

REACH LADAKH BULLETIN



In Conversation with
Yangchan Dolma (Palajora), Progressive Farmer

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REACH LADAKH BULLETIN

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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

From struggle to strength: District de-addiction centre discharges first recovering individual

Officials stress long-term rehabilitation, skill development and community support



Photo Caption: District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), Leh marking a historic milestone with the successful discharge of its first recovering individual.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), Leh marked a historic milestone with the successful discharge of its first recovering individual a sign of hope in the region's growing efforts to combat substance dependence through structured care, counselling and rehabilitation. The occasion was more than a formal discharge; it symbolised a new beginning — not only for the individual and his family, but also for the community striving to build a healthier, drug-free society.

The programme was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Leh, Ghulam Mohd (JKAS); DySP (HQ) Leh, Rishab Shukla, IPS; District Social and Tribal Welfare Officer Leh, Mohd Safdar Bhat (JKAS); Consultant Psychiatrist Dr. Padma Angmo; the LBA Youth Wing Advisor; officials of DDAC Leh; and the parent of the recovering individual. Their presence reflected a coordinated administrative and community effort to address substance abuse with compassion and accountability.

Currently, six male recovering individuals are undergoing treatment and rehabilitation at the Centre. The discharged individual had been admitted for one month and completed a comprehensive programme that included medical supervision, psychiatric care, therapeutic counselling and structured behavioural rehabilitation. Officials described his recovery as steady and encouraging, achieved through consistent professional support and active family involvement.

Healthcare professionals at the Centre emphasised that substance dependence is not a moral failing but a health condition that requires timely intervention, sustained counselling and community support. The discharge serves as a testament to the effectiveness of structured rehabilitation and the importance of early treatment.

Speaking on the occasion, the Additional Deputy Commissioner underscored that recovery does not end at discharge. He highlighted the administration's commitment to ensuring long-term rehabilitation through livelihood support, skill development programmes and facilitation for self-employment and small business initiatives. "The objective is not merely to treat but to reintegrate individuals into society with dignity and financial independence," he noted. The LBA Youth Wing Advisor praised the initiative, stressing that prevention must go hand in hand with treatment. He called for greater youth engagement, awareness campaigns and community-driven efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and discourage substance abuse. The Youth Wing expressed its readiness to collaborate with the administration in outreach and awareness programmes across the district.

...continues on page 2

Leh administration reviews anti-drug measures, reports 30 arrests in two months



Photo Caption: During the 36th District Level Committee meeting under the NCORD mechanism and the 5th Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA).

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The 36th District Level Committee meeting under the NCORD mechanism and the 5th Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) was convened in Leh on February 26 under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Leh, Ghulam Mohd, JKAS.

The meeting was attended by Rishab Shukla, IPS, DySP (HQ) Leh; Dr. Padma Angmo, Psychiatrist at SNM Hospital Leh; and a representative from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Srinagar, who joined via video conference. Officials from the Social Welfare Department, NMBA, and other concerned departments were also present.

During the meeting, the DySP (HQ) Leh informed the chair that around 30 arrests were made between January and February 25 this year. During the same period, more than 30 drug awareness programmes were conducted across the district. Eight FIRs were registered in connection with "cool-lip" cases, identified as a potential gateway to substance addiction, and intensified awareness campaigns are underway to curb its spread.

ADC Leh emphasised the optimal utilisation of de-addiction and rehabilitation centres, stressing accountability and transparency in

their functioning. He directed that structured life-skills training programmes, including cooking, hospitality and other employable skills, be incorporated to support recovering individuals in achieving self-reliance. He also highlighted the importance of documenting and publicising success stories to inspire others to seek help.

Dr. Padma Angmo appreciated the prompt ground-level action and noted a visible positive shift, including increased involvement of parents and families in the recovery process. However, she pointed out the issue of understaffing at the de-addiction centre. Taking note, ADC Leh directed the concerned department to initiate the recruitment of nurses on a contractual basis.

Earlier, as per the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Leh, the integration of the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) with NCORD was also reviewed. The NTCP consultant outlined the objectives of the programme and enforcement measures under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003. It was informed that 31 villages have been declared tobacco-free and 194 challans have been issued under COTPA.

ADC Leh directed NTCP to design and install public awareness posters on display boards to reinforce behavioural change. He also emphasised the need to undertake a comprehensive district-wide survey on drug usage, incorporating gender-specific and age-specific data, to enable targeted interventions and evidence-based policy planning.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to strengthening coordinated enforcement, preventive outreach and rehabilitation efforts to combat substance abuse in the district.

Endurance on Ice: Pangong marathon draws hundreds of runners



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

PANGONG: The Pangong Frozen Lake Marathon 2026 was held on February 24 and 25 along the frozen expanse of Pangong Lake. The event was organised by The Thin Ice Adventure in collaboration with the UT Administration Leh, Indian Oil Corporation (Servo), and other stakeholders.

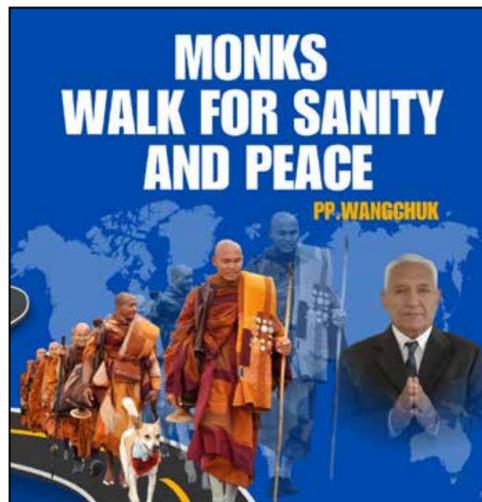
The marathon featured four race categories: 42 km and 10 km on Day 1, followed by 21 km and 5 km on Day 2.

On the opening day, 46 runners participated in the 42 km category, while 185 runners competed in the 10 km race, demonstrating remarkable endurance and enthusiasm in extreme high-altitude conditions.

The final day began with the 5 km and 21 km races, drawing enthusiastic participation across categories. Following the completion of all race segments, a medal distribution ceremony was organised to honour the winners and acknowledge the efforts of collaborators and stakeholders who contributed to the successful conduct of the marathon.

...continues on page 2

Monks walk for sanity and peace



Dr P P Wangchuk

LEH: Life turns into a wasted 'commodity' if not used for a meaningful and purposeful mission.

It was with this point as mission in mind that 18 Buddhist monks, led by Bhikkhu Panakara, staged an amazing peace-walk, over 2,703 km, in 108 days, and melted the hearts of millions across the globe.

Their mission: To help bring this war-torn world of ours into a peaceful mode by creating a sense of awareness that wars have never been any means to achieve peace and harmony.

Starting from Texas and ending up their mission successfully in Washington, after 108 tiring days, with great challenges on the way,

braving rains and storms, the monks' mission-peace has not only moved the hearts of millions but was also quite effective in sending out a soulful message to those leaders of the world who have lost their 'mental balance' and have turned our Mother Earth into a dangerous 'war zone', killing or affecting the lives of thousands of innocent people every day. What was interesting and greatly noticeable was the loyal, faithful and wonderful Aloka the dog who could very easily understand the immediate need for a peaceful world, and travelled all the way from India to the US to make his bid towards ending wars in several regions across the globe.

Thousands of people came out to support the monks and darling Aloka, every day at many spots on the way in various cities, some of them crying and others with roses, chocolates and essential commodities to make the monks' peace-march comfortable and successful.

Life is all about peace, harmony in a progressive atmosphere. If we fail in this effort, the very purpose of life goes missionless. And we lose, as human beings, our superiority to all other beings. Therefore, the hardened souls and rusted minds in the form of leaders must turn around and work for love, compassion and peace. They are there as leaders to lead us towards a happier and a progressive world in which everybody can have his/her place to stand up and prove that life is all about a beautiful journey with great responsibilities.

Courtesy: WongWorld

Fortnightly News

From struggle to strength: District de-addiction centre discharges first recovering individual

...Continuity of page 1

Officials also outlined plans for sustained post-rehabilitation support, including regular follow-up counselling, family guidance sessions and structured reintegration strategies. These measures aim to reduce relapse risks and ensure long-term recovery.

Alongside treatment efforts, the District Administration is intensifying awareness drives in schools and communities while strengthening inter-departmental coordination to address substance abuse comprehensively.

The District De-Addiction Centre, Leh, continues to function as a dedicated facility offering medical treatment, psychological counselling and rehabilitation services. The successful discharge of its first recovering individual stands as a powerful reminder that recovery is possible and that with collective will, professional care and community support, new beginnings can indeed take root in Ladakh.

