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From alleged overdose to cover-up: A crime that exposes Ladakh's growing drug crisis

Death of 22-year-old woman and arrest of four youths spark debate on substance abuse, mental health and youth vulnerability

By Stanzin Dasal

LEH: A shocking case involving the death of a 22-year-old woman and the subsequent arrest of four youths has brought Ladakh's growing drug problem into sharp focus, raising concerns about substance abuse, youth vulnerability, and the potential link between addiction and serious crime.

The case came to light after the charred body of a young woman was recovered on June 1 from the Gangles-Khardungla Road area. Following an intensive investigation, Leh Police arrested four accused, all in their twenties, on June 8. A case has been registered under FIR No. 104/2026 under Sections 103(1) and 238 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Addressing a press conference, Incharge Senior Superintendent of Police Rajneesh Garg said preliminary investigations suggest that the deceased and three of the accused had allegedly consumed drugs together at a rented accommodation prior to the incident.

According to statements recorded by investigators, the woman is suspected to have died from a drug overdose.

"Instead of seeking medical assistance, the accused allegedly shifted the body to different locations in an attempt to dispose of it. They later transported the body to the Gangles-Khardungla Road area, where multiple attempts were made to burn it. A fourth accused is alleged to have assisted in disposing of the body," Garg said.

Describing the conduct of the accused as that of "hardened criminals," the SSP said the investigation remains underway and further details would emerge as the case progresses.

Police records show that the deceased, identified as Stanzin Zesdon, had previously been booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in February this year. One of the accused is also reported to have a prior NDPS-related case.

Investigators believe the incident is directly linked to substance abuse and its consequences. While overdose-related deaths have occasionally surfaced in Leh in recent years, the



Photo Caption: Representational Image

illeged attempt to conceal the death by burning the body represents a deeply disturbing development.

The incident highlights how addiction can trigger panic-driven decisions that escalate into serious criminal acts.

The case has sent shockwaves through Ladakh, a region long known for its close-knit communities and comparatively low crime rates. Many residents view the incident as a troubling indicator of changing social realities and the growing impact of narcotics among sections of the youth.

The tragedy has also challenged the perception that substance abuse primarily affects men.

Mental health professionals point out that addiction cuts across gender, age and social backgrounds.

Dr. Padma Angmo, Psychiatrist, said cases involving women and young girls are increasingly being reported, underscoring the need to address addiction as a wider societal issue rather than a gender-specific problem.

"Substance abuse does not discriminate. It af-

fects individuals across different sections of society, and we need to acknowledge that reality if we are serious about prevention and rehabilitation," she said.

Alarming drug seizure trends

Official data indicates that drug-related offences have remained a persistent concern in Ladakh over the past four years.

In 2023, police registered 16 cases under the NDPS Act, resulting in 25 arrests. During the year, authorities seized 3.124 kg of charas, 2.429 kg of ganja, 12 grams of brown sugar, hundreds of banned capsules and 6.688 grams of MDMA.

In 2024, 15 NDPS cases were registered with 22 arrests. Drug seizures rose significantly, with authorities recovering 5.5 kg of charas, 8.602 kg of ganja and substantial quantities of banned tablets and capsules.

In 2025, police registered 11 cases leading to 23 arrests, while seizures included around one kilogram of charas, 960 grams of ganja and 48 grams of heroin.

The trend has continued in 2026. In just the first half of the year, 16 FIRs have already been registered under the NDPS Act, resulting in 25 arrests. Seizures so far include more than one kilo-

gram of charas, 955 grams of ganja and 16.64 grams of heroin.

Law enforcement officials believe the figures indicate not only continued availability of narcotic substances but also growing efforts by agencies to identify and disrupt drug networks operating in the region.

Beyond tourism and unemployment

Experts caution against attributing the problem solely to tourism or unemployment. Dr. Padma Angmo said substance abuse is often linked to deeper emotional, psychological and social factors.

"Mental health and substance abuse are closely connected. In most of the cases, family problems, emotional distress and lack of support systems push young people towards addiction. Tourism and unemployment alone cannot explain the issue," she said.

She stressed the importance of parental involvement, urging families to remain attentive to their children's behaviour, peer groups and emotional well-being.

Experts and community leaders agree that addressing drug abuse requires a multi-pronged approach involving law enforcement, educational institutions, families, healthcare providers and civil society organisations.

While strict policing remains essential to curb the supply of narcotics, awareness campaigns, counselling services, rehabilitation facilities and community engagement are equally important in preventing addiction and supporting recovery.

As police continue their investigation into the death of Stanzin Zesdon, the incident has evolved beyond a criminal case. It has reignited urgent conversations about drug abuse, mental health, youth vulnerability and the collective responsibility of society to prevent similar tragedies.

For many in Ladakh, the case serves as a stark reminder that the region's emerging drug crisis can no longer be viewed as an isolated problem. Instead, it demands sustained attention, open dialogue and coordinated action before more young lives are lost.

Union Minister Raksha Khadse arrives in Leh for Viksit Vibrant Villages Programme



Photo caption: Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse being welcomed in Leh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse, arrived in Leh on June 11 on an official visit to Ladakh in connection with the Viksit Vibrant Villages Programme (VVVP) being implemented by MY Bharat under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Upon her arrival at Kushok Bakula Rinpoche Airport, Leh, the Minister was accorded a warm traditional Ladakhi welcome. She was received by State Director, MY Bharat Ladakh, Tajamul Ara, along with officials of MY Bharat and other dignitaries.

The visit is part of the ongoing Viksit Vibrant Villages Programme, which aims to strengthen youth participation in nation-building, promote cultural exchange, and foster sustainable development in India's border villages. Under the programme, youth volunteers from different parts of the country are visiting vibrant villages across Ladakh to engage with local communities, experience their rich cultural heritage, and contribute to

various community-oriented activities.

During her stay in Ladakh, Khadse will review the progress of programme activities and interact with participants of the Viksit Vibrant Villages Programme, members of MY Bharat Youth Clubs, and local youth. She is also scheduled to visit Hemya village on June 12, where she will interact with local residents, Panchayati Raj Institution representatives, women, and youth to understand their aspirations and discuss developmental initiatives being undertaken in the region.

As part of her visit, the Minister will also interact with personnel of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and acknowledge their invaluable contribution to safeguarding the nation's borders and supporting local communities in remote areas.

The Viksit Vibrant Villages Programme is being implemented across several border villages of Ladakh, including Hemya, Chumathang, Hanle, Korzok, Chumur, Kuyul, and Nyoma. Activities under the programme include yoga sessions, cleanliness drives, community interactions, cultural exchanges, awareness campaigns, and youth engagement initiatives.

The Minister's visit is expected to further strengthen youth participation in nation-building and reaffirm the Government of India's commitment to the holistic development of border villages under the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Historic Zojila tunnel breakthrough brings Ladakh closer year-round access

Union Minister outlines ₹18,000-crore infrastructure push for Ladakh



Photo caption: During the historic breakthrough of the main tunnel at the eastern portal of the Zojila Tunnel Project at Minamarg in Kargil district.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Monday witnessed the historic breakthrough of the main tunnel at the eastern portal of the Zojila Tunnel Project at Minamarg in Kargil district on June 9, marking a major milestone in India's infrastructure development and bringing the country closer to achieving all-weather connectivity between Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Members of Parliament, public representatives, senior officials, and other distinguished guests attended the event. Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Vinai Kumar Saxena joined the programme virtually and hailed the

achievement as a landmark moment in the region's development journey. The Zojila Tunnel, being constructed between Baltal and Minamarg on National Highway-1, is among India's most ambitious mountain infrastructure projects. The nearly 14-km-long bi-directional tunnel is being built at an estimated cost of ₹6,800 crore and at altitudes ranging from 2,900 metres to 3,310 metres.

Despite challenging terrain, heavy snowfall, harsh weather conditions, and complex geological formations, the project has progressed steadily through the efforts of engineers, workers, consultants, contractors, the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), and other

stakeholders. Gadkari congratulated all those associated with achieving the breakthrough.

The Minister said the tunnel will be equipped with state-of-the-art ventilation systems, automatic fire detection mechanisms, advanced CCTV surveillance, and pedestrian cross-passages to ensure safe and efficient travel.

The project also includes eight cut-and-cover sections, four bridges, 40 culverts, snow galleries, catch dams, avalanche protection structures, approach roads, and other modern safety features designed to withstand the region's harsh climatic conditions.

Describing the project as much more than a transportation initiative, Gadkari said the tunnel would serve as a gateway to development for the region.

Upon completion, travel time between Sonamarg and Minamarg will be reduced from nearly two hours to around 30 minutes. The tunnel will significantly reduce disruptions caused by avalanches and adverse weather while improving road safety and reducing fuel consumption.

The project is expected to boost tourism, facilitate trade, improve access to remote areas, and strengthen connectivity to border regions. It will also enable faster movement of troops, equipment,

...continues on page 2

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Fortnightly News

Historic Zojila tunnel breakthrough brings Ladakh closer year-round access

...Continuity of page 1

and supplies, enhancing national security and strategic preparedness.

The Minister noted that the project would generate employment opportunities, promote economic growth, and improve the quality of life for local communities through enhanced regional integration. Gadkari informed that road and tunnel projects worth nearly ₹18,000 crore are currently under implementation across Ladakh.

Among the major initiatives is the Kargil-Zanskar-Padum Highway project, which aims to improve connectivity to the remote Zanskar region while strengthening strategic mobility.

To ease traffic congestion in Leh, South and North Bypass projects are being developed to facilitate seamless movement of vehicles travelling towards Srinagar, Manali, and Khardung La without entering the city.

