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Civil Society ...

ordinary residents were receiving sufficient priority.

It also questioned the representativeness of the LAB-KDA leadership, arguing that decisions affecting the entire Union Territory should not rest with a limited circle of representatives without adequate participation from its diverse districts and social groups.

The dispute goes beyond differences over individual leaders. It raises fundamental questions about who speaks for Ladakh, how the movement’s negotiating positions are determined and whether the pursuit of major constitutional demands should take precedence over immediate institutional reforms.

The forum called for the reconstitution of the Leh Apex Body on democratic lines, with adequate representation for elected public representatives, religious institutions, women, youth, tribal communities and nomadic populations living in border areas. It also sought greater powers for elected hill councils to protect local land, employment opportunities, natural resources, tourism interests and cultural identity.

Acknowledging the complexities involved in securing constitutional arrangements through legislation and parliamentary processes, the forum maintained that the absence of a final settlement cannot be used to justify continued deprivation of democratic representation.

It appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to prevent negotiations from being derailed by political confrontation and take immediate steps towards restoring elected institutions in Ladakh.

The resolution exposed a strategic divide within Ladakh’s political and civil society leadership. While LAB and KDA have continued to demand statehood, Sixth Schedule status and strong constitutional guarantees, the Chhewang-led forum argues that immediate democratic reforms and practical safeguards must not be indefinitely deferred.

By placing Wangchuk’s role and the LAB-KDA strategy under scrutiny, the forum has brought the debate over leadership and accountability into sharper focus.

PM Modi,...

dialogue and diplomacy as the way forward," the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) said in a statement. In a post on X, Modi said he received a phone call from the Israeli prime minister.

"We reviewed the sustained momentum in our bilateral ties and reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening our partnership. We also exchanged views on recent developments in West Asia and underscored the urgent need to restore peace and stability in the region," he said.

Prime Minister Modi had made a state visit to Israel from February 25 to 26. The two leaders had then agreed and decided to elevate the Strategic Partnership to a new level -- 'A Special Strategic Partnership for Peace, Innovation and Prosperity'.

UT Admin ...

called a pattern of public order disruptions. Citing a Home Ministry order dated September 25, 2025, the affidavit said SECMOL’s foreign funding registration was cancelled over several alleged legal violations. These included accepting funds from a Swedish donor for a study concerning India’s sovereignty, which was considered harmful to the national interest.

The administration said local residents, the Phyang Welfare Society and village nambardars had repeatedly approached the authorities since 2018. They alleged that promises related to the university project had not been kept, ancient irrigation streams had been diverted without permission for “Ice Stupa” experiments, and an additional 174 kanals had been encroached upon beyond the boundary wall.

According to the affidavit, villagers alleged that HIAL had misled them with promises of a world-class university, blocked old pasture land and repeatedly diverted centuries-old natural irrigation streams for Ice Stupa projects, causing a severe water shortage for local farmers.

Urging the court to dismiss the petition, the administration alleged that HIAL had made false statements under oath by claiming that it had sent repeated reminders during the first year and paid all required dues. It submitted records that, it said, showed no written communication between May 2018 and March 2020 and no payments.

The affidavit also referred to letters written by HIAL in June 2020 seeking a complete waiver of the premium and ground rent. The administration said this request was never approved and the letters had not been disclosed in the petition.

Referring to official records dating to 2006, the administration cited an October 2006 communication from the then Leh district magistrate. The communication recorded an allegation that Wangchuk had openly threatened the Hill Council and district administration during a council meeting, prompting officials to recommend surveillance and preventive detention.

The affidavit also cited March 2007 orders in which the district magistrate banned public gatherings, speeches and the circulation of what were described as provocative video discs by SECMOL. According to the affidavit, the orders alleged that the organisation was carrying out large-scale anti-establishment propaganda that threatened public peace and was collecting money from the public without authorisation. Reports from the Chief Education Officer in April

2007 alleged that Wangchuk had occupied 200 kanals of land without authorisation in the name of educational programmes and had disrupted the functioning of the education department.