Endurance on Ice: Pangong marathon draws hundreds of runners

The results are as follows:

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CATEGORY	POSITION	NAMES
42 km Category MALE	1st	Tsering Norboo
	2nd	Tsering Stobgais
	3rd	Kadim Hussain
42 km Category FEMALE	1st	Skarma Endong
	2nd	Ang Furba Sherpa
	3rd	Dakhi Kyudai
21 km Category MALE	1st	Tsetan Namgyal
	2nd	Tashi Namgyal
	3rd	Sarfaz Hussain
21 km Category FEMALE	1st	Nima Lamo
	2nd	Eashy Dolker
	3rd	Tsering Lhatso
10 km Category MALE	1st	Mehbob Ali
	2nd	Rinchen Gurmet
	3rd	Jigmet Stobdan
10 km Category FEMALE	1st	Eashy SangdoL
	2nd	Tashi Dolker
	3rd	Rinchen Dolker
5 km Category	1st	Konchok Dhargyal
	2nd	Rohi
	3rd	Sonver Singh
5 km Category FEMALE	1st	Rohit
	2nd	Tsewang Dolma
	3rd	Dawa Chuzin
		Rafket Dolma

The high-altitude sporting event once again highlighted Ladakh's growing reputation as a destination for extreme endurance sports.

Leh administration gears up for SIR 2026; AEROs given key directions



Photo Caption: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) / Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Ghulam Mohd.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) / Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Ghulam Mohd chaired a meeting on February 23 in the VC Room of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Leh, to review preparedness for the upcoming Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, scheduled to commence in April 2026.

The meeting focused on underscor-

ing the significance of the SIR and ensuring widespread awareness at the village level through social media and other communication platforms. Discussions were held on assessing internet connectivity in all villages, identifying areas with limited or no connectivity, and ensuring that polling stations are equipped with adequate power supply, technical support, and water facilities. Preparatory measures, including arrangements for photo updates, role allocation, and other key aspects of the revision process, were also deliberated.

The ADC directed all Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) of both districts to ensure the availability of quality photocopying and scanning facilities and to submit details within two days regarding the status of photocopy machines and scanners in their respective offices. He further emphasised the need to maintain uninterrupted internet connectivity in all AERO offices.

He instructed AEROs to identify Master Trainers and Booth Lev-

el Officers (BLOs) and provide them with comprehensive training specifically tailored to the SIR process. Stressing meticulous planning, he underscored the importance of ensuring the smooth and efficient conduct of the revision exercise.

The Deputy District Election Officers (Dy DEOs) of Leh and Kargil were directed to circulate letters to AEROs regarding meetings with political parties to apprise them of the importance of the SIR. They were also instructed to promote awareness in local languages through local media channels to ensure outreach from the grassroots to higher administrative levels.

The ADC further directed all government officials to download the ECI Net application and ensure its dissemination across departments for streamlined digital communication. The Dy DEOs were asked to promote awareness regarding the procedure for downloading and effectively using the ECI Net platform.

Lt Governor approves Notional Annual Increments for SRO-202 employees in Ladakh

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, has approved the grant of notional annual increments for the probation period to employees appointed under the Jammu & Kashmir Special Recruitment Rules, 2015 (SRO-202).

The decision marks a significant step towards ensuring fairness and service parity among government employees in the Union Territory. By recognising notional increments for the probation period, the Administration has addressed a long-pending issue affecting employees appointed under SRO-

202, acknowledging their legitimate service entitlements.

The approval underscores the UT Administration's commitment to building a transparent, equitable, and employee-friendly governance framework. The move is expected to create a level playing field for employees in Ladakh and align their service benefits with established principles of administrative justice.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the Administration remains committed to safeguarding the legitimate rights

of employees and strengthening institutional fairness. He stated that the decision reflects the government's resolve to boost morale, enhance efficiency, and uphold equity in public service. He also directed the concerned departments to issue the necessary orders and implement the decision in a time-bound manner.

The measure is expected to benefit a substantial number of employees appointed under SRO-202 and further streamline service conditions in the Union Territory.

UT-Ladakh conducts House Listing Operations training conference for census 2027



Photo Caption: During the UT-level training conference on House Listing Operations (HLO) for Census of India 2027.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A one-day UT-level training conference on House Listing Operations (HLO) for Census of India 2027 was held on February 25 under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary of UT-Ladakh, Ashish Kundra.

The conference was organised by the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department (PD&MD), UT-Ladakh — the nodal department for the Census — in collaboration with the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The training programme aimed to strengthen preparedness and coordination for the successful conduct of House Listing Operations across the Union Territory as part of Census 2027.

At the outset, Amit Sharma, Director of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, provided a comprehensive overview of Census 2027 and the House Listing Operations. He highlighted the importance of early sensitisation of stakeholders, timely appointment of nodal officers, and effective inter-departmental coordination. He expressed confidence that UT-Ladakh could emerge as one of the best-performing regions in the country in the upcoming Census exercise.

In his address, Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra underscored the significance of the Census as the backbone of policy formulation, welfare planning, and equitable resource distribution. He stated that the Census is not merely a statistical exercise but a foundational activity that directly impacts developmental planning, infrastructure creation, and the de-

livery of public services.

He emphasised that special attention must be given to translating census schedules and training materials into local languages to ensure better understanding and accurate data collection at the grassroots level. He also stressed the need for structured and decentralised training at district, sub-division, and village levels so that enumerators and supervisors are fully equipped with technical and procedural knowledge.

During the conference, detailed discussions were held on the strategy for Census 2027, including its background, methodology, timeline, and implementation process. It was informed that the Census in UT-Ladakh will be conducted in two phases: House Listing Operations (HLO) and Population Enumeration (PE).

The administrative framework under the Ministry of Home Affairs and the overall significance of the Census as a foundation for evidence-based policymaking were also elaborated upon. Special emphasis was laid on the use of digital tools for data collection, including mobile applications and the Census Management & Monitoring System (CMMS).

Key functionalities of CMMS — such as registration of census functionaries, monitoring of field activities, reporting mechanisms, and fund management — were explained in detail.

Discussions were also held on provisions for self-enumeration, robust data security measures, and key

features of the Census Act, 1948. Self-enumeration was highlighted as a first-of-its-kind feature of Census 2027 in India, enabling citizens to fill in their information through a designated portal. The UT administration was requested to facilitate the process through its offices.

Technical assistance requirements for strengthening UT-, district-, and charge-level census offices were reviewed, including hiring manpower, augmenting IT infrastructure, issuing census circulars, and resolving operational challenges encountered so far.

Additionally, presentations were made on the roles and responsibilities of various census functionaries, procedures for registration on the CMMS portal, training modules, fund disbursement and utilisation processes, and mechanisms to address field-level challenges.

The importance of inter-agency coordination and effective publicity campaigns to ensure public participation and awareness across the Union Territory was also emphasised.

Among those present were Dr L. Franklin, Commissioner Secretary, PD&MD and Nodal Officer for Census 2027 in UT-Ladakh; Rakesh Kumar, Deputy Commissioner, Kargil; Moses Kunzang, Administrative Secretary, Youth Services & Sports; Ghulam Mohd, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Leh; Imtiyaz Kachro, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kargil; Tsewang Gyalson, CPO Leh; Sunil Kaul, State Informatics Officer, NIC; Punchok Paldan, Director, NIC Leh; and Konchok Gyalson, Joint Director Planning, along with other officers.

From the Office of the Director of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, those present included Arun Kumar, Joint Director; Manmeet Singh Loomba, Deputy Director; Jatinder Kumar, Assistant Director; Sanjay Kumar, SIG-I; and Tashi Otsal, SIG-II.

Ladakh showcased at premier travel expo

LG Kavinder Gupta inaugurates Ladakh Pavilion at South Asia Travel & Tourism Exchange in New Delhi



Photo Caption: Lieutenant Governor Kavinder Gupta inaugurating the Ladakh Pavilion at South Asia Travel & Tourism Exchange (SATTE).

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, along with Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Kavinder Gupta, graced the 33rd edition of the South Asia Travel & Tourism Exchange (SATTE), India's premier travel and tourism exposition, held at Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi, on February 25. The event witnessed the presence of distinguished delegates, industry leaders, and tour and travel operators from across India and abroad.

Among the prominent personalities present were Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets India; Anita Mendiratta, Advisor to the Secretary-General of UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO); Suman Billa, Additional Secretary & Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Subhash Goyal, Chairman, STIC Travel Group; Dr Upasana Arora, Managing Director, Yashoda Super Specialty Hospitals; and Pasang Dorjee Sonu, Tourism Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, among others.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Tourism Minister said that tourism, which had long remained on the margins of national policymaking, has now moved to the centre of India's development agenda under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He emphasised that tourism is not merely about travel but a

powerful engine for livelihood generation, entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic growth.

Highlighting that the future belongs to nations that successfully blend culture with commerce, he noted that global travellers today seek authentic experiences, wellness, heritage, and meaningful human connections.

He further stated that the government is transforming the sector through a comprehensive national approach focused on heritage conservation, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment, with the vision of establishing India as an experience-led destination and a global leader in responsible tourism.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the unprecedented development witnessed in the Union Territory of Ladakh. He noted that world-class road infrastructure has strengthened connectivity from Leh to remote border areas, enhancing accessibility and boosting tourism potential.

He also referred to the rapid progress of the Zoji La Tunnel, which will ensure all-weather connectivity to Ladakh and further accelerate tourism growth.

Describing Ladakh as home to several world-renowned tourist destina-

tions known for their natural beauty, adventure, and spiritual heritage, he listed key attractions such as Pangong Lake, famous for its changing blue hues; Nubra Valley, known for its sand dunes and double-humped camels; Leh, the historic capital; and Khardung La, one of the highest motorable passes in the world.