The Minister also highlighted the proposed Fatu-La Twin-Tube Tunnel and Kela Pass Tunnel, which will further strengthen all-weather connectivity and improve access to important tourist destinations, including Pangong Lake. He further informed that tunnel projects are being planned at Baralacha La, Lachulung La, and Tanglang La along the Manali-Leh highway, which will significantly enhance travel reliability and year-round connectivity.

Highlighting the Government's broader infrastructure push, Gadkari said highway projects worth approximately ₹1.35 lakh crore, including completed, ongoing, and proposed works, are being implemented across Jammu & Kashmir.

He said four major high-speed corridors are under development, including the Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar Corridor, Jammu-Chenani-Anantnag Corridor, Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri Corridor, and Jammu-Akhnoor-Poonch Corridor, all aimed at improving connectivity and reducing travel time.

The Minister also highlighted strategically important projects such as the Katra-Srinagar High-Speed Corridor, the Rafiabab-Kupwara-Chowkibal-Tangdhar Road Project, and the Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri Corridor, which will enhance border connectivity, tourism, and economic activity.

A new corridor connecting Surankote, Buzia, Supen, Doodhpathri, and Magam is also under planning to strengthen links between the Pir Panjal region and the Kashmir Valley.

Gadkari said the Srinagar Ring Road and Jammu Ring Road projects are being developed to decongest urban areas and improve traffic circulation. Dedicated connectivity links to Srinagar Airport, the railway station, and Katra are also being strengthened.

He further highlighted the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Greenfield Expressway, which will provide faster connectivity between Delhi and Katra while strengthening economic linkages across northern India and improving access to Jammu & Kashmir.

Emphasising the importance of tunnel infrastructure in the Himalayan region, Gadkari said such projects are essential for ensuring all-weather connectivity, improving road safety, enhancing strategic mobility, and driving socio-economic development.

He stated that the successful breakthrough of the Zojila Tunnel symbolizes the emergence of a New India that transforms geographical challenges into opportunities for development, prosperity, regional integration, and national progress.

PM eVidya workshop ends at DIET Leh with focus on digital learning



Photo Caption: During the concluding of the four-day PM eVidya DTH TV channels orientation-cum-training workshop.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: The District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Leh, concluded the four-day PM eVidya DTH TV channels orientation-cum-training workshop on June 12 with a valedictory session that celebrated collaboration, innovation, and the collective vision of educators across Ladakh.

The session was graced by Bhanu Prabha, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Education, UT Ladakh, who in her address emphasized the transformative role of digital platforms in bridging educational gaps and reaffirmed the UT Administration's commitment to strengthening Ladakh's digital learning infrastructure.

On behalf of DIET Leh, Head of Department Tsering Yangdol extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest, setting the tone for the day's proceedings.

The valedictory session featured insightful remarks from Dr. Anantha S. Nayak, Assistant Professor, RIE Ajmer and State Coordinator for Ladakh, who highlighted the need to contextualize PM eVidya resources for Ladakh's unique educational environment. Experts from NCERT, including Dr. Piyush Vishwakarma, Ruchi L. Khatri, Monika Bhakuni, and Akilesh Verma, shared practical strategies for digital pedagogy and content creation, inspiring teachers to embrace innovation in their classrooms.

Special thanks were extended to Mansukh Bhai Rathod, Film Producer, Manoranjan Badatya, and Hrishikesh Sen, Cameraman, for their valuable contributions in supporting the program's success. The event was also honored by the presence of Phunstog Dorje, DEPO Leh, and Chamba Standar, ZEPO Leh, whose encouragement underscored the importance of collaborative educational initiatives.

As part of the valedictory program, videos prepared by participants were showcased to Bhanu Prabha, reflecting the creativity and commitment of Ladakh's educators. Certificates and mementos were awarded to all participants in recognition of their enthusiastic engagement, while experts from Delhi also received mementos as a token of appreciation for their guidance. The collaborative efforts of Principal S.D. Namgyal of DIET Kargil and Principal Mirza Mehdi of DIET Leh were acknowledged for their leadership in jointly hosting this landmark workshop.

The valedictory session marked not only the conclusion of the workshop but also the beginning of a renewed digital journey for Ladakh's education system—anchored in innovation, inclusivity, and collaborative spirit.

L-G V.K. Saxena approves ₹7.62 crore project for comprehensive infrastructure upgradation and beautification of Old town Leh

Project to transform heritage precinct through an underground utility network, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and enhanced urban aesthetics



Photo Caption: LG Ladakh Vinai Kumar Saxena during his visit to Old town Leh.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a major step towards preserving the heritage character of Leh city while improving urban infrastructure and visitor experience, Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena has approved a ₹7.62 crore project for the comprehensive infrastructure upgradation and beautification of Old Town Leh.

The project includes the construction of a multipurpose trench and common utility duct for the underground placement of electric cables, sewerage lines, water supply networks, and communication cables. It also envisages the development of public amenities and beautification works around the historic Leh Palace.

Key components of the project include heritage-compatible pedestrian footpaths, façade improvement works, parking facilities, installation of ornamental lighting and benches in harmony with local architecture, flower pots, heritage-style signage, wayfinding infrastructure, and other public amenities aimed at enhancing the overall visitor experience in the Old Town.

The initiative follows directions issued by the Lieutenant Governor during his visit to Old Town Leh on March 15, just two days after assuming office. The works are scheduled for completion by September this year.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor had directed

concerned departments to prepare a comprehensive plan to address issues related to sanitation, infrastructure improvement, utility management, and overall urban development in the historic area, which serves as a major heritage and tourism hub of Leh. He had taken serious note of broken pavements, dug-up streets, unplanned construction, open drainage channels running through streets, and overhanging electric wires that not only marred the area's aesthetic appeal but also caused inconvenience to residents and visitors.

The project aligns with the Lieutenant Governor's vision of transforming Leh into a clean, organized, pedestrian-friendly, and world-class tourist destination while preserving its unique heritage and architectural identity. It aims to provide a sustainable and long-term solution for coordinated utility management, minimize repeated excavation works, and promote environmentally sensitive urban infrastructure within the heritage zone.

Speaking on the initiative, Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena said, "Old Town Leh is the cultural and historical heart of Ladakh and one of the most iconic heritage precincts in the Himalayas. Our endeavour is to preserve its unique character while providing modern, efficient and sustainable urban infrastructure. This project will not only improve public utility services and pedestrian facilities but also enhance the overall experience of residents and visitors. It is a major step towards creating a clean, organized, heritage-sensitive and tourist-friendly urban environment that reflects the rich legacy of Ladakh while meeting the aspirations of a modern society."

Old Town Leh, one of Ladakh's most prominent heritage and tourism destinations, has long faced challenges arising from unplanned utility services, exposed overhead cables, repeated road cutting, inadequate pedestrian facilities, and the gradual deterioration of its traditional aesthetic character. The project seeks to address these issues through integrated urban infrastructure development.

The proposed utility corridor will facilitate coordinated management of public utilities, reduce the need for repeated road excavations, improve maintenance efficiency, and significantly enhance the visual appeal of the heritage precinct, contributing to a more sustainable and visitor-friendly urban environment.

L-G VK Saxena approves key healthcare deregulation measure for Ladakh

Move expected to strengthen healthcare delivery and attract qualified doctors across the Union Territory



Photo Caption: Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a significant move aimed at deregulating the healthcare sector and addressing the shortage of medical professionals in Ladakh, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved a draft notification allowing all medical practitioners registered under the National Medical Register (NMR) to practice in the Union Territory without requiring any additional approval or No Objection Certificate (NOC).

Under existing regulations, medical practitioners are required to register with the respective State or Union Territory Medical Council where they intend to practice. However, as Lada-

kh does not have its own Medical Council or Dental Council, the Lieutenant Governor approved the issuance of a notification making practitioners registered under the National Medical Register eligible to practice in the UT. He also directed the concerned authorities to provide clarity on the matter to applicants and the general public.

The decision is part of the Administration's ongoing Deregulation 2.0 initiative and is expected to significantly improve the availability of doctors and healthcare professionals, particularly in remote and underserved regions of Ladakh.

For several years, Ladakh has faced an acute shortage of doctors and specialists, with many sanctioned posts remaining vacant. As a result, the healthcare system has relied heavily on contractual doctors, medical officers, and specialists engaged under the National Health Mission (NHM), often affecting the availability of specialised healthcare services in far-flung areas.

"Quality healthcare is a fundamental necessity for every citizen. This reform will help attract more qualified medical practitioners to Ladakh, thereby addressing the shortage of doctors and specialists and strength-

ening healthcare delivery, particularly in remote and difficult areas. It is a major step towards ensuring better access to healthcare services for the people of Ladakh while also advancing the objectives of Deregulation 2.0 and ease of professional practice," L-G Saxena said.

Under the approved framework, all medical practitioners whose names are duly entered in the National Medical Register maintained under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, shall be eligible to practice in the Union Territory of Ladakh, subject to the provisions of the Act and the rules and regulations framed thereunder.

The approval follows extensive deliberations under Priority Area 19 (Healthcare) of Deregulation 2.0, which seeks to simplify the process for medical practitioners registered in any State, Union Territory, or the National Medical Register to practice in another Union Territory without requiring additional approvals or NOCs.

The administration expects the reform to facilitate greater mobility of healthcare professionals, improve staffing in government health institutions, and enhance access to quality healthcare services across Ladakh.

Administrative Secretary, RDD reviews progress and pending queries under Vibrant Villages Programme



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Administrative Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD), UT Ladakh, Nidhi Malik on June 9 chaired a review meeting to assess the status of projects, fund utilization, pending queries, and implementation progress under the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) across Ladakh.

