.

### CEC reviews redevelopment projects for Baroo and Kargil town



During the meeting on redevelopment initiatives for Kargil town and the Baroo area.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, chaired a meeting on December 20 to review redevelopment initiatives for Kargil town and the Baroo area.

The meeting was attended by Executive Councillors Zakir Hussain, Kacho Mohd Feroz, and Er Punchok Tashi; Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse; and other key officials, including the Administrator Municipality, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Assis-

tant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), and the Executive Officer of the Municipal Committee Kargil. The Directors of FCS&CA and Urban and Local Bodies joined virtually. Councillors representing Baroo and Town constituencies also participated, sharing their insights and developmental priorities.

Consultant Rigzin presented a comprehensive proposal outlining redevelopment projects for the Baroo area. Key initiatives included the creation of green spaces, parking facilities, and

other urban infrastructure improvements aimed at enhancing the town's environment and livability.

To expedite progress, it was decided that the Deputy Commissioner will conduct site visits to identify suitable locations for the proposed projects in Baroo.

Discussions also focused on constructing a mechanized multi-level parking facility in Kargil's main bazaar. The Tehsildar informed the meeting that 4 kanals and 15 marlas of land, currently held by various departments, including Tourism, FCS&CA, Handicrafts, Cooperatives, and the Municipal Committee, could be utilized for the project. A committee, headed by the ADC, will oversee the handover of these properties to the Municipality to facilitate construction.

Temporary arrangements will be made for the affected departments to ensure uninterrupted operations during the redevelopment process.

The CEC emphasized the importance of timely execution and announced a follow-up meeting at the end of the month to review progress on the identified projects.

### KVK Kargil-II celebrates Kisan Diwas with local farmers



Celebration of the Farmers' Day (Kisan Diwas) at Barsoo.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** KVK Kargil-II celebrated Farmers' Day (Kisan Diwas) at Barsoo on December 23, commemorating the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the fifth Prime Minister of India, who is widely recognized as the "Champion of India's Farmers."

The event honored the invaluable contributions of farmers to the Indian economy and shed light on the challenges they face, aligning with the theme, "Empowering Farmers for Sustainable Agriculture."

The program was attended by Sheikh Mohd Ansari, Councillor of Barsoo Constituency, LAHDC Kargil, as the chief guest. Other notable attendees included Chief Agriculture Officer Ashiq Hussain Basharat as the guest of honor, Dr. Siraj Ud Din, Block Veterinary Offi-

cer (Sankoo), and Liqat Ali. Dr. Siraj Ud Din addressed the farmers on livestock-related issues, emphasizing the role of livestock in boosting agricultural productivity and ensuring livelihood security for tribal farmers in remote areas. He highlighted how livestock sustains agricultural land and enhances farmers' economic stability.

Ashiq Hussain discussed advanced agricultural practices, particularly the adoption of high-yield seed varieties for fodder crops. He stressed the connection between quality fodder, livestock health, and increased production of meat and milk. He also shared insights into modern cultural practices designed to maximize agricultural output and their impact on India's GDP and employment.

Dr. Mehdi, Principal Scientist and Head of KVK Kargil-II, elaborated on the advantages of protected cultivation, such as growing vegetables during the off-season. He explained the success of cultivating crops unsuited to open-field conditions and commended farmers for their enthusiastic participation despite the harsh winter weather.

Before the chief guest's address, an interactive session was held between scientists, experts, and farmers. Sheikh Mohd Ansari expressed his gratitude to the scientists and officers of KVK for organizing the event. He acknowledged the importance of adopting advanced agricultural technologies and appreciated the efforts of the livestock department in raising awareness. He encouraged continued initiatives like training sessions and awareness programs to benefit the local farming community further.

A total of 121 farmers participated in the event. The program concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by a progressive farmer, who lauded the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders in making the event a success.

### WWF-India and Wildlife department join hands for Brown Bear



During the one-day workshop on the conservation strategy for the Himalayan brown bear.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** A one-day workshop on the conservation strategy for the Himalayan brown bear was organized by WWF-India in collaboration with the Wildlife Department, Kargil, on December 26.