Other major attractions include Magnetic Hill, Tso Moriri, Hemis Monastery, Shanti Stupa, Zaskar Valley, Lamayuru Monastery, Drass, Aryan Valley, and Hanle, which hosts the Indian Astronomical Observatory with the MACE Telescope.

Terming Ladakh a fast-emerging global tourism destination, the Lieutenant Governor pointed to its pristine landscapes, spiritual heritage, and adventure tourism appeal. He said the administration has undertaken several initiatives to promote year-round tourism, including fixing dates for UT-level festivals, participation in national and international travel marts, the launch of a new tourism logo, and the organisation of familiarisation (FAM) tours.

He added that steps are being taken to simplify registration processes for hotels and travel operators through an online portal, while environmental sustainability is being prioritised through support for sewage treatment infrastructure. Inviting tour and travel operators to prominently feature Ladakh in their packages, he assured full support from the administration to ensure that every visitor leaves with a safe, memorable, and enriching experience.

Concluding his address, the Lieutenant Governor invoked the popular line associated with Amitabh Bachchan—"Kuch Din Toh Guzariye Gujarat Mein"—and, in the same spirit, invited travellers to explore Ladakh, saying, "Kuch Din Toh Aaiyein Ladakh Mein," encouraging all to experience the region's breathtaking beauty, rich culture, and warm hospitality.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated the Ladakh Pavilion and interacted with tourism stakeholders. Around 2,000 exhibitors from India and abroad are participating in the 33rd edition of SATTE 2026 at the Yashobhoomi International Exhibition Centre, with representatives from 60 countries taking part in B2B meetings.

NOTICE

I, Gurmat Stanzin F/o Stanzin Sadol R/o Skara, Leh UT Ladakh do hereby notify that my name Gurmat Stanzin has been wrongly recorded as Gurmet Stanzin instead of correct and actual name Gurmat Stanzin in my daughter's Resident Certificate duly issued by Tehsil Office, Leh UT Ladakh with Certificate no. T-Leh/8626-27(R)22 dated 24/06/2022. Now, I'm applying for changes in my daughter's Resident Certificate and objection, if any may be conveyed to Tehsil Office, Leh UT Ladakh within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Fortnightly News

Workshop-cum-training programme on 'Product Certification and Capacity Building' concludes in Kargil



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: A five-day Workshop-cum-Training Programme on "Product Certification and Capacity Building for Women SHG Members" under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Programme concluded on February 18 in Kargil.

The workshop witnessed the participation of MSME entrepreneurs and Women Self Help Group (SHG) members engaged in the food processing sector.

The programme was organised by the Industries & Commerce Department, UT Ladakh, in collaboration with the Food Safety Department, Kargil, at the Conference Hall of the District Industries Centre (DIC), Kargil.

Speaking on the occasion, Shakil Ahmad, Assistant Extension Officer, DIC Kargil, highlighted the growing importance of certification, quality assurance, branding, and market readiness in strengthening local enterprises. He stated that the RAMP initiative aims to promote the formalisation of MSMEs, enhance competitiveness, and ensure the long-term sustainability of grassroots enterprises. He also provided a detailed overview of the scheme's objectives, institutional support mechanisms, and the range of assistance available to entrepreneurs.

Mohd Ali, Food Safety Officer, HQ Kargil, conducted an informative session on food safety compliance and emphasised the importance of obtaining registration under the Food Safety and Stan-

dards Authority of India (FSSAI). A live demonstration of the FSSAI registration process was carried out to familiarise participants with the required procedures and documentation.

The concluding day featured sessions on branding strategies, standardised labelling, and improved packaging techniques aimed at strengthening the market positioning of local products. Participants were introduced to innovative approaches adopted by emerging entrepreneurs from Ladakh, encouraging SHG members to scale up and modernise their ventures.

Nearly 40 SHG members and MSME representatives attended the programme and actively engaged in discussions throughout the workshop.

As part of the practical learning component, participants visited M/s Zilpa Chu Enterprises, where they observed the filtration and mineral water production process. Technical demonstrations on processing and packaging were conducted, followed by an interactive session addressing queries related to quality standards, product development, and packaging practices.

The Director, Industries & Commerce, UT Ladakh, appreciated the enthusiastic participation of the attendees and assured that similar capacity-building programmes would be organised in the near future to further strengthen the MSME sector in the region.

Government Primary School Skara Yokma upgraded to Ladakh Model School



Photo Caption: During the inauguration-cum-upgradation ceremony of Government Primary School, Skara Yokma, into a Ladakh Model School.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The inauguration-cum-upgradation ceremony of Government Primary School, Skara Yokma, into a Ladakh Model School was held in Leh on February 20. Administrative Secretary of the School Education Department, Bhanu Prabha, attended the event.

She was accompanied by the Principal, DIET Leh; District Programme Officer (DPO), Leh; Deputy Chief Education Officer (Dy CEO), Kargil; Zonal Education Officer (ZEO), Leh, Padma Dechen; other Heads of Departments; the Nambardar of Skara; members of the Village Education Committee (VEC); teachers; students; and parents.

Headmaster Dorjey Namgail delivered the welcome address and highlighted the significant role played by the School Education Department and the Administrative Secretary in strengthening government schools across Ladakh. He expressed gratitude for the upgradation of the school and emphasised the need to increase student enrolment in the coming academic sessions to fully utilise the enhanced facilities.

Addressing the gathering, Administrative Secretary Bhanu Prabha stated that strengthening and promoting government schools across the Union Territory remains a key priority. She emphasised the importance of quality education, improved infrastructure, and regular monitoring of students' academic progress. She called upon parents and teachers to work collaboratively to ensure the holistic development of students. She further expressed her commitment that, in the coming years, every government school in Ladakh would be developed into a model school equipped with modern facilities and innovative teaching practices.

The Nambardar of Skara, Angchuk, congratulated the department on the upgradation of the school and presented several key concerns and requirements of the institution, seeking continued support for its overall development.

Architect Konchok Tashi delivered a detailed presentation on the architectural design and structural features of the upgraded school building, explaining how the design incorporates innovative learning spaces to create a child-friendly and inspiring academic environment.

During the programme, the dignitaries conducted a comprehensive visit of the school premises, inspected classrooms, and reviewed the upgraded facilities under the Model School framework. They interacted with students, encouraging them to make the best use of the enhanced learning environment and to pursue their studies with dedication.

As a gesture of support to mark the beginning of their academic journey, the dignitaries felicitated the newly enrolled students with school bags.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by ZEO Leh, Padma Dechen, who thanked the Administrative Secretary and other dignitaries for their presence and reiterated the department's commitment to strengthening the education system in the region.

The School Education Department, under the leadership of the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh and the guidance of the Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh, reaffirmed its commitment to improving the educational landscape of the Union Territory.

Ladakh hosts 2-day Pashmina conclave in Leh

Focus on sustainability, standardisation and global branding of Changthang fibre



Photo Caption: During the two-day Pashmina Conclave 2026, themed "From Changthang Fibre to Global Luxury Standards," at The Dragon Hotel.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The two-day Pashmina Conclave 2026, themed "From Changthang Fibre to Global Luxury Standards," commenced at The Dragon Hotel in Leh on February 24.

Organised by the Administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh, the conclave aims to strengthen the Pashmina value chain and position Ladakh's premium fibre in the global luxury market.

The event has brought together designers from Delhi and Ladakh, local weavers, yarn makers, entrepreneurs, cooperative representatives, policymakers, and herders of the famed Changthang Pashmina goat from the Changthang region. The platform seeks to foster collaboration among stakeholders involved in the production, processing, branding, and marketing of Ladakh's world-renowned Pashmina.

The first session centred on the origin and sustainability of Changthang fibre.

Dr. Asif Hussain, Nodal Officer, Pashmina Ladakh, elaborated on the origins of Ladakh Pashmina and emphasised sustainable practices to preserve its unique quality and global reputation.

Thinles Nurboo, General Secretary of the All Changthang Pashmina Growers Cooperative Marketing Society Ltd., highlighted the key features of Ladakh Pashmina and outlined the society's mission, strategic objectives, and milestones in driving socio-economic transformation among pastoral communities.

Tara Sharma of Jungwa Foundation provided a historical overview of Pashmina in Changthang and discussed the impact of climate change, stressing the need for sustainable and climate-resilient production approaches.

The second session focused on processing, purity, quality grading, and standardisation gaps in the Pashmina value chain.

Huma Khan, District Registrar of Cooperatives (DRC), addressed challenges related to quality control and grading mechanisms, underscoring the need for standardised practices to enhance market credibility.

Amina Bano of Looms of

Ladakh spoke on value addition through traditional weaving and emphasised maintaining authenticity in finished Pashmina products.

Konchok Stanzin of Pangong Craft Institute highlighted the welfare of Pashmina growers and sustainable livestock management in Changthang, drawing a direct link between animal health and fibre quality.

The third session addressed artisan livelihoods and design integration.

Tundup Wangail, District Development Council (DDC) member and representative of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, shared insights into NABARD's role in promoting and sustaining the Pashmina sector through financial inclusion, institutional support, and livelihood initiatives.

Rigzin Wangmo Lachic, a Ladakh-based entrepreneur, highlighted the contribution of local growers and entrepreneurs in sustaining the heritage craft while adapting to contemporary market demands.