The meeting focused on addressing issues raised by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), ensuring timely submission of replies, and expediting project execution under Vibrant Villages Programme-I and II.

During the meeting, Director, Rural Development Department, provided an overview of the pending queries received from the Ministry of Home Affairs regarding various projects approved under the Vibrant Villages Programme. The discussion covered the status of projects uploaded on the designated portal, pending utilization certificates (UCs), convergence projects, modifications proposed under approved works, and issues requiring clarification from district administrations. Emphasizing the importance of timely compliance, Malik expressed concern over delays in responding to queries and directed all concerned officers to ensure that pending issues are resolved at the earliest. She stressed that Deputy Commissioners, being the primary authorities responsible for implementation at the district level, possess firsthand

knowledge of the requirements and ground realities of Vibrant Villages and should proactively facilitate the resolution of all pending matters.

The Deputy Commissioner, Changthang, informed the meeting that under Vibrant Villages Programme-I in Leh district, several convergence projects have been approved, while a number of projects are currently awaiting resolution of funding and implementation-related issues. It was also informed that certain project-related queries raised by the Ministry are under examination and require coordinated action from multiple departments.

The Administrative Secretary directed the Chief Planning Officers (CPOs) and district authorities to closely monitor all pending cases, particularly those related to utilization certificates, project modifications, and funding issues.

She instructed that all unresolved matters, including responses awaited from various departments, be compiled and submitted for immediate review so that necessary interventions can be made at the appropriate level.

Reviewing the status of projects under Swachh Bharat Mission and other convergence components, Malik instructed officials to ensure that all pending information is uploaded on the portal within the stipulated

timeline. She further directed district administrations to clearly identify projects proposed for continuation, modification, or closure and ensure that decisions are supported by proper documentation and field verification.

The Administrative Secretary also reviewed the status of pending queries from Leh district and directed concerned officers to furnish complete replies without delay. She instructed all districts to submit feedback and action-taken reports on the outstanding queries and emphasized that inter-departmental coordination is essential for achieving timely approvals and fund releases.

During the discussion, Deputy Commissioners and district officials shared updates regarding the implementation status of Vibrant Villages Programme projects in their respective districts. While some districts reported satisfactory progress, others highlighted procedural and funding-related challenges requiring intervention at higher levels.

Malik reiterated the Administration's commitment to ensuring effective implementation of the Vibrant Villages Programme and stressed that all pending queries, utilization certificates, and project-related issues must be resolved in a time-bound manner to facilitate smooth execution of developmental works in border villages.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Leh; Director, Rural Development Department; Deputy Commissioner, Changthang; and officials from various departments, while Deputy Commissioners and officers from Kargil, Nubra, Zanskar, Sub-Divisional Administrations, and District Rural Development Agencies participated virtually.

Fortnightly News

L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena highlights Ladakh's Developmental Transformation at 11th NITI Aayog governing council meeting

Showcases achievements in water security, tourism, education, renewable energy, green development and infrastructure



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, attended the 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog in New Delhi on June 11. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and focused on key developmental priorities and strategies for the country.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the transformative initiatives undertaken in Ladakh since it became a Union Territory in 2019. He stated that the region has witnessed unprecedented momentum in development across sectors such as infrastructure, tourism, education, renewable energy, water security, agriculture, and governance under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Governing Council of NITI Aayog serves as the apex body for fostering cooperative federalism and developing a shared vision of national priorities through the active participation of States and Union Territories. It provides a platform for discussing developmental challenges, accelerating the implementation of national programmes, and strengthening Centre-State collaboration.

Emphasising water security as a key priority of the Administration, Saxena highlighted the launch of Project Him

Sarovar, under which small water reservoirs are being developed in 50 villages to harvest snowmelt and glacial meltwater. Five reservoirs have already been completed, while the Administration aims to create 100 such water bodies by next year.

The Lieutenant Governor also showcased the innovative Rock Check Dam Initiative, which involves the construction of eco-friendly check dams using locally available riverbed stones without cement, concrete, or steel. The first such structure, inaugurated at Upshi in May 2026, has created a pondage area capable of storing over 40 million litres of water. Four more rock check dams are proposed in the coming weeks.

Highlighting tourism as the backbone of Ladakh's economy, Saxena referred to the successful exhibition of the Sacred Relics of Lord Buddha, which attracted more than 1.18 lakh visitors and helped position Ladakh as an emerging eco-spiritual tourism destination. He also underscored the growth of astro-tourism through India's first Dark Sky Sanctuary at Hanle and the promotion of sports tourism through the Ladakh Sports Policy 2025, the Khelo India Winter Games, and the development of modern ice hockey infrastructure.

On economic empowerment initiatives, the Lieutenant Governor informed the Council that an agreement with the Lulu Group for the export of 1,000 metric tonnes of apricots has opened new market opportunities for Ladakhi farmers. He further noted that milk procurement through the modern Oma Dairy Plant has increased from 1,000 litres per day in 2024 to 8,500 litres per day at present. He also informed the Council about the establishment of a Pashmina Board aimed at promoting authentic Ladakhi Pashmina in national and international markets.

Highlighting environmental conservation efforts, Saxena spoke about the Indus River Green Corridor Initiative, under which extensive plantation drives are being carried out along the Indus River. He reiterated the Administration's target of increasing Ladakh's forest cover from less than one per cent to five per cent over the next two years. He also informed the Council about efforts to rejuvenate nearly 800 acres of barren land in Leh by utilising surplus freshwater from the Igoo-Phey Canal.

On border area development, Saxena stated that work has commenced on developing Chumur as Ladakh's first Model Border Village under the Vibrant Village Programme. He also highlighted

the preparation of Ladakh's first comprehensive Master Plan in collaboration with the School of Planning and Architecture, Government of India, to ensure planned and sustainable urban development.

The Lieutenant Governor further highlighted governance reforms undertaken by the Administration, including the launch of Ladakh's first Unified Ease of Doing Business Portal, which offers 23 online services across 13 departments and has significantly simplified procedures by reducing manual processes.

Referring to tourism sector reforms and deregulation measures, Saxena informed the Council that tourist arrivals in Ladakh between January and May 2026 increased by nearly 44 per cent compared to the corresponding period last year. Tourist arrivals during May 2026 alone recorded a remarkable growth of 121 per cent, reflecting the region's growing appeal as a major tourism destination.

Concluding his address, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated the Administration's commitment to building an environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant, and socially inclusive Ladakh through innovation-driven development and participatory governance.

Petroglyph Park proposal aims to secure Ladakh's ancient legacy

Scientific relocation of at-risk rock art discussed to ensure long-term preservation and public awareness



Photo Caption: Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture Department, UT Ladakh, Sanjit Rodrigues, chairing a high-level consultative meeting on the identification and transfer of vulnerable petroglyph-bearing boulders.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture Department, UT Ladakh, Sanjit Rodrigues, chaired a high-level consultative meeting on June 9 with Nambardars and Gobas of concerned villages, researchers, heritage experts, and members of the committee constituted for the identification and transfer of vulnerable petroglyph-bearing boulders.

The meeting was convened to discuss the proposed establishment of a Petroglyph Park at Sindhu Ghat, Leh, aimed at preserving Ladakh's rich prehistoric rock art heritage.

Deliberations focused on the scientific relocation of endangered petroglyph-bearing rocks from various locations across Ladakh to a secure and professionally managed site. The initiative seeks to ensure the long-term preservation of these invaluable cultural assets while creating a dedicated centre for education, research, and cultural tourism.

Addressing the gathering, Rodrigues highlighted the immense cultural significance of petroglyphs, describing them as irreplaceable repositories of Ladakh's history, traditions and identity. He emphasised that many of these ancient rock carvings face threats from natural erosion, developmental activities and other external factors, making their preservation an urgent priority.

Clarifying the intent behind the proposed project, he stated that the objective is not to remove heritage from villages but to safeguard vulnerable petroglyphs that are at risk of being lost. He assured participants that the initiative would be pursued through extensive consultation with local communities and that no decision would be imposed without their consent.

Rodrigues further noted that the proposed Petroglyph Park could serve as a major educational and cultural resource, benefiting students, researchers, visitors and local communities while promoting heritage-based tourism in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Tashi Ladawa, Researcher and Associate Professor at Government Eliezer Joldan Memorial College, underscored the urgent need for conservation. He cited instances where valuable rock art sites had already been lost due to neglect, environmental degradation and human intervention. Noting that nearly 800 petroglyph sites have been identified across Ladakh, he cautioned that every loss represents an irreversible erosion of the region's history and stressed the importance of systematic documentation and timely preservation efforts.

Dr. Sonam Wangchuk, Founder of the Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation, highlighted

the broader significance of conserving Ladakh's archaeological heritage. He informed the gathering that a committee of experts has been established to identify and document vulnerable petroglyphs requiring immediate attention, adding that nearly 200 petroglyph-bearing rocks have already been categorised as highly vulnerable.

He observed that the proposed Petroglyph Park has the potential to become the first initiative of its kind in India and could serve as a model for heritage conservation across the country.

The meeting witnessed active participation from Gobas and Nambardars of several villages, particularly Stakmo, which hosts a significant concentration of petroglyph-bearing rocks. While expressing support for the conservation of vulnerable sites, village representatives suggested that petroglyphs not facing immediate threats should be preserved in situ. They also proposed the development of village-level heritage parks and interpretation centres to strengthen local stewardship and public awareness.

Responding positively to the suggestions, Rodrigues assured that the UT Administration would extend full support to community-led heritage conservation initiatives. He encouraged village representatives to identify suitable land and submit proposals, reiterating that community participation would remain central to the preservation strategy.