The administration told the court that this alleged pattern of occupying public land without paying government dues had continued over the years, including at SECMOL’s Phey campus. It said 1,076 kanals of state land had now been held for more than six years without a valid lease or payment of the premium and ground rent.

The affidavit further alleged that recent agitations led and incited by Wangchuk ended with the office of the chief executive councillor of the Hill Council, which had originally allotted the land, being set on fire.

It also accused Wangchuk of inciting a mob through speeches during a hunger strike on September 24, 2025. According to the affidavit, the violence resulted in political party offices being burnt, police vehicles being set on fire and more than 30 security personnel being injured.

The administration argued that a petitioner with such a record had not approached the court with “clean hands” and was not entitled to discretionary or equitable relief. It also rejected the relevance of the awards, visits by guests and international recognition cited by Wangchuk in his petition.

Personal eminence and accolades were “wholly irrelevant” to whether the lease conditions had been followed, the affidavit said. It added that no recognition, however distinguished, could replace compliance with the legal conditions governing the allotment and alleged that reliance on such honours was an attempt to divert attention from the default.

The administration said public land was held in trust for the people and could not be distributed as private largesse. It asked the court to dismiss HIAL’s petition with costs and suggested that the reclaimed land be allotted to reputed national institutions such as a Sainik School, an Eklayva Model Residential School or Sindhu Central University.

The case centres on the administration’s claim that HIAL failed to sign the lease deed and pay mandatory dues within the stipulated period, while the institute has denied the allegations and challenged the cancellation of the land allotment before the high court.

LG Saxena ...

and interaction among people from different regions.

The initiative assumes significance in view of Ladakh’s growing tourism potential and the need to create platforms that can extend economic benefits beyond conventional tourism activities. A dedicated exhibition venue could provide artisans, craft producers, local businesses and entrepreneurs with opportunities to reach visitors, prospective buyers and other stakeholders through organised events and trade fairs.

For local artisans and craftspersons, such a facility could offer greater visibility for Ladakhi handicrafts, traditional products and indigenous artistic practices. It could also help local entrepreneurs explore new markets, establish business connections and present locally developed products to national and international audiences.

The exhibition ground is also envisaged as a venue for showcasing Ladakh’s cultural diversity and creative potential, allowing traditional practices to find wider recognition while encouraging innovation and new forms of enterprise. The proposed platform could further strengthen the link between cultural preservation, tourism promotion and livelihood generation.

The project is expected to support the administration’s broader efforts to position Ladakh as a destination not only for its distinctive landscapes and tourism attractions but also for its cultural identity, traditional knowledge and entrepreneurial potential.

By facilitating exhibitions, fairs and community gatherings, the facility could create additional avenues for tourism-related activity and provide opportunities for local service providers and businesses associated with hospitality, transport, handicrafts and other sectors.

The LG described the initiative as part of the Union Territory Administration’s commitment to developing world-class infrastructure that nurtures creativity, fosters dialogue and promotes sustainable development. The project is intended to establish Ladakh as a hub of cultural exchange by bringing together local communities, visitors, businesses and participants from outside the region.

With the foundation stone laid, the proposed Open Exhibition Ground at Melong-Thang is expected to emerge as an important addition to Leh’s public and cultural infrastructure, offering a dedicated space for the promotion of Ladakh’s heritage, creative industries and local enterprise.

BrahMos-NG ...

expressed interest in integrating the missile with their Air Force capabilities.

The Brahmos CEO said the company had undertaken the range extension programme in phases and that the missile had validated its longer-range capabilities during test firings from ground, sea and air, surpassing its initial strike range of 290 km.

In an interview, Dr Joshi on Thursday said the BrahMos-NG system was under development and would feature higher indigenous content, new technologies and advanced materials, requiring extensive research and development work.