Tashi Dorjey of Oden Collectives elaborated on the importance of structured design processes, innovation, and integration to enhance product appeal and competitiveness.

In the concluding technical session, Dr. Stanzin Thakchos presented strategies on branding, market positioning, and value capture for Ladakh Pashmina. He discussed emerging market trends, opportunities, key challenges, and factors shaping the future of the industry.

Local representatives Kunzes Wangmo of Leh-Valle and Deskit Angmo of Coral Hue shared perspectives on brand building, market expansion, and strengthening Ladakh Pashmina's value proposition in national and international markets.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, highlighted the Union Territory's vision to transform its iconic Pashmina into a globally recognised luxury brand.

Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra emphasised the need to unite stakeholders—from herders and designers to government agencies—to safeguard Ladakh's Pashmina value chain. Noting that

Ladakh produces 40-50 tonnes annually, he observed that much of the profit currently flows to traders outside the region. He stressed adopting a holistic approach to enable local production of luxury cashmere shawls, attract younger generations, and position Pashmina as a high-end global product benefiting all stakeholders.

Secretary, Cooperatives, Bhupesh Chaudhary highlighted the department's role in addressing sectoral challenges, including climate change, and advocated collective approaches such as cooperative farming, drawing lessons from models like Amul.

Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Moses Kunzang, spoke about the Pashmina Matrix adopted by the Department of Industries and Commerce, emphasising inter-departmental collaboration and targeted interventions.

Secretary, Rural Development Department, Shashanka Ala summarised the sessions, covering fibre sustainability, processing and purity, grading gaps, artisan livelihoods, design relevance, and branding strategies.

The conclave witnessed participation from Central Government bodies, including the Central Wool Development Board and the Textile Committee under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Officials from the Departments of Industries & Commerce, Sheep/Animal Husbandry, Handloom & Handicrafts, Rural Development, and Social & Tribal Welfare were also present.

Prominent fashion industry leaders—including Samir Mehra (Founder, EZMA), Suket Dhir (SUKETDHIR), Rajesh Pratap Singh (Rajesh Pratap Singh Label), Kulbhushan Ahuja (Founder, Ahujasons), and Karan Ahuja (Director, Ahujasons)—joined shepherds, artisans, self-help groups, cooperatives, financial institutions, researchers, and government officials to chart a sustainable and inclusive roadmap for the sector.

The two-day conclave is expected to lay a strong foundation for positioning Changthang Pashmina as a sustainable, premium, and globally competitive luxury fibre while ensuring inclusive growth for Ladakh's pastoral and artisan communities.

LG Kavinder Gupta reviews preparations for 1st Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026

Directs robust arrangements, emphasises hospitality and inter-departmental coordination



Photo Caption: During the preparatory meeting at Lok Niwas to review and finalise arrangements for the first Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, chaired a high-level preparatory meeting at Lok Niwas to review and finalise arrangements for the first Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026, scheduled to be held on June 23-24 at Sindhu Ghat.

The Lieutenant Governor said the upcoming Sindhu Mahakumbh in Leh is not merely an event but a symbol of Ladakh's capability, discipline, and cultural pride. He noted that the landmark gathering is expected to bring together thousands of devotees, dignitaries, and cultural troupes, reinforcing Ladakh's status as a unique destination for spiritual, cultural, and tourism experiences.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra; Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Sanjit Rodrigues; Wildlife Warden Mandeep Mittal; Director Tourism Tsering Paldan; ADC Leh Gulam Mohd; SE PWD Dorjay Gyatso; Assistant Director Tourism Leh Padma Angmo; and members of the Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti, including General Secretary Bhupinder Kansil, Vice President Manoj Kumar Gogia, and MLA Vikram Randhawa from Jammu.

Bhupinder Kansil informed the meeting that the Sindhu Darshan Festival has been organised by the Samiti since 1987. This year marks its 30th edition, which will be celebrated as the grand first Sindhu Mahakumbh. The event is expected to attract pilgrims from over 25 States and Union Territories across India, along with foreign ambassadors and dignitaries. The Samiti sought full support from the UT Administration for logistical coordination, arrangements for the North Zone Cultural Centre troupe from Patiala, and other essential services to ensure smooth conduct of the event.

Emphasising the timeless principle of "Atithi Devo Bhava," the Lieutenant Governor urged the Administration to ensure that every pilgrim is welcomed with care, respect, and hospitality. He called for meticulous planning and inter-departmental coordination to provide a safe, comfortable, and memorable experience for all visitors.

Assuring full support from

the UT Administration, he directed all departments to prepare detailed, time-bound action plans covering logistics, security, medical services, and visitor management, with regular progress reviews.

The Lieutenant Governor stressed effective crowd management, traffic regulation, parking arrangements, and smooth movement of pilgrims. He directed that robust security arrangements be ensured through close coordination among police, civil administration, and allied agencies, supported by a fully operational emergency response system.

He instructed the Health Department to deploy adequate medical camps, ambulances, doctors, and disaster management resources. He further emphasised maintaining the highest standards of sanitation, potable water supply, toilet facilities, lighting, and waste management, and called for environmentally sustainable and responsible organisation of the event.

The Lieutenant Governor also directed coordination between the Sindhu Welfare Committee and the Administration for cultural programmes, volunteer deployment, and devotee reception. A Joint Control Room will be established to facilitate real-time coordination among departments, with strict accountability mechanisms in place to address any lapses.

"Our collective efforts should ensure that the Sindhu Mahakumbh is not only a grand spiritual gathering but also a showcase of Ladakh's organisational capability, cultural pride, and commitment to excellence," he said, adding that it must emerge as a safe, memorable, and exemplary national-level event.

Reaffirming the Administration's commitment, he said the first Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026 will be organised as a spiritually enriching, secure, and meticulously managed event reflecting Ladakh's cultural heritage, tourism potential, and administrative excellence.

Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra announced the constitution of a committee under the Deputy Commissioner Leh to ensure the successful conduct of the first Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026.

Ladakh Pollution Control Committee inspects wastewater disposal system at Chumathang Hot Spring



Photo Caption: Ladakh Pollution Control Committee reviewing the status of Liquid Waste Management system at Chumathang hot spring.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

CHUMATHANG: The Ladakh Pollution Control Committee (LPCC) conducted a comprehensive inspection of restaurants and other commercial establishments in and around the Chumathang Hot Spring area on February 18.

The inspection also covered stretches along the Indus River and adjoining Army establishments to review the status of Liquid Waste Management (LWM) systems and ensure proper treatment and disposal of wastewater.

During the inspection, LPCC officials examined the existing wastewater treatment and disposal mechanisms. Necessary directions were issued to the concerned establishments wherever deficiencies were observed, with instructions for timely rectification to ensure compliance with environmental standards.

The Committee emphasised the importance of strict adherence to environmental norms by all stakeholders, including commercial es-

tablishments, local residents, and visitors, to safeguard Ladakh's fragile and ecologically sensitive landscape.

LPCC further informed that it is mandated to monitor water quality in the region under the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act. In this regard, the general public has been urged not to litter or pollute water bodies across Ladakh.

Any individual or unit found violating environmental norms will be liable for penal action under the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and other applicable laws, including the initiation of legal proceedings wherever necessary.

Fortnightly News

Gyalwang Drukpa: A living bridge between ancient wisdom and modern responsibility

Marking the auspicious birth anniversary of the supreme head of the Drukpa lineage

By Thinles Nurboo Yoklo

On this sacred and joyous occasion, we bow with deep reverence to His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa, the Supreme Head of the Drukpa Lineage, whose life is a radiant embodiment of compassion, wisdom, courage, and visionary leadership. His Holiness is not only a revered spiritual master but also a transformative guide whose presence has profoundly shaped Ladakh and the Himalayan region.

For decades, when Ladakh had limited access to structured spiritual teachings and guidance, His Holiness chose to spend invaluable years in these high Himalayan mountains. Through profound teachings, personal example, and tireless dedication, he nurtured monks, nuns, and lay practitioners, planting seeds of compassion, discipline, and mindfulness that continue to flourish today.

Spiritual Guidance and Inner Awakening

At the heart of His Holiness's life mission lies spiritual transformation. He revived and strengthened authentic Buddhist teachings in Ladakh, emphasising non-violence, compassion for all living beings, and conscious living. His guidance inspired gradual social transformation, encouraging many to adopt vegetarianism and environmentally responsible lifestyles.

Breaking rigid traditions, His Holiness made spirituality more inclusive. He encouraged lay practitioners to participate in sacred rituals traditionally reserved for monastics, provided they practised with sincerity and discipline. This step brought spirituality closer to the people and strengthened collective faith.

Empowering Nuns and Elevating Women's Leadership

One of the most revolutionary contributions of His Holiness has been the empowerment of Buddhist nuns. At a time when nuns often received limited social recognition, he envisioned equality, dignity, and leadership for women in spiritual life.

At Druk Amitabha Mountain in Nepal and in Ladakh, more than 500 nuns have been empowered under his guidance. These nuns independently manage administration, leadership, spiritual training, and community responsibilities. From Kung Fu training to academic excellence, they stand today as a powerful global symbol of strength, discipline, and compassion in action.