Social Anthropologist Viraf Mehta also shared insights on the cultural and historical significance of petroglyphs, noting that the carvings and symbols provide valuable information about the lives, beliefs and movements of ancient communities and therefore deserve greater recognition and protection.

Participants unanimously acknowledged the importance of preserving Ladakh's rock art heritage and stressed the need for collaborative efforts involving local communities, researchers, experts and the Administration. Nambardars and Gobas of the concerned villages expressed their support for the initiative and conveyed their willingness to cooperate in the relocation of identified vulnerable petroglyph-bearing boulders to the proposed park for their long-term preservation.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Sonam Wangchuk, Founder of the Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation; Dr. Tashi Ladawa, Researcher and Associate Professor; Viraf Mehta, Social Anthropologist; Gobas and Nambardars of concerned villages; the Deputy Director of the Archives, Archaeology and Museums Department; members of the Petroglyph Committee; and officials from various departments.

DC Nubra reviews anti-drug measures, calls for collective action

Directs stakeholders to intensify awareness campaigns as police strengthen vigilance against narcotics trafficking



Photo Caption: Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, IAS, chairing a review meeting on the prevention, control and awareness of drug abuse in Nubra district.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, IAS, chaired a review meeting on the prevention, control and awareness of drug abuse in the district as part of the Union Territory-wide initiative aimed at curbing substance abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

Emphasising that prevention is the first line of defence against drug abuse, the Deputy Commissioner directed all stakeholders to intensify awareness campaigns, particularly among students, through mentorship programmes, counselling sessions and educational outreach activities. He also called for the widespread dissemination of anti-drug awareness messages through posters, public spaces and social media platforms.

Addressing the meeting, Superintendent of Police (SP) Nubra, Stanzin Losal, JKPS, informed that intensive checking and patrolling are being conducted at

North Pullu, Agyam, Panamik and other strategic locations to prevent the smuggling of narcotics into the region.

He stated that strict action would be taken against individuals involved in drug trafficking and added that efforts are underway to trace and recover narcotic substances already brought into the district. The Deputy Commissioner stressed that there should be no laxity in regulation and enforcement. He urged government departments, religious leaders, community representatives and Numberdars to work collectively in creating awareness and strengthening community vigilance against drug abuse.

Calling for a united approach, he underscored the importance of active public participation in achieving the objective of a drug-free Nubra.

The meeting concluded with an appeal for collective action and community involvement to ensure the success of the anti-drug campaign across the district.

The meeting was attended by SP Nubra Stanzin Losal, JKPS; SDM Nubra Jigmet Raptan, JKAS; former Deputy Chief Executive Councillor (CEC); Executive Engineer, PWD Nubra; Block Medical Officer (BMO) Nubra; Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) Nubra; Tehsildars; school principals; representatives of religious organisations; Numberdars; and representatives of the Merchant Association, Taxi Union, Adventure Sports Association and Camel Safari Association of Nubra.

DC Nubra reviews power supply scenario amid peak tourist season



Photo Caption: Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, chairing a meeting with officials of PDD and LREDA.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

NUBRA: Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, chaired a meeting with officials of the Power Development Department (PDD) and the Ladakh Renewable Energy Development Agency (LREDA) on June 9 to review power supply challenges arising during the peak tourist season in the district.

The meeting focused on issues such as voltage fluctuations, occasional power tripping and the increased demand for electricity across various parts of Nubra due to the seasonal influx of tourists.

During the review, the Deputy Commissioner assessed the impact of the surge in electricity consumption and discussed measures to ensure a stable and reliable power supply throughout the tourist season. He emphasized the need to maintain uninterrupted electricity services, particularly at healthcare facilities and other essential public institutions where continuous power supply is critical for

effective service delivery.

Highlighting the importance of proactive planning, Beniwal directed the concerned departments to undertake a detailed load study and evaluate the existing power distribution network to identify areas requiring augmentation and infrastructure strengthening.

He further instructed officials to conduct load checking of households, commercial establishments and other consumers exceeding their sanctioned load in order to ensure effective load management and reduce stress on the power infrastructure during periods of peak demand.

The meeting was attended by SDM Nubra Jigmet Raptan, JKAS; former Deputy Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) Tsering Angchuk; Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE), PDD; representatives of PDD and LREDA; and Numberdars of Diskit and Hunder.

GHSS Sakti hosts awareness session on cervical cancer and HPV vaccination



Photo Caption: Dr. Jigmet Wangchuk, Medical Officer, AAM-PHC Sakti educating students on HPV and Cervical Cancer.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

SAKTI: An awareness session on Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination was conducted for the girl students of Govt. Higher Secondary School, Sakti, on June 6 by Dr. Jigmet Wangchuk, Medical Officer, AAM-PHC Sakti.

During the session, the students were educated about cervical cancer, its association with HPV infection, and the importance of HPV vaccination in preventing cervical cancer. Dr. Jigmet Wangchuk highlighted that cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers and emphasized that timely vaccination offers long-term protection against cervical cancer.

The students were also informed about the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India's HPV Vaccination Programme, under which free HPV vaccination is being provided to

all eligible girls aged 14 years to protect them against cervical cancer. Information regarding the eligibility criteria, safety, effectiveness, and benefits of the vaccine was shared with the participants.

Interactive discussions were held to address myths and misconceptions regarding the vaccine, encouraging students to make informed health decisions. The students actively participated in the session and sought clarification on various aspects of HPV infection and vaccination.

The programme concluded with an appeal to the students to spread awareness among their families and communities regarding the importance of HPV vaccination and cervical cancer prevention.

Fortnightly News

Chumur set to become Ladakh's first model border village

Ambitious project under Vibrant Village Programme aims to strengthen border habitation through modern infrastructure, tourism, and livelihood opportunities



Photo Caption: Chumur village.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a landmark initiative aimed at strengthening border habitation and improving the quality of life in remote frontier regions, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on June 3 laid the foundation stone for Ladakh's first Model Border Village at Chumur under the Government of India's ambitious Vibrant Village Programme (VVP).

Located at an altitude of 16,700 feet along the Indo-China border, Chumur is home to 24 households and a population of 91, primarily engaged in Pashmina rearing and production.

The project marks a new chapter in Ladakh's development journey and aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of strong and self-reliant border villages. Beginning with Chumur, ten border villages will be developed as Model Border Villages in the first phase of the Vibrant Village Programme.

The project, the first of its kind in Ladakh and among the pioneering model border village initiatives in India, is built around four key pillars: infrastructure development, employment and livelihood generation, all-weather functionality, and civil-defence integration. It aims to transform Chumur into a self-reliant, climate-resilient, tourism-enabled, and economically vibrant border settlement.

The foundation-laying ceremony witnessed enthusiastic participation from hundreds of local residents, including youth and senior citizens, reflecting strong public support for the initiative. A large number of schoolchildren from nearby villages were also brought to the site by the district administration to understand the concept of the Vibrant Village Programme, which seeks to foster inclusivity and connect remote communities with the mainstream of development.

oment.

Under the programme, families will be provided climate-resilient, south-facing passive solar houses designed to maximize solar heat gain and protect residents from harsh winters, when temperatures can fall to as low as minus 35 degrees Celsius. Each household will receive a residential unit with an attached bathroom, an additional room suitable for homestay activities, a kitchen garden space, livestock sheds, and dedicated fodder storage facilities. Subject to weather conditions, the houses are expected to be completed by September this year.

The project also seeks to boost local economic activity by developing Chumur as a tourism destination on the Korzok-Hanle circuit. Tourism infrastructure, including a community-run café, promotion of handicrafts, Pashmina-based livelihoods, and value-added Pashmina products, will be developed to create new income-generating opportunities for local residents. The initiative aims to encourage self-reliance and help reverse migration from border areas.

Addressing the gathering, L-G Saxena described the project as a transformative initiative that goes beyond conventional development and contributes to national security, stability, and resilience by strengthening border settlements. He said Chumur was selected as Ladakh's first Model Border Village due to its strategic location along the India-China border.

Calling the Vibrant Village Programme a dream project of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he reiterated the Prime Minister's vision that border villages are not the "last villages" but the "first villages" of India. He noted that the

...continues on page 6

LG VK Saxena approves Ladakh tourism development society

New autonomous body to unite government and tourism stakeholders for sustainable sectoral growth



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

LEH: In a significant step towards strengthening tourism promotion and steering the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the tourism sector in Ladakh, the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, has accorded approval for the constitution of the Ladakh Tourism Development Society (LTDS).

The establishment of LTDS addresses the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism that brings together government agencies, tourism stakeholders, local communities, and industry associations under a common platform for the holistic development of tourism in Ladakh. The Society will serve as the central agency for planning, promotion, regulation, coordination and implementation of tourism-related initiatives, while ensuring environmental sustainability, cultural preservation and community participation in Ladakh.

The LTDS will function as an autonomous, not-for-profit body under the overall administrative control and policy direction of the Department of Tourism and Culture. The Society will have the Lt. Governor as its Chief Patron, while the Chief Secretary will serve as the President and Secretary Tourism will be the Member Secretary.

"Tourism is a key pillar of Ladakh's economy and a major source of livelihood for our people. The constitution of the Ladakh Tourism Development Society aims at creating a professional, collaborative and future-ready institutional framework for the growth of the tourism sector. Through LTDS, we aim to bring together government agencies, tourism stakeholders, local communities and experts to ensure the growth of tourism in Ladakh in a sustainable, environmentally responsible and culturally sensitive manner. Our goal is to balance growth with environmental conservation and cul-

tural preservation and ensure that the benefits of tourism growth are shared among its people," LG, Saxena said.