"We expect to develop the first prototype by 2027 or 2028. Since this new system will have higher indigenous content and would also feature many new technologies, advanced materials etc., we need to undertake extensive R&D work. We have chalked out our plans and are steadily moving forward in this

direction. At this point of time, it is under development stage. Once developed, we will tell you the details," he said.

Speaking on the interest shown by foreign countries in the air-launched version of BrahMos, Dr Joshi said some countries operating the Sukhoi-30 platform had expressed interest in integrating the missile with their Air Force capabilities.

He added that some countries had also shown interest in the BrahMos-NG system, which would be developed first in an airborne configuration.

"Yes, there are countries which have evinced interest in air-launched BrahMos for their Air Force, having the Sukhoi-30 platform in their inventory. In addition, some countries have also expressed their desire in the BrahMos-NG system which will be developed in an airborne configuration first. We are engaged in talks with all the interested parties," he said.

BrahMos Aerospace CEO Joshi said foreign militaries had become increasingly interested in the missile’s operational and functional parameters after its performance in combat.

"The militaries want a state-of-the-art system which can swiftly adapt to a rapidly evolving war environment. BRAHMOS, being a very sophisticated weapon and evolving with times, has proven its excellent performance metrics by precisely engaging enemy targets in real-time without a single missile being intercepted during the entire combat operation last year. So, impressed by all these characteristics of the missile, the foreign militaries have become all the more inquisitive in their queries about BRAHMOS, its overall operational and functional parameters, among other aspects," he said.

On the proposed extension of the missile’s range to 1,500 km, Dr Joshi said the company had undertaken the range extension programme in phases and that the missile had validated its longer-range capabilities during test firings from ground, sea and air, surpassing its initial strike range of 290 km.

"We have taken up the range extension programme in a phase-wise manner, and the missile has validated its longer-range capabilities during test firings conducted from ground, sea and air, surpassing its initial 290-km strike ambit. The 1,500-km range is part of our future roadmap which is presently at the conceptual stage. We are in discussion with our JV partner for further upgrades in the missile system," he said.

Indian killed ...

on Wednesday, while another Indian sustained injuries in the incident at the Shaybah oil field in the kingdom’s Eastern Province.

“We strongly condemn the continued attacks on civilian and energy infrastructure in Saudi Arabia,” the government said, describing the strikes as unacceptable and calling for an immediate cessation of such attacks.

New Delhi conveyed condolences to the family of the Indian national killed in Dammam and wished those injured a speedy recovery. The Indian Embassy in Riyadh is in contact with Saudi authorities and will provide all possible assistance, the MEA said.

The Dammam attack killed two people, including an Indian resident, and injured eight others, according to Saudi Arabia’s General Authority of Civil Aviation. The injured included expatriates of several nationalities, with some reported to be in serious condition. Airport operations have since resumed, although authorities are assessing the damage and reviewing security measures.

In a separate incident on Wednesday, Saudi air defences intercepted a drone trying to target a facility at the Shaybah oil field, according to the Saudi Energy Ministry.

Debris from the interception sparked a fire in a contractor’s vehicle outside the facility’s perimeter, killing two foreign workers from the Philippines and Nepal and injuring two others, including an Indian and a Pakistani national. The ministry said the incident did not affect the oil field’s operations.

The attacks come amid a wider wave of strikes and attempted strikes against Saudi airports and energy facilities. Earlier this month, King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh was targeted in attacks that killed three Saudi nationals and injured several others.

Saudi authorities also reported attacks on Dammam airport earlier in October, while Yemen’s Houthi group had claimed responsibility for some previous strikes on Saudi aviation and oil infrastructure. Responsibility for the latest Dammam attack had not been established in the reports available on Thursday.

The developments have heightened concerns over the vulnerability of civilian facilities and critical energy infrastructure in the kingdom, which is a major global oil producer and home to a large Indian expatriate community.

Reiterating its support for Saudi Arabia, India said it stood in solidarity with the government and people of the kingdom in safeguarding the country’s sovereignty and hoped peace and normalcy would return to the region at the earliest.