Environmental Vision: Live to Love

Long before sustainability became a global priority, His Holiness spoke of environmental responsibility as a spiritual duty. Through the international organisation Live to Love International, he initiated worldwide efforts promoting environmental protection, education, and compassion. The remarkable Cycle Yatras where His Holiness rode thousands of kilometres alongside the Kung Fu nuns from Nepal to Ladakh carried a clear message: "Care for the environment, and the environment will care for us." These journeys ignited environmental awareness across communities and generations.



Pad Yatras: Walking with Nature

Through extensive Pad Yatras across the Himalayas, including challenging routes from Himachal Pradesh to Zanskar, His Holiness inspired people to reconnect with nature. These journeys were not merely symbolic—they were powerful teachings in motion, reminding humanity to live harmoniously with the Earth.

Green Ladakh: Turning Barren Land into Hope

For generations, Ladakh was considered too harsh for large-scale greenery. His Holiness personally disproved this belief by initiating tree plantation drives in the arid mountains many years ago.

In 2010, during the Commonwealth Games in India, he set a Guinness World Record by planting 50,000 trees in just 30 minutes in Ladakh—an extraordinary act symbolising hope, action, and environmental responsibility. His tree plantation drives laid the foundation for the Green Ladakh vision that continues to grow today.

Holistic Education: Druk Padma Karpo School

Understanding that education shapes the future, His Holiness established the Druk Padma Karpo School in 2001. Designed to integrate modern education with cultural values and ethics, the school provides holistic learning rooted in Ladakhi identity. It nurtures students to become globally competent while remaining deeply connected to their heritage.

Compassion in Action: Live to Rescue

Compassion for all sentient beings lies at the core of his teachings. Through

the Live to Rescue initiative, injured and abandoned animals receive care and protection. Inspired by his message of non-violence, many communities in Ladakh have embraced vegetarianism, with places like Kharu Market becoming fully vegetarian reflecting a powerful cultural shift toward compassion.

Cultural Revival and Identity

At a time when modernisation threatened Ladakh's cultural identity, His Holiness launched Live to Love Cultural Workshops in collaboration with renowned Ladakhi artists. These initiatives revived pride in traditional dress, music, dance, and customs not only in Ladakh but also among Ladakhi students in cities such as Delhi, Jammu, and Chandigarh.

Today, one can see youth proudly wearing traditional attire and celebrating their heritage a reflection of his foresight and commitment to cultural preservation.

Hemis Monastery and Global Spiritual Gatherings

Having grown up at Hemis Monastery, His Holiness later assumed its spiritual leadership. Under his guidance, Hemis hosted the historic Naropa Festival, attracting participants and artists from across the world.

He also initiated the Hemis Winter Festival, ensuring spiritual continuity during Ladakh's long winters and concluding the celebrations with traditional Ladakhi Losar festivities. Nearly two decades ago, he inaugurated the Hemis Museum, inspiring monasteries across Ladakh to preserve their precious artefacts and heritage.

Youth Leadership: Naropa Fellowship

Recognising that youth empowerment requires more than employment opportunities, His Holiness launched the Naropa Fellowship. The programme brings together young leaders from Ladakh, the Himalayan belt, India, Nepal, and Bhutan to cultivate ethical leadership, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility.

Today, its fellows serve as changemakers, social entrepreneurs, and job creators continuing his vision of compassionate leadership.

A Living Bridge Between Ancient Wisdom and Modern Responsibility

On his blessed birth anniversary, we celebrate not only the birth of a great spiritual master but also the living legacy of a visionary whose initiatives span spirituality, environment, education, culture, compassion, and youth empowerment.

His Holiness the Gyalwang Drukpa stands as a luminous bridge between ancient Himalayan wisdom and modern global responsibility. His blessings to Ladakh are immeasurable, and his vision continues to guide generations toward a future rooted in compassion, sustainability, and pride in identity.

May His Holiness be blessed with long life and stable health. May his guidance continue to illuminate Ladakh and the Himalayas for generations to come.

The World of Juniors

National Grammar Day

On March 4 every year, National Grammar Day celebrates the rules, structure, and beauty of language that help us communicate clearly and effectively. It's a day for writers, students, teachers, and language lovers to appreciate grammar and the system that gives meaning and order to our words. Grammar helps us share ideas, express emotions, and make sense of the world around us. National Grammar Day reminds us that good grammar is all about connection and understanding, not rigid standards of perfection.

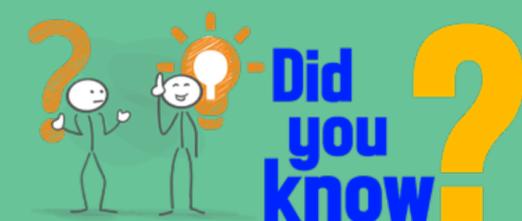
Martha Brockenbrough, the founder of the Society for the Promotion of Good Grammar and author of "Things That Make Us [Sic]", founded National Grammar Day in 2008. She used a play on words and grammar to create the day's very clever motto: "It's not only a date, it's an imperative: March forth on March 4 to speak well, write well, and help others do the same!"

Brockenbrough stated in an interview that her motivation to create National Grammar Day was to have a fun and positive way in which to help her students with their grammar.

In its first year, National Grammar Day received the approval of President George W. Bush, who sent a letter commemorating the day.

Many people think that grammar is just a set of rules established for language that can be ignored. But the truth is that grammar is the language system that ensures we are all able to communicate effectively and understand each other. Grammar is one of the most important parts of communication because excluding or including certain grammatical elements can change the entire meaning of a sentence. Using a very well-known example, the two sentences "Let's eat, grandma!" and "Let's eat grandma!" have two completely different meanings. It is the comma, a grammatical element, that changes everything. So, not knowing proper grammar can cause a few awkward misunderstandings.

The day quickly became popular among teachers, students, and language enthusiasts across the country. From online grammar quizzes to classroom games, National Grammar Day has become a mix of learning, laughter, and love for words.



1. The earliest known mirrors were made from polished obsidian, but today, we use both concave and convex mirrors in everything from telescopes to vehicles.
2. The most misspelled word in English is "accommodate." its double C and double M, which is why using effective spelling strategies is essential for mastering such tricky words.
3. There's a place in the Pacific Ocean called Point Nemo that's farther from land than any other location on Earth.
4. In Finland, there's a national day for failure. Celebrated on October 13, it encourages people to embrace mistakes and learn from them turning failure into a positive force for growth.
5. Bhutan uses Gross National Happiness to measure success.

6. In Korea, babies are considered one year old at birth.
7. Scotland's national animal is the unicorn.
8. Cleopatra lived closer to the moon landing than to the pyramid construction.
9. Cleopatra lived closer to the moon landing than to the pyramid construction.
10. Sharks existed before trees. Sharks have been around for over 400 million years, while trees appeared around 350 million years ago—making sharks one of the oldest living species on Earth.
11. A teaspoon of neutron star material would weigh over 6 billion tons. That's incredibly dense!
12. Sloths can hold their breath longer than dolphins. They slow their heart rate to survive underwater for up to 40 minutes.
13. Bananas are technically berries, but strawberries aren't. It all comes down to botanical classifications!
14. Stars don't twinkle in space. The twinkling is caused by Earth's atmosphere.

Courtesy: PNC Cognition School

SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

Man's hunger for recognition!



We work hard not merely to make two ends meet but also to gain some recognition. I would even go to the extent of saying that we humans are born with a hunger for recognition. Nothing wrong with that as it is recognition that boosts one's morale and confidence. All the great things of the world were done by those who were confident and morally strong.

In everybody's life, even the smallest of recognition like acknowledgment of good work can be a morale booster. It is a kind of appreciation that eggs you on to do

better.

There are several ways that recognition can make a big difference in one's life. In some cases, it can be a game-changer or super-powerful. Take the case of someone being applauded at her workplace for her good work and the boss shooting out an 'appreciation letter'. This kind of small gestures act as a powerful force to bring about a good and positive work-culture.

Every time such a recognition is done, better work and a sense of loyalty is 'born', and you feel like doing all the more of good things and a team-work culture for better results. As a result, one gives better performance. That is because of the psychological effect playing its role: When people feel they are being appreciated and their work is valued, then they go out of the way to give out better results.

Another strong point that recognition leads to is that it fosters a positive culture in terms of work environment, and that automatically leads to higher productivity. And higher productivity, in turn, leads to greater recognition and rewards. As such, individuals working in such an atmosphere get highly motivated to step up higher, and to repeat success stories one after the other.

In other words, recognition is necessarily a human need. Nothing good or great can be expected without recognition for someone's good work. Seeking recognition for your good work is all in good order.

Tailpiece: Recognition is a kind of catalyst for any kind of achievement, big or small.

Courtesy: WongWorld

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

Fortnightly News

In Conversation with Yangchan Dolma (Palajora), Progressive Farmer

Q. Congratulations on receiving the State Award 2026 under the Entrepreneurship and Progressive Farming category. How do you feel?

Jullay, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my views and opinions. I sincerely express my gratitude to the Administration of UT Ladakh, the concerned departments, and all the officers for recognising the work of farmers and encouraging us to continue working with greater passion and enthusiasm.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my family members, who have worked equally hard and supported me at every step, ensuring that our livelihood continued smoothly. This award motivates me to do even more in the field of agriculture. I believe such recognition not only encourages an individual but also inspires many others in Ladakh who are associated with agricultural practices to work with renewed dedication and confidence.