The major objectives of the LTDS include:

Preservation, protection and promotion of Ladakh's unique cultural and natural heritage.

Strategic planning and policy support for tourism, adventure tourism, destination development, branding and marketing.

Promotion and regulation of tourism and adventure activities while ensuring safety, environmental safeguards and quality standards.

Development, operation and maintenance of tourism-related infrastructure and visitor amenities. Promotion of festivals, cultural events, exhibitions, heritage celebrations and experiential tourism initiatives.

Strengthening Ladakh's position as a premium destination for adventure, nature-based, spiritual, heritage and community-based tourism.

Capacity building, skill development and livelihood enhancement for local youth, guides, homestay operators, artisans and tourism stakeholders.

Promotion of wildlife tourism, curated thematic circuits, astro-tourism, eco-tourism and regenerative tourism models.

Liaison with Government of India, Foreign Embassies and High Commissions and International Cultural Organizations for collaboration to promote Tourism.

Acting as the designated implementation agency for tourism-related policies and schemes including the Homestay Policy, Mountaineering Policy, Adventure Tourism Policy and other incentive-based schemes.

To ensure effective governance, strategic oversight and efficient execution of its mandate, the LTDS will function through a three-tier structure comprising the Governing Body, Executive Committee and Finance Committee.

The Governing Body will be the apex policy-making and supervisory authority of the Society. The Governing Body will also include Secretaries of Finance and Law & Justice Departments, Deputy Commissioners/CEOs of

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The World of

Juniors

Every year on June 18th, the globe celebrates Autistic Pride Day to raise awareness that autism is a condition, not a disease. The day is celebrated annually and "Autistic pride" stands for pride in autism, about shifting views of autism from "disease" to "difference". It observes the diversity various neurological types express.

The very first autistic pride day was observed in Brazil in 2005. This day was founded by Gareth and Amy Nelson, and it has now become known as Autistic Pride Day across the world. Every year on April 2nd, the globe commemorates Autism Awareness Day. Every year has a different theme, and the title for Autistic Pride Day 2025 is to emphasize autistic patients' participation in the workplace.

Autism is a spectrum disorder, each person will have diverse strengths and challenges. Autism is a neurological illness marked by a lack of social interaction and communication, as well as limited and repetitive behavior. The first two years of a child's life are when parents generally detect indications.

WORLD AUTISTIC PRIDE DAY



Aspies for Freedom established Autistic Pride Day in 2005 by Aspies for Freedom to improve public awareness and celebrate the similarities and differences among persons with autism. It swiftly grew into a worldwide phenomenon that is extensively seen both online and offline. Aspies For Freedom (AFF) is a grassroots advocacy and solidarity organisation dedicated to increasing public awareness of the autism rights movement. AFF's mission is to inform the public that autism is not necessarily a handicap and that there are benefits as well as drawbacks.

Courtesy: guidely.in

SoulSpeak

Dr. P.P. Wangchuk

You and your feel-good factor in life



One can say safely that feeling good is quite like feeling happy. That is because unless one feels good, one can't feel happy, and vice versa. But the point to remind ourselves is that feeling good is not an 'automatic happening'. One has to work for it, very seriously and consciously.

At any given time in a day, you feel good if everything seems to be going well, but your joy gets a hard prick if anything goes against your wishes. That is the way life goes, wanted or not wanted.

Let us admit that the feel-good factor is very important any moment, any day. One has to work for it, and it comes in small bits by doing small things at a time. For instance, go for a leisurely walk, all alone if possible, or do a bit of dancing or stretching, or even talk to a friend or a relative. This has to be done on a daily basis.

Some other feel-good factors are like you doing your work in time, or having a good cup of tea or coffee after overcoming a difficult task. You must 'gather' happy feelings realising that things are going all well with you. In a way, that is like expressing your gratitude.

And, what is of great importance is to tie your daily small tasks to your ultimate goal. If you have small children and aged parents, be with them quite often every day to exchange pleasantries. Let them not feel rejected and discarded.

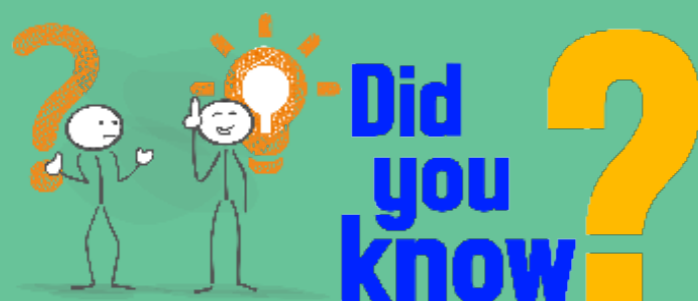
Psychologists call the feel-good factor 'subjective well-being', and it involves connecting with people and talk with them on issues you are deeply touched with. Don't try to overrule and lecture them. Listen more and react less.

Normally, the feel-good factor has to be the starter of your day. Only then you will have a day filled with moments of joy and a smooth sailing, thereby making your journey for the day a meaningful and a fulfilling one.

The punchline: A feel-good sense on any day is one that ends with small achievements and gives you a sense of triumph!

Courtesy: WongWorld

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



• When helium is cooled to absolute zero (-460 degrees Fahrenheit) it becomes a liquid and starts flowing upward, against gravity.

• The moon once had an atmosphere. Volcanic eruptions on the moon released trillions of tons of gas into the air, which created an atmosphere. The gases eventually became lost to space.

• When Einstein posed his Theory of Relativity, he didn't have the resources to prove this theory. However, the theory has been proven correct several times over the years. Most recently in 2018, scientists saw that as a black hole distorted light waves from a nearby star in a way that agrees with the theory.

• Scientists have answered the question "what comes first the chicken or the egg?" The chicken came first because the egg shell contains a protein that can only be made from a hen.

• Pineapples are all the rage now, but they were also a fad in the UK in the 1700s. People carried them around to show their wealth and status, and people decorated their homes with pineapples. You could even rent a pineapple as an accessory.

• The patent for the first car was filed in 1886 by Karl Benz for a gas-powered, 3-wheel motor car.

• Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin were all nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. While not all nominees since have been controversy-free, whoever nominated these three probably regretted it.

• Many animals exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence. For example, cows form bonds akin to friendships, and often have a "best friend," and Gentoo Penguins bring a potential mate a pebble to "propose."

• Cats have only lived with people for about 7,000 years. Compared to dogs, whose domestication may have begun as early as 25,000 years ago.

The Doctor Suess book Green Eggs and Ham uses only 50 different words. Doctor Suess wrote the book on a bet from his publisher that he couldn't write a book with fewer words than The Cat in the Hat, which has 225.

Fortnightly News

**In Conversation with
Jigmet Chunzen: Ladakh's First SAFF Futsal Silver Medallist**

Q. Tell us about your journey in sports and how you became part of the SAFF Futsal Championship team.

Thank you for having me. I am from Kharu village in Ladakh. I completed my schooling at Druk Padma Karpo School, Leh. For higher education, I studied at Fergusson College, Pune, and later graduated from Spicer Adventist University.

My interest in sports developed at a young age, largely because of my brother, who inspired me to pursue athletics. I was introduced to futsal while studying in Pune. Since childhood, I have actively participated in local football tournaments and represented Leh in various district-level competitions, where our team won several championships.

Recognizing my passion and potential, my coach and Mam Angmo recommended me to represent Ladakh. In November 2025, trials for the SAFF Futsal Championship were conducted, with around 100 participants competing for selection. Out of them, 25 athletes were shortlisted. After undergoing intensive training camps and coaching sessions, 14 players were finally selected to represent the team at the SAFF Futsal Championship.

Q. Could you share your SAFF Futsal Championship journey?

The preparation for the SAFF Futsal Championship began in November 2025. After months of rigorous training and preparation, we participated in the championship held in Thailand in January 2026. The tournament featured seven teams from different countries across South Asia.

It was a memorable experience competing at the international level. Bangladesh emerged as the champions, while India finished as the runners-up. Our Indian squad consisted of 14 players from different parts of the country, including Gujarat, Pune, Tamil Nadu, Kolkata, and Manipur. I had the honour of leading the team as its captain throughout the tournament.

Representing India on such a prestigious platform and captaining the national team was a proud moment in my sporting journey and an experience that taught me valuable lessons in leadership, teamwork, and perseverance.

Q. What is the difference between futsal and football?

The main difference between futsal and football is the playing surface and the size of the ground. A futsal court is much smaller than a football field, which makes the game faster and more intense.

Interviewed by Stanzin Dasal



In football, stamina, endurance, and overall fitness are extremely important because of the larger playing area. While these qualities are also important in futsal, the game places greater emphasis on speed, technical skills, quick decision-making, and close ball control.

Another key difference is substitutions. In football, substitutions are limited, whereas futsal allows rolling substitutions, enabling players to enter and leave the court multiple times during a match.

Football is generally played on grass or artificial turf, while futsal is played on a hard indoor surface, often a wooden court. Because of the hard surface and fast pace of the game, the risk of certain injuries can be higher.

Overall, futsal is a highly technical and skill-oriented sport where quick thinking, agility, and ball-handling abilities play a crucial role in a player's success.

Q. You have played in several national championships. Could you tell us about your experience and your future plans?

I have represented my region in several national-level tournaments. I played in the Under-14 Sub-Junior National Championship for Jammu & Kashmir in Odisha and the Under-17 Junior National Championship for Ladakh in Assam. In addition, I have represented the Ladakh team in four Senior National Championships. These tournaments provided me with valuable exposure, helped me improve my skills, and allowed me to compete against some of the best players from across the country.