The event witnessed participation from various dignitaries and stakeholders, including Executive Councillor for Wildlife, Er. Punchok Tashi; Councillors Abdul Wahid, Abdul Samad, Abdul Hadi, and Manzoor ul Hussain; Assistant Director of Tourism, Rehmattullah Bhat; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Dr. Gulzar Hussain; Divisional Forest Officer, Kargil, Mohd Ali; Wildlife Warden, Raza Ali Abidi; Principal of GDC Drass, Amjad Hussain; WWF-India Landscape Coordinator, Rohit Rattan; Senior Programme Officer, WWF, Rigzin Dawa, and representatives from NGOs such as JUIAK and Baseej-e-Zaraat, among others.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) Dr. Jaffer Akhooon stressed the importance of preserving Kargil's wildlife, highlighting the critical role of flora and fauna in maintaining the region's ecological balance. He acknowledged the challenges posed by human-wildlife conflicts, particularly livestock losses, and called for increasing compensation for affected individuals.

Dr. Akhooon directed the Wildlife Warden to draft a comprehensive plan to mitigate these issues and pledged full support from the Hill Council to bolster conservation initiatives. He also extended gratitude to WWF-India for their consistent efforts in wildlife preservation across Ladakh.

Executive Councillor Er. Punchok Tashi applauded WWF-India's conservation programs and underlined the significance of raising awareness among local communities about the ecological importance of protecting wildlife. He urged all departments to collaborate for the effective preservation of the Himalayan ecosystem and encouraged stakeholders to continue learning and adapting best practices in wildlife conservation.

Wildlife Warden Raza Ali Abidi provided an overview of ongoing departmental initiatives and outlined key challenges in protecting the Himalayan brown bear population.

WWF-India Landscape Coordinator, Rohit Rattan, shared insights into the organization's extensive conservation efforts in Ladakh, such as work on Tso Moriri, black-necked cranes, and human-wildlife conflict resolution.

Senior Programme Officer Rigzin Dawa and Assistant Programme Officer Mohd Kazim presented a detailed presentation on species conservation projects, collaborative initiatives, and human-brown bear interactions in Kargil.

The workshop concluded with discussions among stakeholders, focusing on the threats faced by the species and identifying both immediate and long-term strategies for conservation. This collaborative initiative marks another step forward in safeguarding the unique biodiversity of Ladakh and fostering coexistence between humans and wildlife.

### CEC Dr. Jaffer Akhooon pays tribute to Dr. Manmohan Singh-conservation in Kargil



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

**KARGIL:** CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, paid rich tributes to former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during a condolence meeting, recognizing his outstanding contributions to the nation's growth and development.

The ceremony was attended by Execu-

tive Councillors Aga Syed Mujtaba, Kacho Mohd Feroz, Er. Punchok Tashi, and staff members of LAHDC.


Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Akhooon praised Dr. Singh's leadership and vision, which he credited with shaping India's economic landscape. "His commitment to social welfare and inclusive growth has inspired generations of Indians," he said.

He highlighted Dr. Singh's significant achievements, including introducing key economic reforms, liberalizing trade and investment, and driving rapid economic growth. The CEC also noted landmark initiatives under Dr. Singh's administration, such as the Mahatma Gandhi

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the Right to Information Act (RTI), which transformed governance and empowered citizens.

Dr. Akhooon further emphasized the former Prime Minister's dedication to education and healthcare, which expanded access to quality services for millions of Indians.

"Dr. Manmohan Singh's legacy is a testament to the power of dedicated public service and visionary leadership. We honor his contributions to our nation's progress and express our deepest gratitude for his selfless service," said the CEC.


**LADAKH BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION**  
REGISTERED UNDER THE SOCIETIES REGISTRATION ACT VI OF 1998 (1941 A.D.) No. 986-S OF 1985  
**CHOKHANG VIHARA, LEH - 194101 UT LADAKH, INDIA Tel +91-1982-252415**

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No. LBA/M-26/1111 Dated: 19/12/2024

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Chairman Rent Committee, Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) would like to bring into the kind attention of the following Shop Owners / Tenants of Shaganar Shopping Complex through this public notice and appeal to pay their pending rent payments at the earliest. It is regret to inform you all that despite repeated notices and verbal request the lessee failed to pay their rent till date.

The list of the overdue rent shopkeepers as under: -

Shop No.03(UG), 04(UG), 04(GF), 06(GF), 07(GF), 10(GF),11(GF), 14(GF), 15(GF), 16(GF), 17(GF), 18(GF), 19(GF), 20(GF), 21(GF), 22(GF), 23(GF), 24(GF), 25(GF), 29(GF), 31(GF), 03(FF), 05(FF), 06(FF), 08(FF), 11(FF), 12(FF), 13(FF), 14(FF), 15(FF), 18(FF), 19(FF), 20(FF), 22(FF), 02(SF) and 08(SF)

  
**Chairman**  
19/12/24  
**(LBA Rent Committee)**



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**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**2025**



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