Q. Brief us about your work.

Earlier in Ladakh, only limited crops such as barley, peas, and turnip were cultivated. However, with time, there has been a significant transformation in agricultural practices. With new innovations, improved techniques, and greater exposure, farmers in Ladakh are now cultivating a wide variety of vegetables.

On my farm, I grow different kinds of vegetables including bottle gourd, summer squash, onion, potatoes, cauliflower, cabbage, knol khol, Kashmiri saag, leafy vegetables, and turnip, among others. I have adopted multiple cropping practices and currently take two crops in open fields and four crops annually in greenhouses.

I have six greenhouses of various sizes. For the winter season, I begin sowing leafy vegetables such as spinach, Chinese cabbage, and coriander in November. These crops are ready for harvest by February and are then sold in the market. From March onwards, I raise nurseries in the greenhouses and later transplant crops such as tomatoes, brinjal, and capsicum. After harvesting these in September, I again sow vegetables like spinach and cabbage, which are ready for harvest by the end of October. In this way, I am able to cultivate four crops in a single greenhouse each year.

In addition to vegetables, I also produce flower seedlings, including gladiolus, gazania, rose, snapdragon, zinnia, marigold, godetia, carnation, and geranium.

Q. Not just crops, you also focus on seedlings and nursery cultivation. Can you brief us about it?

Interviewed by Stanzin Dasal



MESSAGE TO THE READERS
“Agriculture is our identity and the backbone of sustainable living. I urge the youth to combine education with farming and adopt modern techniques to make it profitable and innovative. With dedication and the right support, we can strengthen local food production and build a self-reliant Ladakh.”

Seedling and nursery preparation is both feasible and highly important. Earlier, we used to procure seedlings from the nursery farm of the Agriculture Department, Leh, and from DIHAR. However, obtaining sufficient seedlings from these sources was time-consuming. Moreover, procuring seeds from other states like Delhi was expensive.

Therefore, I decided to start producing my own seedlings and nursery plants on about two kanals of land. This not only helps meet the requirements of my own vegetable cultivation but also allows me to sell surplus seedlings in the market for income generation.

Out of the total seedlings I produce, around 20 percent are transplanted into my own fields, while the remaining 80 percent are sold in the market. Through this initiative, I generate an annual income of approximately ₹2.5 lakh.

Many farmers have been inspired by my work and have started producing seedlings themselves. The seeds and seedlings produced locally in Ladakh are of good quality, and we have received no complaints so far.

Q. What are the challenges faced by the farmers of Leh?

One of the main challenges faced by farmers in Leh is the non-availability of a proper market space to sell farm produce. In earlier days, farmers from different parts of Ladakh could sell their products in the main market area. However, with development and changing regulations, they are no longer permitted to sell their produce there.

It is very important to have a designated marketplace where local farmers can directly sell their produce. At present, many farmers are forced to sit along roadsides or on small footpaths, often in crowded conditions, to sell their goods. They struggle significantly under such circumstances.

This situation has adversely affected income generation, and as a result, many farmers feel discouraged from continuing agricultural practices. Providing proper market infrastructure would greatly support and motivate local farmers.

Q. Today many educated youths do not prefer to work in fields or pursue sustainable living. What is your opinion on this?

Yes, it is true that very few young people today take interest in farming or wish to continue the ancestral way of life. While education is extremely important, there should be a healthy blend of modern knowledge and traditional practices.

If educated individuals engage in agriculture, they can bring

...continues on page 6

Fortnight Highlights



The Sampoornata Abhiyan conducted in the Block Puga at Sumdho Gongma under the aegis of the Government of India's flagship initiative, launched by the NITI Aayog. During the Abhiyan special outreach activities were conducted to ensure 100% coverage of government schemes, were carried out. Approximately 70 people participated in the Abhiyan



B3 helicopter of Pawan Hans successfully landed at the helipads of Sumoor and Digger villages, marking an important step in strengthening connectivity and public service delivery in the region.



Drass Warriors clinched the title of the 17th CEC Ice Hockey Championship 2026, defeating Shakar Chiktan Red by 3-0 goals in the final match.



Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, during his visit to Sub-Division Zaskar on February 22, toured Kargyak village the last inhabited village of Zaskar where he attended a Public Darbar and held extensive interactions with local residents and public representatives.



The National Institute of Sowa Rigpa Leh participated in the National Arogya Mela 2026 held at Shegaon in Buldhana district, Maharashtra for four days from 25 to 28 February. The event was inaugurated by the President of India Draupadi Murmu.



The Department of Horticulture, Leh organized a one-day awareness-cum-training programme on Pruning and Pest Management at Chemday in Kharu Zone on 25th February. Around 100 farmers from Kharu, Sakti, and Chemday actively participated in the programme.



The District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), Leh, organized a special guest session with Choskyong Palga Rinpoche. Rinpoche shared inspiring teachings on building a positive and purposeful future, emphasizing the importance of education, strong values, and discipline in daily life.



The Department of Social Work, Eliezer Jordan Memorial (EJM) College, Leh, flagged off an Academic Exposure and Field Learning visit to New Delhi on February 19 under the banner of PM-USHA (Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan).

Fortnightly News

In Conversation with Yangchan Dolma (Palajora), Progressive Farmer

...Continuity of page 5

significant positive changes to the sector. With better awareness, skills, and exposure, they can introduce new ideas, adopt modern technologies, improve productivity, and explore wider markets. The scope of income generation also increases when farming is approached with innovation and proper planning.

Agriculture should not be seen as a backward profession; rather, it has immense potential if combined with education, entrepreneurship, and sustainable practices.

Q. To promote organic farming, you not only cultivate crops but also rear livestock. In Leh, many people have given up livestock rearing, and some are even abandoning it. What would you like to say about this?

For organic farming, the use of compost is essential, and for that, a farmer must have a sufficient number of livestock. I currently rear five cows and 35 sheep. Using cow dung and sheep manure, I prepare compost with the help of waste decomposer solutions and other organic materials. This provides natural and nutrient-rich manure for my fields.

Nowadays, people easily get products like milk, curd, and butter from the market, which has led many to give up livestock rearing. However, livestock plays a crucial role in sustaining organic farming practices. Without animals, it becomes difficult to maintain soil fertility naturally. At the same time, it is equally important to have a proper market system to sell organic produce. If farmers are assured of good returns and market access, more people will be encouraged to continue both livestock rearing and organic farming.

Five-day FLN and Jolly Phonics training concludes at DIET Leh



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The five-day teacher training workshop on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) lesson planning and Jolly Phonics concluded successfully on February 21 at District Institute of Education and Training Leh. The programme was organised in collaboration with the 17,000 Feet Foundation and Jolly

Phonics.

The training sessions were conducted by expert resource persons Archana Mahindra and Shainaz Jussa, a certified Jolly Phonics trainer from the UK. Both trainers demonstrated great dedication throughout the workshop,

providing practical demonstrations, classroom strategies, and interactive activities aimed at strengthening teachers' skills in foundational literacy, numeracy, and phonetics instruction.

The Joint Director of the School Education Department, UT Ladakh, graced the valedictory function as the Chief Guest. The Principal of DIET Leh warmly welcomed the Chief Guest and appreciated the resource persons for their tireless commitment and the high-quality training imparted to the participants.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest assured that his office would extend full support in addressing service-related matters of teachers. He also encouraged participants to effectively implement the newly learned pedagogical practices in their respective schools for the overall benefit of students.

DC Kargil reviews staff attendance, health infrastructure in district



Photo Caption: Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Rakesh Kumar chairing a comprehensive meeting of the Health Department.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Kargil, Rakesh Kumar chaired a comprehensive meeting of the Health Department at his office on February 24, emphasizing punctuality and accountability of staff across all health institutions in the district.

sure uninterrupted public service delivery.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Inteeaz Kacho; District Social Welfare Officer Sameena Khatoun; Medical Superintendent, District Hospital, Dr. Mohammad Abbas; Block Medical Officer, Kargil, Dr. Jaleel Ahmad; Nodal Officer (Tobacco Control and Mental Health), Dr. Fatima Nissa; and ENT Specialist Dr. Oliyath

He stressed the need for regular attendance of employees at the District Hospital, Block Medical Offices, and all health centres to en-

Ali. Several Block Medical Officers also joined the meeting virtually.

The Deputy Commissioner directed Block Medical Officers to conduct regular visits to health centres under their jurisdiction and warned that strict action would be taken in cases of absence or dereliction of duty.

He further informed that a face-authentication-based Aadhaar-enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS) will soon be introduced at all workplaces, with health institutions to be prioritized. He also stressed effective implementation of the e-Hospital system and discussed measures to strengthen the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission initiative.

In addition, the meeting reviewed infrastructural requirements at the District Hospital and other health institutions, with emphasis on identifying gaps through improved data collection. The need for specialists, particularly cardiologists and gynaecologists, was also discussed.