Looking ahead, my priority is to continue playing and developing my career in either futsal or football. I am training hard and constantly working on improving my fitness, skills, and overall performance so that I am prepared for future championships and opportunities.

At present, I have not made a final decision on whether to focus entirely on futsal or football. I enjoy both sports and remain open to pursuing either path. One of the biggest advantages of playing futsal is that it enhances speed, agility, close ball control, and quick decision-making, all of which are equally valuable in football. In many ways, the skills developed in futsal complement and strengthen my performance on the football field. For now, I am committed to improving in both sports and making the most of every opportunity that comes my way.

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

“ My message to the youth is to believe in yourself, work hard, and stay disciplined. Success comes through dedication and consistency. I encourage everyone to participate in sports, stay active, and make positive choices in life. With determination and the support of your family, you can achieve your goals and make your community proud. ”

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Fortnight Highlights



The Zonal Level Inter-School Tournament for Middle Schools of Nyoma and Durbuk Zones held at Government Higher Secondary School Nyoma. The tournament has brought together young student athletes from various schools across the two zones to participate in different sporting events, promoting sportsmanship, teamwork, and healthy competition.



Deputy Commissioner Nubra, Mukul Beniwal, IAS, conducted a surprise inspection of High School Hunder to review the academic functioning of the institution. During the visit, the DC reviewed the school's enrollment and attendance records of both students and staff. He also interacted with students in classrooms, assessed their learning levels through direct questioning, and observed the teaching-learning process.



An awareness programme on drug abuse was organised at the Residential Hostel, Khatse, on June 1 with the objective of educating students about the harmful effects of substance abuse and promoting a healthy, responsible lifestyle.



In accordance with the circular issued by the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Leh, mandating the participation of concerned Headmasters and School Administrators of PM SHRI Schools in the Digital Holistic Progress Card (DHPC) training programme, the first day of the two-day online hands-on training workshop was successfully conducted on June 1, 2026.



The Bar Association Kargil organized a high tea programme in honour of Justice Arun Palli, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and his family during their visit to Kargil.



District Police Kargil commenced a series of sports events under the Civic Action Programme with the inauguration of an Archery Tournament at the District Police Lines (DPL), Kargil on June 6 in coordination with the Ladakh Archery Association, Kargil Wing.



Government Degree College (GDC) Zanskar organised an Interactive and Career Counselling Programme on June 10 in collaboration with Sindhu Central University, Ladakh, with the aim of creating awareness among students about higher education opportunities, scholarships, admissions, internships, and career prospects offered by the university.



The Healthy Lifestyle and Balanced Diet Committee of Government Degree College (GDC) Zanskar organised an awareness programme on the importance of a healthy lifestyle and balanced dietary habits at the college conference hall on June 10.

Fortnightly News

Chumur set to become Ladakh's first model border village

...Continuity of page 4

initiative is intended to improve living standards, create sustainable livelihood opportunities, and ensure long-term prosperity for residents of remote border regions.

To strengthen food security and livelihoods, a commercial greenhouse measuring 90 x 27 feet will be established with support from the Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR) for year-round vegetable cultivation.

The produce will meet local requirements and supply nearby defence establishments, including the Indian Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), thereby creating a sustainable market for villagers and promoting stronger civil-defence cooperation.

The village has been planned as an all-weather settlement with reliable water supply, improved sanitation and wastewater management systems, renewable energy-based power infrastructure, modern digital connectivity, and enhanced winter habitability.

A central service core comprising a school, Primary Health Centre (PHC), community hall, parks, community café, and Tourist Interpretation Centre (TIC) will provide essential services and strengthen the village's social and economic life.

L-G Saxena also acknowledged the crucial role of the Indian Army, ITBP, local residents, and youth in ensuring the success of the initiative and thanked the security forces for their dedicated service in the region.

Envisioned as a self-reliant, climate-resilient, tourism-enabled, and economically vibrant border settlement, the Chumur Model Border Village is expected to emerge as a benchmark for sustainable development in high-altitude frontier regions and serve as a model for border villages across the country.

Key Highlights of Chumur Model Border Village

Chumur – Ladakh's First Model Border Village

- First village of its kind in Ladakh and among the pioneering model border villages in India.
- Developed under the Vibrant Village Programme as a sustainable and resilient border settlement.
- Aims to improve quality of life while strengthening border habitation.

Settlement Stabilisation

- Transition from a largely nomadic lifestyle to a secure and permanent settlement.
- South-facing passive solar houses designed to maximise sunlight and shield residents from cold winds during severe winters.

Each Family Will Receive

- Residential house with attached bathroom.
- Additional room suitable for homestay and tourism activities.
- Kitchen garden space for household cultivation.
- Individual goat/sheep shed.
- Dedicated fodder storage for year-round livestock support.

Local Economy Activation

- Development of Chumur as a tourism destination on the Korzok–Hanle circuit.
- Establishment of a community-run café to promote local entrepreneurship.
- Capacity-building and skill-development initiatives in Pashmina production and value addition.
- Promotion of locally produced value-added Pashmina products.
- Establishment of a 90 x 27 ft commercial greenhouse with support from DIHAR.
- Fresh vegetable production to generate income and meet local as well as defence requirements.

All-Weather Functionality

- Reliable year-round water supply system.
- Sustainable power supply through maximum utilisation of solar energy.
- Improved sanitation and wastewater management infrastructure.
- Enhanced habitability during harsh winter conditions.

Civil-Defence Integration

- Greenhouse produce to be supplied to nearby defence establishments.
- Creation of a sustainable local market for villagers.
- Stronger civil-defence cooperation and mutual support.
- Employment opportunities through engagement with defence forces.

Settlement Structure

- Cluster-based neighbourhoods comprising 8–10 housing units each.
- Houses oriented southward for optimum solar gain and wind protection.
- Dedicated greenhouse belt integrated into village planning.
- Livestock infrastructure designed according to the geography and climatic conditions of Changthang.

Central Service Core

- School
- Primary Health Centre (PHC)
- Community Hall
- Parks
- Community Café
- Tourist Interpretation Centre (TIC)

LG VK Saxena approves Ladakh tourism development society

...Continuity of page 4

LAHDC Leh and Kargil, as its Members. The Society will also comprise the President, All Ladakh Tour Operators Association; the President, All Ladakh Hotel & Guest House Association; the President, All Kargil Travel Trade Association; the President, Ladakh Mountain Guide Association and experts from tourism, hospitality, heritage, culture, wildlife and environmental sectors as its Members.

The Governing Body will be responsible for providing overall policy direction and strategic guidance and approving budget, infrastructure projects, long-term vision documents, annual action plans and major tourism initiatives. It will also monitor the performance of the Executive Committee and provide policy-level guidance.

'Stories from a Kargili Kitchen' released in Kargil

Authors call for preservation of Ladakh's fading culinary traditions



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: The book "Stories from a Kargili Kitchen" was launched on June 2 by Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo. The event, organised by Roots Ladakh under the leadership of its founder, Muzammil, celebrated the rich culinary traditions, food memories, and cultural heritage of Kargil.

Muzammil, the visionary behind Roots Ladakh, opened the programme by sharing the inspiring journey behind the book. He explained that "Stories from a Kargili Kitchen" is a heartfelt effort to revive and document Kargil's unique traditional food practices, which have been passed down through generations. He expressed gratitude to the entire team whose dedication made the publication possible and urged dignitaries to ensure its wider distribution in educational institutions.

Co-author Neha Nair, a distinguished anthropologist, spoke about her research journey and highlighted that Kargil is much more than a region associated with war and borders. She described the book as not only a culinary exploration but also an important initiative for cultural preservation and revival.

Co-author Yash Saxena shared his experiences of food cultures across different regions and drew attention to the gradual decline of Kargil's traditional food heritage. He discussed the factors contributing to this decline and emphasised the need to preserve local culinary traditions.

Renowned writer Reza Amjad Badgami, known for his contributions to Shina literature, underscored the significance of buckwheat, locally known as "Baro" in Shina and Balti. He highlighted its historical and cultural importance and its frequent mention in traditional literature.

Addressing the gathering, CEC Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoo lauded the efforts of Roots Ladakh and the entire team for their valuable contribution to promoting Ladakh's culture, cuisine, and organic farming traditions, which form an integral part of Kargil's identity. He highlighted the ongoing efforts of LAHDC Kargil to promote tourism and expressed confidence that Kargil and Ladakh would gain greater national and international recognition. He assured support for distributing the book to educational institutions and thanked all contributors for their commitment and passion.

Member of Parliament Haji Haneefa Jan congratulated the authors, particularly Yash Saxena, Neha Nair, and Muzammil, for their efforts. He praised Roots Ladakh for promoting Kargil's culture and tourism at national and international platforms and encouraged young people to actively participate in preserving Ladakh's unique traditions and heritage.

The event was attended by several distinguished guests, including Deputy Commissioner Kargil Rakesh Kumar, SSP Kargil Nitin Yadav, Brigadier Joshi, Commander of 121 Infantry Brigade, former CEC Kacho Ahmed Khan, and former CEC Feroza Ahmed Khan.

In Conversation with Jigmet Chunzen: Ladakh's First SAFF Futsal Silver Medallist

...Continuity of page 5

Q. How do you view the interest and support for sports promotion and development in Ladakh?

In my case, my family has been extremely supportive of my sporting journey. They have always encouraged me and stood by my decisions, even when pursuing football was not considered a conventional career path. I believe that the confidence and strength with which I compete today are largely because of their unwavering support and belief in me.