The latest incidents add to the risks faced by Indian nationals in the region as attacks increasingly threaten airports, oil installations and other essential infrastructure.

Ladakh Congress ...

Bachao, Desh Bachao”. Claiming that more than 13 crore names had been deleted from electoral rolls across the country during the revision exercise, Khan alleged that the deletions had disproportionately affected voters and demanded

that the rolls be reviewed and eligible voters’ names restored.

Khan said Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh had not yet undergone the SIR exercise, but expressed apprehension that a similar process in the region could lead to the deletion of eligible voters’ names.

He alleged that the exercise was being used to benefit a particular political party and questioned the Election Commission’s explanation regarding proceedings before the Supreme Court. He also criticised the legal protections available to the CEC, claiming that the provisions undermined accountability. These assertions were part of the Congress leader’s criticism of the poll panel.

Raising concerns over the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs), Khan said the Congress had lost confidence in the existing voting system and called for a return to ballot-paper voting.

He referred to reported instances of dissent within the Election Commission and argued that concerns about the electoral process needed to be addressed to restore public confidence in elections.

The Congress leader said the proposed two-month campaign would focus on voter awareness, protection of electoral rights and vigilance at the polling-booth level. Party workers would be mobilised to monitor the electoral-roll revision process and help prevent the exclusion of eligible voters, he added.

Earlier, former LAHDC Leh councillor Tsering Namgyal introduced Khan and other party leaders, describing the press conference as an effort to bring the Congress’s concerns over alleged ‘vote theft’ to the attention of the people of Ladakh.

Final electoral...

Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) concerned.

All electors residing within the territorial jurisdictions of the two municipal committees, along with recognised political parties and other stakeholders, have been advised to inspect the rolls and verify the particulars of the electors included in them.

The notification further states that any person aggrieved by the final publication of the electoral rolls may file an appeal before the competent authority in accordance with Rule 13 of the Municipal Election Rules, 2003.

The Chief Electoral Officer has urged all concerned to take note of the publication and exercise their rights in accordance with the applicable rules.

British MP ...

mark it as the constitutional accession of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union," the EDM reads.

It further acknowledges the contribution of British Jammu and Kashmiri communities to the cultural, social and civic life of the UK and welcomes peaceful commemorations in the UK that promote historical literacy, cultural exchange and civic participation.

The motion also calls for "constructive dialogue, community cohesion, and respect for international norms and sovereign boundaries in discussions about Jammu and Kashmir". The fellow signatories of the EDM include Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) MP Jim Shannon, Labour's Gill Furniss and Lib Dem MP Luke Taylor.

Grand welcome ...

education and other important sectors. He emphasized that he would work in close coordination with officers from all departments to ensure effective administration and take Sankoo forward on the path of development.

The Deputy Commissioner also congratulated the people of Sankoo on receiving district status, describing it as an important milestone for the region. He assured the public that concerted efforts would be made to address local needs and promote development through teamwork and coordination among various departments.

Local residents expressed hope that the creation of the new district would speed up administrative processes, improve access to government services and bring positive changes in healthcare, education and other essential facilities.

The people of Sankoo are now looking forward to concrete steps by the new district administration to fulfil public expectations, address local issues and ensure the overall development of the region.

NHPC invites ...

medals, laptops and tablets. In addition, all national-level winners, accompanied by their parents, will be taken on a guided educational tour to Madhya Pradesh in January 2027, sponsored by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

The initiative highlights the importance of engaging students at an early age in efforts to promote energy conservation. By using painting as a medium of expression, the programme aims to encourage children to communicate the message of energy efficiency and translate awareness into everyday practices at home and school.

Through the competition, NHPC’s Nimoo Bazgo Power Station seeks to contribute to the broader national effort to promote energy conservation and nurture environmentally responsible habits among the younger generation in Ladakh.

7.0-magnitude...

tectonic plates meet, often colliding with huge force.