Menstrual health awareness programme held at CHC Sankoo; 260 menstrual cups distributed



Photo Caption: During the awareness programme on menstrual health and hygiene management at Community Health Centre (CHC) Sankoo.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

SANKOO: An awareness programme on menstrual health and hygiene management, along with sensitisation on the use of menstrual cups, was held at the Conference Hall of Community Health Centre (CHC) Sankoo on February 23.

The programme was organised by Baqirya Health Care & Research Centre in collaboration with the Block Medical Officer (BMO), Sankoo.

The event was conducted under the leadership of Vice President of BHC&RC, Dr. Nasreen Fatima, who addressed participants on the importance of menstrual health, personal hygiene, and breaking the stigma surrounding menstruation. She highlighted the advantages of menstrual cups, including their reusability, environmental sustainability, and cost-effectiveness, while also clarifying common myths and addressing concerns regarding their safe usage.

Block Medical Officer Sankoo, Dr. Zahida Khatun, outlined the objectives of the programme and appreciated the initiative taken by BHC&RC Kargil in supporting healthcare workers.

On the occasion, ASHAs, Anganwadi workers, ANMs, CHOs, and female staff of CHC Sankoo were provided comprehensive awareness and education on various aspects of menstrual health and hygiene.

The main resource person for the programme was Dr. Rubiya Banoo, Consultant Gynaecologist, who delivered an informative session on menstrual hygiene management. She explained the safe usage, benefits, and maintenance of menstrual cups, emphasising the importance of proper menstrual hygiene and addressing the social challenges faced by women during menstruation.

Zakiya Banoo, CHO, and Kaneek Sakina, LHV from the MCH Section, also attended the programme and expressed their support for initiatives aimed at improving women's health and hygiene standards in the region.

During the programme, more than 260 menstrual cups were distributed among ASHAs, ANMs, CHOs, and female staff of CHC Sankoo by BHC&RC Kargil.

In her concluding remarks, Dr. Nasreen Fatima thanked the volunteers of Baqirya Health Care & Research Centre Kargil, the Block Medical Officer, ASHAs, Anganwadi workers, CHOs, ANMs, and the female staff of CHC Sankoo for their cooperation and support in successfully organising the event.

Department of Horticulture Nubra organises training on pruning and pest management



Photo Caption: Progressive orchardists of Tyakshi-A, Tyakshi-B, Kharponthang, and adjoining villages after awareness-cum-training programme on pruning and pest management.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: The Department of Horticulture, Nubra Sub-Division, organised a one-day awareness-cum-training programme on pruning and pest management for progressive orchardists of Tyakshi-A, Tyakshi-B, Kharpon-

thang, and adjoining villages on February 24. Around 40 farmers participated in the programme, which was conducted in the presence of Hamidullah, Horticulture Technician Grade-I.

During the session, practical demonstrations on scientific pruning techniques were conducted to enhance participants' understanding of proper orchard management practices. Farmers were also provided guidance on effective pest management measures to protect crops and improve yield.

Horticultural tools were distributed among the orchardists to facilitate the effective implementation of the demonstrated techniques in their respective orchards.

The participating farmers appreciated the Department for organising an informative and well-coordinated training programme.

The initiative is part of the Department's ongoing efforts to strengthen the knowledge and technical skills of local farmers. By promoting the adoption of modern horticultural practices, the programme aims to enhance agricultural productivity, increase farmers' income, and contribute to the overall economic development of the region.

Chief Secretary interacts with public representatives of Singe Lalok, reviews key developmental issues



Photo Caption: Chief Secretary of UT-Ladakh, Ashish Kundra interacting with public representatives of Singe Lalok at Nyerak Bridge.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Chief Secretary of UT-Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, during his tour to the Zaskar sub-division interacted with public representatives of Singe Lalok at Nyerak Bridge on February 21.

The meeting witnessed active participation from Nambardars and representatives of various villages in the Singe Lalok region, who apprised the Chief Secretary of key developmental issues and long-pending demands concerning their areas.

During the interaction, the delegation raised the issue of road alignment in Yulchung village, requesting the necessary intervention to ensure safer, more feasible connectivity. They also stressed the urgent need to strengthen Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connectivity to improve telecommunication and internet services in these remote villages, which are crucial for education, healthcare, and administrative services.

The representatives further demanded the construction of a community gathering hall at Lingshed to facilitate social, cultural, and official programmes. Improvement of link roads and black-topping of roads in Skumpata village were also highlighted to ensure smooth transportation, particularly during winter months.

The delegation emphasised the need for reliable bus connectivity in the Singe Lalok region to ease travel hardships faced by residents. They also urged ensuring all-time connectivity through the NPD road, which remains vital for uninterrupted access to essential services and movement of goods and people throughout the year.

In addition, the representatives proposed constructing an Ice Hockey rink and a Futsal ground to promote sports infrastructure and provide constructive engagement opportunities for local youth.

Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra gave a patient hearing to all the issues raised and assured the delegation that their concerns would be examined in coordination with the concerned departments. He reiterated the UT Administration's commitment to strengthening infrastructure, improving digital and road connectivity, and promoting youth development in remote and far-flung areas.

Accompanying the Chief Secretary, Ashish Kundra, during the visit were the Deputy Commissioner, Romil Singh Donk; ASP (HQ) Leh, Rishab Shukla; officers from the Border Roads Organisation (BRO); Heads of Departments; and other concerned officials.

PM Vishwakarma Exhibition-cum-Trade Fair 2026 held at Eco Park, Leh



Photo Caption: During the PM Vishwakarma Exhibition-cum-Trade Fair.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The PM Vishwakarma Exhibition-cum-Trade Fair 2026 was successfully organised at Eco Park Leh by the MSME-Development & Nucleus Cell, Leh, under the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Government of India, in association with the Directorate of Industries & Commerce, UT Ladakh, on February 25.

The exhibition aimed to promote and showcase the rich craftsmanship and entrepreneurial potential of local artisans and traditional workers under the flagship PM Vishwakarma Scheme of the Government of India.

The event provided a vibrant platform for beneficiaries and local entrepreneurs to display their products, network with buyers, and explore new market opportunities.

Artisans representing various traditional trades exhibited a diverse range of products, reflecting Ladakh's cultural heritage and skilled craftsmanship. The trade fair facilitated direct interaction between producers and consumers, encouraging business linkages and enhancing visibility for locally manufactured goods.

Director Industries & Commerce, Ladakh, Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, high-

lighted the government's commitment to strengthening the MSME ecosystem in Ladakh by providing financial assistance, skill upgradation, modern tools, and marketing support under the PM Vishwakarma initiative.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from artisans, entrepreneurs, self-help groups, and members of the public. The exhibition not only celebrated the spirit of self-reliance and entrepreneurship but also reinforced collaborative efforts towards sustainable economic development in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

The programme was attended by General Manager, District Industries Centre, Leh, A.G. Zargar; Convenor UTIBC, Tsering Wangmo; Assistant Director Handloom, Leh; Assistant Director Handicrafts, Leh; Manager IPPB, Jagdish; officials from the Industries Department; and a large number of artisans and cultural troupes.

The organisers expressed gratitude to all participating artisans, departments, and stakeholders for making the event a success and reiterated their commitment to continuing such initiatives to empower traditional artisans and promote local industries.

NOTICE

Whereas Mohd Mussa F/o Muddasir Ali R/o Turtuk, Nubra Leh UT Ladakh has claimed that his Son's name has been wrongly written as Muntazeer Ali instead of correct and actual name Muddasir Ali in his Birth Certificate which is issued by Department of Health and Family Welfare Block Medical Officer Nubra with Registration No. B202538000150001388 and Date of Birth 12-11-2018 and now he has applied for correction of name in the Birth Certificate. Hence the notice is hereby served through press to file objection if any in this office Department of Health and Family Welfare Block Medical Officer Nubra within 7 days from date of publication of this notice.

Fortnightly News

DIET Leh organises poster-making competition on adolescent health



Photo Caption: During the poster-making and painting competition on the theme Adolescent Health.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The District Institute of Education and Training Leh successfully organised a poster-making and painting competition on the theme Adolescent Health under the National Population Education Programme of National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi. The event was held at the Lingshed Winter Residential Hostel on February 23 and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students.

The primary objective of the programme was to create awareness among adolescents about the physical, emotional, and psychological changes during adolescence,

and to promote healthy habits, positive thinking, and responsible behaviour.

Students actively participated in the competition, creatively expressing their understanding of adolescent health, hygiene, mental well-being, nutrition, and the importance of guidance and counselling. The colourful and thought-provoking posters reflected their awareness and sensitivity towards this crucial stage of life.

An awareness session on adolescence was also conducted by clinical psychologist Tsewang Stanzin, who delivered an informative and interactive talk. He sensitised students about emotional changes, stress management, peer pressure, self-confidence, and the importance of seeking guidance from teachers and parents. The session was highly engaging, allowing students to ask questions and clarify their doubts in a friendly and supportive environment.

The programme aimed to empower adolescents with accurate knowledge and to dispel myths and misconceptions related to this transitional phase of life.

Senior Lecturer Tsering Tundup stated that DIET Leh remains committed to promoting holistic education and ensuring the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of students through such meaningful initiatives under the National Population Education Programme.