At the same time, I have witnessed significant growth in the sports sector in Ladakh. There was a time when opportunities were limited, with very few tournaments and championships available to motivate players or help them develop their talents. However, the situation is changing rapidly. Today, athletes from Ladakh are participating and excelling at district, state, national, and even international levels across various sports.

The increasing number of tournaments, training camps, and competitive platforms is helping young athletes gain exposure and improve their skills. More importantly, there is a growing interest in sports among children and youth. Parents are also becoming more supportive and are encouraging their children to pursue sports alongside academics. This positive shift is playing a crucial role in the overall promotion and development of sports in Ladakh.

Q. Could you share your views on the potential of futsal and the challenges in promoting the sport further?

I believe futsal has tremendous potential in Ladakh. Ladakhi children naturally possess good technical skills, agility, and creativity, which are important qualities for success in futsal. This gives them a strong foundation to excel in the sport if they are provided with the right opportunities and guidance.

One of the main challenges is the lack of dedicated futsal clubs, tournaments, and regular competitive platforms. To promote the sport further, there is a need to establish more futsal clubs and organize tournaments at different levels. Such initiatives will encourage more children and young players to participate and develop their skills.

The more opportunities young athletes receive, the greater their interest and growth in the sport. With proper infrastructure, coaching, and regular competitions, futsal can become a popular and successful sport in Ladakh, helping many talented players showcase their abilities at the national and international levels.

Q. Today, many young people are getting involved in drugs. What is your opinion, and how can sports help combat this issue?

From my personal experience, athletes and people actively involved in sports and fitness tend to be very conscious about their health and well-being. They understand what is beneficial for their body and what can harm their performance. Since they are focused on achieving their goals and improving their game, they are aware that substance abuse can negatively affect their fitness, performance, and future career prospects.

Sports not only keep young people physically active but also instill discipline, responsibility, and a sense of purpose. Regular training, competitions, and teamwork help individuals stay focused and motivated, leaving less room for negative influences.

I believe sports can play a significant role in combating drug abuse by providing youth with a positive environment, healthy habits, and clear goals to work towards. When young people are engaged in meaningful activities and have the right guidance, they are more likely to make informed choices and avoid harmful substances. Therefore, encouraging greater participation in sports is an important step in building a healthier and more responsible generation.

Maternal health takes centre stage as AAM-PHC Sakti marks PMSMA milestone

Nine pregnant women receive comprehensive antenatal care and counselling services



Photo Caption: During the special PMSMA session, woman attended receiving check-ups.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

SAKTI: As part of the nationwide celebration of 10 Years of Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA), AAM-PHC Sakti on June 9 organized a special PMSMA session to promote safe motherhood and strengthen awareness regarding maternal health services.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Chesfida and Dr. Jigmet Wangchuk, Medical Officer, AAM-PHC Sakti, with the active participation and support of the entire PHC team.

During the special PMSMA session, nine pregnant women attended the clinic and received comprehensive antenatal check-ups, including detailed clinical examination, screening for high-risk pregnancies, laboratory investigations, and the provision of essential medications as per government guidelines. The beneficiaries were also monitored for vital parameters and counselled regarding their pregnancy care.

An extensive awareness session was conducted to educate the pregnant women on the importance of regular antenatal care, institutional delivery, early identification of high-risk pregnancies, nutrition during pregnancy, birth preparedness, and the various benefits available under the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan and other government maternal health schemes. The participants were informed about the free services being provided by the Government to ensure safe motherhood and healthy outcomes for both mother and child.

To mark the occasion and promote maternal nutrition, the pregnant women were served milk, fruits, and eggs following the health session.

The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of AAM-PHC Sakti's commitment towards ensuring quality maternal healthcare services and achieving the objectives of safe motherhood through regular PMSMA activities and community awareness initiatives.

World Environment Day celebrated across Kargil with plantation drives, awareness programmes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: World Environment Day was celebrated across Kargil district with enthusiasm and active public participation, marked by plantation drives and awareness programmes aimed at promoting environmental conservation and sustainable practices.

At Yokat Tsok, Bodhkarboo, the Department of Forest Ecology and Environment organized a plantation drive in the presence of the Block Forest Officer (BFO) and staff of the Shakar-Chiktan Block. During the programme, 245 saplings, including Kikar, Kashmiri Wil-

low and Willow (*Salix alba*), were planted. The initiative focused on enhancing green cover and creating awareness about the importance of protecting natural resources and maintaining ecological balance.

In another initiative, the Forest Department, South Block, conducted plantation activities on June 4, planting 150 saplings at the Gurgurdoo Departmental Unit and 50 saplings at the Garkone Departmental Unit as part of ongoing efforts to promote a greener and healthier environment in the district.

Meanwhile, the University of Ladakh, Kargil Campus, also observed World Environment Day with the participation of students, faculty members, staff and officials from the Forest Department. The programme featured expert lectures on environmental conservation and sustainable development, followed by a plantation drive and community-based activities.

The Department of Forests, TSG Block, played a significant role in the event by supporting plantation efforts and highlighting the importance of preserving natural resources for future generations.

The celebrations concluded with participants taking a collective pledge to work towards environmental protection and sustainable development, reflecting the district's growing commitment to safeguarding the environment and promoting ecological sustainability.

Fortnightly News

Bicycle rally, cleanliness drive held to promote fitness and environmental awareness in Kargil



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: CEC, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon, participated in the World Bicycle Day celebration organized at the Council Secretariat, Kargil on June 6. The event was organized by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Training Centre, Kargil, UT Ladakh, to promote physical fitness, environmental sustainability, and healthy living through the use of bicycles.

A bicycle rally was flagged off from the Council Secretariat and proceeded towards the Petrol Station at Kurbathang, witnessing enthusiastic participation from cyclists, officials, and youth.

The programme was attended by Deputy Commissioner Kargil Rakesh Kumar, Additional District Development Commissioner Ghulam Mohammad, Joint Director Planning/Chief Planning Officer Kargil Kacho Mohammad Hussain, Tehsildar Kargil, Deputy Superintendent of Police Tundup Dorjay, Executive Officer Municipal Committee Kargil Ayaz Ahmed, DYSSO Kargil Abid Ali, In-charge SAI Training Centre Kargil Ghulam Mustafa, and other officials.

The occasion also coincided with the observance of World Environment Day, which is being celebrated in Kargil from June 5 to June 12 through a series of awareness and cleanliness drives organized by the Municipal Committee Kargil. As part of the observance, a cleanliness drive was conducted in and around the Council Secretariat, reinforcing the collective commitment towards

environmental protection and sustainable development.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhooon congratulated all participants and highlighted the numerous benefits of cycling, including improved physical fitness, reduced traffic congestion, fuel conservation, and the creation of a cleaner and greener environment through zero-emission transportation.

The CEC said that World Bicycle Day serves as an important reminder of the need to adopt eco-friendly practices and sustainable lifestyles.

He also stressed the importance of community participation in environmental conservation and appreciated the efforts being made to raise awareness through such initiatives.

Dr. Akhooon further expressed gratitude to the sanitation workers and frontline staff of the Municipal Committee Kargil, describing them as the true heroes of society for their dedicated service in maintaining cleanliness and public hygiene. He acknowledged their invaluable contribution towards keeping Kargil clean and healthy.

Speaking as Guest of Honour, Deputy Commissioner Kargil Rakesh Kumar congratulated the participants and underscored the importance of incorporating cycling into daily life to improve physical fitness and overall well-being. He noted that such initiatives align with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for promoting healthy lifestyles, environmental consciousness, and sustainable modes of transportation.

During the programme, Executive Officer Municipal Committee Kargil Ayaz Ahmed delivered an informative presentation on solid waste management, highlighting the segregation of waste into four categories and emphasizing the importance of proper waste disposal practices for maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

The programme concluded with a renewed pledge by participants to promote cycling, maintain cleanliness, and contribute actively towards building a healthier, cleaner, and greener Kargil.

Chief Secretary visits Government Degree College Drass, releases annual magazine 'Himbabs'



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

DRASS: Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, IAS, visited Government Degree College (GDC) Drass on June 8 and reviewed the academic and infrastructural developments undertaken by the institution.

He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Drass, Inteeaz Kacho, JKAS; Councillors Abdul Samad and Abdul Wahid; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Drass, Vishal Atri, JKAS; and other administrative officers.

During the visit, the Chief Secretary inspected various facilities, including the newly constructed lecture halls, science laboratories, administrative block, library, girls' common room and gazetted quarters. He later visited the Academic Block, where he formally released the college's annual magazine, Himbabs.

As part of the visit, Kundra planted a sapling under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign at the High Altitude Biodiversity Conservation and

Research Park. He appreciated the college administration for its initiative to conserve biodiversity and promote research on the indigenous plant species of Drass district.

On the occasion, students who excelled in the Annual Seminar Presentations were felicitated for their academic achievements. The Chief Secretary also honoured the team that secured first position in the Zoological Survey of India Hackathon held in Solan, Himachal Pradesh.

The programme featured a welcome address and a detailed presentation by the Principal highlighting the college's academic progress, achievements and future plans. A short documentary showcasing the institution's activities and initiatives was also screened.

During the interaction, representatives of the permanent faculty and faculty engaged under Academic Arrangement submitted memoranda to the Chief Secretary regarding issues related to higher education and faculty welfare.

Addressing the gathering, Kundra appreciated the efforts of the college administration, faculty members and students in promoting quality higher education in the region. He encouraged the institution to continue striving for academic excellence and innovation.

The programme concluded with closing remarks delivered by Deputy Commissioner Drass, Inteeaz Kacho, JKAS.