Mobile Medical unit camp benefits 85 residents in Ang village



Photo Caption: During the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) camp at village Ang.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ANG: The Block Medical Officer (BMO), Khalte, Dr. Shamim Ahmed, successfully organised a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) camp at village Ang on February 20.

The camp was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Shamim Ahmed with the objective of providing

specialised healthcare services to the local community, particularly residents of the remote village.

Medical officers were deputed for the camp is Dr. Stanzin Yangdol Physician; Dr. Ashish Vaishnav Medical Officer; Dr. Shaista Iqbal Dental Surgeon and Dr. Stanzin Lazes Medical Officer (Amchi)

A total of 85 patients availed services during the camp, including, 34 physician consultations, 18 general consultations by the Medical Officer, 17 dental consultations and 12 Amchi consultations.

In addition to general medical care, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening was conducted for all eligible attendees, focusing on the early detection of diabetes and hypertension.

The camp concluded successfully, delivering essential healthcare services and much-needed relief to the residents of village Ang.

DC Kargil chairs review meeting on Capex Budget 2025–26 expenditure



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Deputy Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, LAHDC Kargil, Rakesh Kumar, chaired a comprehensive review meeting on the expenditure under the District Capex Budget 2025–26 at the Conference Hall, Baroo, Kargil, on February 26.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner conducted a detailed assessment of progress achieved under both ongoing and newly sanctioned works across various sectors.

Emphasising fiscal discipline and transparency, he stressed the need for proactive coordination between executing agencies and financial authorities to ensure accurate and up-to-date expenditure figures.

He directed all departments to immediately reconcile their expenditure data with the Treasury authorities and ensure timely updating of financial records.

The Deputy Commissioner further instructed that any unspent or non-committed funds, where expenditure is not feasible within the stipulated time-frame, must be surrendered by February 27 to facilitate consolidation of accurate financial figures for the closure of the financial year 2025–26.

He highlighted that precise financial reporting is essential for effective planning and formulation of the District Capex Budget for 2026–27.

Additionally, he directed all Heads of Departments to promptly submit and reflect pending requisitions, particularly for projects nearing completion where expenditure can be booked within the current financial year.

The meeting was attended by the Joint Director Finance; Superintending Engineers of R&B and PHE; Executive Engineers of R&B and PHE divisions of Kargil and Sankoo; Executive Engineer, Irrigation and Flood Control; Accounts Officers of various departments; Block Development Officers; Divisional Forest Officer; and other district and sectoral officers.

29 men's, 4 women's teams compete in 17th CEC Cup Ice Hockey championship



Photo Caption: During the farmers training camp on oilseed cultivation at Sakti village.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHARU: A training camp on oilseed cultivation under the National Mission on Edible Oils–Oilseeds (NMEOS) as part of Krishi Unnati was conducted on February 21 at Sakti village in Kharu Sub-Division, Leh.

The programme, organised by the Agriculture Department, aimed to educate farmers on best practices for cultivating mustard as an oilseed crop.

The training was led by Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer Mohd Ramzan, Agriculture Extension Officer, Kharu, Kunzang Dolma, Junior Agriculture Extension Officer Stanzin Idong, and Dr. Kunzang Lamo.

In addition to oilseed cultivation, the programme covered various modern agricultural techniques. Topics included the package of practices for the Ladakh Greenhouse, preparation of vermicompost, mushroom cultivation, natural farming, and organic farming. Farmers were also informed about various departmental schemes available to support and strengthen their agricultural activities.

DLSA Leh spreads awareness on Domestic Violence Act and Legal Aid services



Photo Caption: During the Legal Awareness Programme at the DC Conference Hall, Leh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHARU: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Leh, organised a Legal Awareness Programme at the DC Conference Hall, Leh, on February 20 to commemorate the World Day of Social Justice.

Observed globally, the day aims to promote social justice, equality, human rights, and equal opportunities for all, particularly for marginalised and vulnerable sections of society.

The programme was attended by Wangail Tsering, Sub-Judge and Secretary, DLSA Leh; Advocate Phuntsog Stobgyal, Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsel; Advocate Tsering Laskit, Panel Lawyer; workers of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS); DLSA staff members; and Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs). Their presence reflected a collective commitment to ensuring access to justice for all.

Addressing the gathering, Wangail Tsering highlighted the significance of the World Day of Social Justice and emphasised the need to ensure equal access to justice for every citizen, particularly women and children from vulnerable sections of society. He apprised participants of the various legal safeguards available for their protection and welfare and elaborated on the free legal aid services provided by DLSA to eligible beneficiaries. He also briefly spoke about the Victim Compensation Scheme in POCSO cases, stressing the provision of financial and rehabilitative support to child victims.

Advocate Phuntsog Stobgyal underscored the vital role of legal awareness in strengthening social justice. He explained the procedure for availing legal aid services through DLSA and encouraged participants to seek timely legal remedies whenever required.

Advocate Tsering Laskit gave a detailed overview of the provisions of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. She explained the rights of aggrieved women under the Act, including protection orders, residence orders, monetary relief, custody orders, and compensation.

She further informed participants about the procedure for filing complaints, the role of Protection Officers, and the legal remedies available to ensure immediate and effective protection against domestic violence.

The programme concluded with an engaging interactive session during which participants raised queries and received clarifications from the resource persons.

Department of Horticulture, Leh conducts one-day farmers' training programme in Nubra zone



Photo Caption: Farmers' Training Programme on pruning, training, and orchard sanitation in Nubra.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The Department of Horticulture, Leh, through Horticulture Zone Nubra, organized a one-day Farmers' Training Programme on pruning, training, and orchard sanitation on February 25 at Kuri, Murgi, and Trisha villages in the Nubra region.

The programme witnessed active participation from local farmers and orchardists. It aimed to enhance their technical knowledge and practical skills in scientific pruning and training methods, while also highlighting the importance of maintaining proper orchard sanitation to ensure healthy plant growth and improved productivity.

During the session, Hamid Ullah, Horticulture Technician, along with field staff of the department, delivered

detailed lectures and conducted practical demonstrations on scientific pruning techniques, canopy management, removal of diseased and dead wood, and sanitation practices to prevent pest and disease incidence. Special emphasis was laid on timely orchard operations to improve fruit quality and yield under the local agro-climatic conditions of Nubra.

The programme was organized as part of the department's continuous efforts to strengthen the horticulture sector by promoting modern and scientific orchard management practices among farmers. The initiative aims to improve productivity, reduce crop losses, and enhance the overall income of orchardists in the region.

Rashtriya Ekatmata Yatra 2026: 30 students leave for national integration tour

Programme to expose participants to India's cultural, educational and administrative landscape



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on February 26 flagged off a batch of 30 students from Lok Niwas, Leh, for the Rashtriya Ekatmata Yatra 2026 – Student Experience in Regional Understanding (SERU) tour. The initiative is organised by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in collaboration with the Vidyarthi Sewa Trust.

The group comprises 11 girls and 19 boys from Eliezer Joldan Memorial College, University of Ladakh, and the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Choglamsar. During the 13-day tour, the students will visit Gurugram, Chandigarh, Manali and Jammu as part of a structured exposure programme aimed at fostering national integration and regional understanding.

The itinerary includes visits to premier institutions and landmark sites such as the Maruti Suzuki India Limited plant at Gurugram and Rashtrapati Bhavan, among others. A unique feature of the programme is the students' stay with host families in different regions, enabling them to experience local culture, traditions and lifestyles firsthand, thereby deepening their appreciation of India's rich diversity.

Addressing the students, the Lieutenant Governor underscored the importance of such exposure tours in strengthening national integration and mutual understanding among youth. He observed that the SERU initiative is a meaningful step towards realising the vision of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' by creating platforms for dialogue, cultural exchange and experiential learning.

Kavinder Gupta highlighted that SERU (Student Experience in Regional Understanding) promotes awareness and appreciation of specific regional cultures, citing previous tours from Ladakh to Delhi as notable examples.

He emphasised that through activities such as cultural exchanges, visits to historical sites and interactions with local communities, participants gain

first-hand insight into the country's diverse traditions and ways of life. Such initiatives, he noted, foster lifelong friendships, lasting memories and a deeper emotional bond among citizens from different regions.

The Lieutenant Governor further remarked that the primary objective of the initiative is to provide Ladakh's youth with an opportunity to understand India's diverse cultural, geographical and administrative landscape. The programme familiarises students with governance systems, higher educational institutions, industrial establishments and the historical backdrop of various states, thereby broadening their academic and professional horizons.

"It is not merely an educational tour but a powerful medium for fostering collaboration, dialogue and national unity. When young people from different regions engage with one another and exchange experiences, it strengthens harmony and mutual cooperation," he stated.

Commending ABVP and Vidyarthi Sewa Trust for their sustained efforts, the Lieutenant Governor appreciated their role in enabling the youth of Ladakh to connect with the nation's cultural heritage, democratic values and governance framework. He encouraged the students to act as ambassadors of Ladakh, uphold its rich traditions and contribute meaningfully to nation-building.

During the interaction, the organisers informed that the tour is designed to broaden students' perspectives, promote cultural understanding and national unity, and inspire them in their future academic and career pursuits.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations and best wishes to all participating students for a safe, successful and enriching journey, reiterating the Administration's commitment to youth empowerment and nation-building initiatives in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