ARTO Kargil conducts vehicle inspections, licence services during Zanskar camp



Photo Caption: During the two-day camp office organised by the Assistant Regional Transport Office (ARTO), Kargil in Zanskar.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ZANSKAR: A two-day camp office organised by the Assistant Regional Transport Office (ARTO), Kargil, concluded successfully in Zanskar on June 9, bringing essential transport-related services directly to the doorstep of residents.

During the camp, the ARTO Kargil team conducted fitness inspections of both commercial and non-commercial vehicles, renewed driving licences, issued permits and vehicle registrations, and carried out driving tests for applicants seeking fresh driving licences. The initiative was aimed at facilitating public access to transport services and reducing the inconvenience faced by residents who otherwise have to travel to Kargil to complete official formalities.

On the sidelines of the camp, ARTO Kargil held a meeting with the Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, Zanskar, to discuss key transport-related issues in the newly created district and strengthen inter-departmental coordination for better service delivery.

In a significant step towards promoting road safe-

ty awareness, ARTO Kargil, in collaboration with Government Degree College Zanskar and Zanskar Police, organised a panel discussion on road safety. The programme was conducted under the leadership of Dr. Amjad Abbasi, Principal of Government Degree College Zanskar.

The discussion witnessed active participation from students and stakeholders, who put forward innovative suggestions and ideas for improving traffic management and enhancing road safety in the district.

The programme was graced by Superintendent of Police Zanskar, Rizzin Sangdup, as the Chief Guest, while ARTO Kargil, Khadim Hussain, attended as the Guest of Honour. SHO Zanskar, Rizzin, also participated actively in the deliberations.

The camp was widely appreciated by the public for delivering citizen-centric services, improving accessibility to transport-related facilities, and fostering greater awareness about responsible driving and road safety.

Zanskar administration holds key meeting on drug abuse, flags concerns over external supply



Photo Caption: During a meeting on drug abuse awareness and prevention at the Conference Hall, Dak Bungalow, Padum.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

ZANSKAR: A meeting on drug abuse awareness and prevention was held at the Conference Hall, Dak Bungalow, Padum on June 10, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner, Zanskar.

The meeting was attended by the Superintendent of Police, Zanskar; President of the Zanskar Buddhist Association (ZBA); President of the ZBA Youth Wing; President of Moin-ul-Islam; representatives of Ama Tsogspa, the Muslim Association, and the Gonpa Association. Officials from the administration, including the Tehsildar Zanskar, SHO Zanskar, Principal of Government Degree College Zanskar, Principal of

Higher Secondary School Padum, Block Medical Officer (BMO) Zanskar, Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) Zanskar, and Tehsil Social Welfare Officer (TSO), also participated in the meeting.

During the discussion, serious concerns were raised regarding the inflow of narcotic substances from outside the district. Participants observed that Zanskar's connectivity from three directions has increased the risk of drug trafficking, with some tourists and labourers arriving from outside states allegedly involved in bringing and supplying drugs to local youth.

The meeting emphasized the growing need for coordinated efforts among

government agencies, educational institutions, community organisations, and religious bodies to prevent the spread of substance abuse and protect young people from falling prey to addiction.

Addressing the participants, the Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police appealed to all stakeholders to remain vigilant and proactive in their respective areas. They urged community leaders, educational institutions, and local residents to promptly share any information related to drug trafficking or substance abuse with the concerned authorities.

The officials stressed that collective community participation and timely reporting of suspicious activities are essential to effectively curb the menace of drug abuse and safeguard the future of Zanskar's youth.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment from all stakeholders to strengthen awareness initiatives and work together to build a drug-free and healthy society in the region.

Crisil foundation organises financial literacy awareness programme at Chemday, Kharu



Photo Caption: Participants during the financial literacy awareness programme at Chemday, Kharu.

Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KHARU: Crisil Foundation, in collaboration with the Ladakh Rural Livelihood Mission (LRLM), organised a Financial Literacy Awareness Programme at Chemday, Kharu on June 11. The programme was conducted by the Centre for Financial Literacy (CFL), Kharu, in coordination with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and Subin Kundal, Manager and Lead District Officer, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Jammu.

The awareness camp witnessed the participation of several dignitaries, including Subin Kundal, Manager, RBI Regional Office Jammu; Shabir Ahmad, SDM Kharu; Tsewang Dorjay, AGM NABARD; Prem Bodh, Director RSETI Leh; Phuntsog Angchuck, Lead District Manager Leh; Tundup, DDC NABARD; Aasiya Tabasum, DPM NRLM; Wasim Akram, DMM NRLM; Bilal Bhat, Area Manager, CFL Project; and officials from various banks, including JK Bank

Chemday, SBI Kharu, PNB Kharu, and SBI Sakti.

A total of 80 participants, including members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and residents from the local community, actively participated in the programme. During the session, officials from the concerned departments sensitised participants on a range of financial and banking-related topics, including:

- The regulatory role of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- Customer rights and grievance redressal mechanisms, including the RBI Ombudsman Scheme
- Financial products and services offered by banks and line departments
- Government-sponsored social security and employment generation schemes
- Cyber fraud prevention and safe digital banking practices
- Utilisation of grievance redressal channels for the timely resolution of complaints

The CFL Kharu staff delivered detailed presentations on various social security schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (SSY). Participants were also educated about Know Your Customer (KYC) and Re-KYC procedures, along with their benefits and enrolment processes.

Awareness was further created regarding credit facilities available under

schemes such as the Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), and NRLM initiatives. The importance of adopting digital banking channels for secure, convenient, and efficient financial transactions was also highlighted.

Participants were advised to remain vigilant against online fraud, phishing attempts, and unauthorised electronic transactions. They were informed about the RBI's framework for limiting customer liability in such cases and educated on the role of customer helplines, grievance redressal mechanisms, and Ombudsman schemes in safeguarding consumer interests.

The awareness camp formed part of CFL's ongoing efforts to promote financial literacy, financial inclusion, digital awareness, and social security schemes across villages in Ladakh. The initiative aims to ensure that rural households, farmers, and vulnerable communities are integrated into the formal financial system with confidence and security.

Crisil Foundation currently operates seven Centres for Financial Literacy (CFLs) across Leh district, covering all blocks under the aegis of the Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund of the Reserve Bank of India and the Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF) of NABARD. The programme is supported by the State Bank of India (SBI) and supervised by the Lead District Manager, Leh.

DC Kargil chairs Highway safety task force meeting, reviews PM Rahat and Good Samaritan schemes



Reach Ladakh Correspondent

KARGIL: Deputy Commissioner Kargil, Rakesh Kumar (IAS), chaired a joint meeting of the District Highway Safety Task Force, PM Rahat Scheme and Good Samaritan Scheme at the DC Office Kargil on June 5 to review highway safety measures, accident response mechanisms and public welfare initiatives.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Kargil, Chief Medical Officer Kargil, Executive Engineer R&B, ARTO Kargil, DySP Headquarters Kargil, DySP Traffic Headquarters Kargil, representatives of BRO and NHIDCL, besides the Presidents of the Taxi Union and Bus Union.

During the meeting, extensive discussions were held on ensuring safe and smooth movement of traffic on National Highways in view of the suo motu cognizance taken by the Supreme Court of India in the Phalodi road accident case.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination for the removal of illegal encroachments and unauthorised halting of heavy vehicles and buses along highways. Departments were instructed to identify suitable locations for vehicle parking and halting facilities equipped with basic amenities.

To strengthen highway safety, NHIDCL, BRO and PWD were directed to conduct a joint survey of NH-01 and NH-301 in accordance with IRC and National Highway guidelines and submit a detailed report to facilitate future enforcement measures.

Reviewing the implementation of the PM Rahat Scheme, the Deputy Commissioner tasked the Chief Medical Officer and e-DAR in-charge with identifying empanelled hospitals and examining bottlenecks that may hinder accident victims from availing timely benefits under the scheme.

Regarding the Good Samaritan Scheme, ARTO Kargil was directed to intensify public awareness campaigns and organize training programmes for concerned agencies. The training will include flow charts and standard response procedures to ensure early assistance to road accident victims.

As part of the review process, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by the ARTO Kargil, DySP Traffic and SHO Kargil, conducted a night inspection from Baroo to Kharul and the Main Bazaar area between 10:30 PM and 12:30 AM. The inspection highlighted several areas requiring immediate intervention, including the installation of crash barriers at vulnerable locations and the need for round-the-clock police deployment at various traffic points to improve traffic management and road safety.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to implement the decisions taken during the meeting in a time-bound manner. It was decided that the next review meeting of the District Highway Safety Task Force will be held within ten days to assess progress and ensure compliance with the directions issued.

NOTICE

No 9928442 Y Rank Nk Jegmat Naytak S/o Tsewang Spalgon Unit 4 Ladakh Scouts C/o 56APO has claimed that his wife namely Jikmat Yangchen has been wrongly entered as Jimet Yangchan instead of Jikmat Yangchen in the Army record of, Unit 4 Ladakh Scouts C/o 56APO and produced an affidavit duly verified by Notary Public Leh with Certificate No. IN-LA11443434996881Y to this office for making necessary correction. Hence the notice is hereby served through press to file objection if any in this office, Unit 4 Ladakh Scouts C/o 56APO within 7 days from date of publication failing which necessary correction will be made.

NOTICE

An application has been received from Lobzang Norbo S/o Panchok Angchok R/o Saspal A/P Tashi Gatsal, Choglamsar, Leh, Ladakh owner of vehicle no. LA02A-6627 for issuance of duplicate Fitness certificate of the above said vehicle in lieu of the lost documents. Now, it is therefore notified for the general public information that objection if any shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer ARTO Leh, Ladakh within a period of 7 days from date of publication of this notice.

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