

In a first, LG VK Saxena inaugurates five EV Charging Stations across Ladakh

Initiative a major step towards Carbon Neutral Ladakh; sixth charging station near Magnetic Hill nearing completion

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: In a significant step towards promoting sustainable mobility and advancing the vision of Carbon Neutral Ladakh, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated five Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations across the Union Territory, reaffirming the Administration's commitment to clean energy, environmentally responsible transportation and preservation of Ladakh's frag-



ile Himalayan ecosystem. The newly inaugurated EV Charging Stations, the first in Ladakh, have been established at Main Bus Stand, Leh; Tia Rong; Solar Colony; Chuchot Shamma; and Khaltsi, while a sixth charging station near Magnetic Hill in Leh is in the final stages of completion. Together, these charging stations will form the foundation of a comprehensive EV charging network across Ladakh, fa-

cilitating the growing adoption of electric vehicles and ensuring convenient charging infrastructure for both residents and tourists. The new EV charging infrastructure has been designed in a way that owners of electric vehicles do not face any inconvenience while travelling within Ladakh or while charging their vehicles. Each of the charging stations is equipped with two fast-charge-

ing guns, enabling vehicles to be charged up to 80 per cent capacity within 30 mins to one hour, thereby making electric mobility more practical and convenient. They are also equipped with advanced fire safety measures and an emergency shutdown system for enhanced safety. Saxena described the inauguration of the charging stations as a historic day for Ladakh's transition towards clean energy and sustainable transportation. He stated that the initiative was fully aligned with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making Ladakh a Carbon Neutral region and promoting clean energy while protecting its pristine environment and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. "The inauguration of these EV Charging ►P11

Mysterious airstrikes target Iran after US attacks

DUBAI: A series of mysterious, unclaimed airstrikes that hit Iran after the US said it finished its attacks has again raised questions of who else may be targeting the Islamic Republic. The strikes on Thursday, just as Iran prepared to bury the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, hit areas across southern Iran. The country's theocracy hasn't directly blamed anyone for the strikes, though one lawmaker issued a warning to the United Arab Emirates over allegedly providing support to the United States in its campaign against Iran. Gulf Arab states, which repeatedly have been targeted by Iran since the war began on February 28, did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Friday over the strikes. The attacks come as they and the US insist the Strait of Hormuz must be open and free for ►P11

'Fresh Apricot Export Mission' gains momentum; First UAE consignment set for July 14

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LEH: The ambitious initiative to export 1,000 metric tonnes of Ladakh's premium fresh apricots to international markets, including Dubai, has entered a crucial implementation phase, with the first consignment scheduled to leave for the UAE on July 14. Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, on Thursday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the preparedness and progress of the export initiative launched under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Lulu Group for promoting Ladakh's fresh apricots in global markets. During the detailed review, Kundra examined the entire supply chain mechanism, including procurement from villages, grading, sorting, packaging, cold chain management, transportation and timely shipment of the



CS Kundra reviews 1,000 MT export initiative with focus on quality, cold chain and farmer payments

fruit. He stressed the need for seamless coordination among all stakeholders to ensure that Ladakh's first major fresh apricot export venture sets a benchmark for future agricultural exports. Secretary, Agriculture

and Horticulture, Bhupesh Chaudhary, gave a comprehensive presentation on the implementation strategy, covering production estimates, identification of apricot-growing clusters, participation of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and aggregators, establishment of collection centres, harvesting schedules, logistics planning, financial arrangements and village-wise export projections. The Chief Secretary reviewed the mobilisation of apricots from various production clusters across Ladakh and sought updates on transportation arrangements from Leh and Kargil to Srinagar and onward to Delhi, from where the produce will be airlifted to international destinations. Special emphasis was laid on maintaining export quality standards. Kundra reviewed the grading and sorting process, rejection rates and reasons ►P11

VBL urges admin to relax eligibility criteria for Jail Supdt, AD Planning posts

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LEH: The Voice of Buddhist Ladakh (VBL) has submitted a representation to the Secretary, Education Department, UT Ladakh, seeking rationalisation of educational eligibility criteria for the posts of Superintendent of Jail and Assistant Director, Planning, arguing that the existing requirement of a Master's degree restricts participation of eligible candidates and narrows the talent pool in the Union Territory. In its letter addressed to Secretary Education Bhanu Prabha, VBL Convener Skarma Namtak requested the UT Administration to revise the minimum qualification for both posts from a



postgraduate degree to a Bachelor's degree, in line with recruitment practices followed by several major recruiting agencies and states across India. Highlighting the case of Superintendent of Jail, VBL stated that the current requirement of a Master's degree in Sociology, Social Work, Psychology or Criminology could be reconsidered,

as similar positions in many states are filled through civil service examinations where the basic eligibility is graduation. The organisation cited that even the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) requires a Bachelor's degree for services such as the Indian Police Service (IPS) and Assistant Commandant (CAPF), which involve significant security and administrative responsibilities. For the post of Assistant Director, Planning, VBL pointed out that the existing requirement of a Master's degree in Economics, Mathematics, Statistics or Computer Science may also be relaxed. It proposed a Bachelor's degree in the relevant ►P11

LG inaugurates 'Centre of Excellence on Integrated Technologies' at Govt ITI Leh

First batch of 22 students begins advanced training; trainees to install solar power system for the laboratory as part of hands-on learning

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Taking a major leap towards strengthening technical education and preparing Ladakh's youth for emerging technologies, Lieutenant Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated the Centre of Excellence on Integrated Technologies – Srujan – at Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Leh. The Centre has been established under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative of Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited (KSSL), a subsidiary of Bharat Forge Ltd., with Sci-



entech Technologies Pvt. Ltd. serving as the technical partner. Developed with an investment of over Rs 1.01 crore, the Centre has been equipped with advanced laboratory infrastructure, in-

dustrial-grade equipment, simulation software and modern training systems to provide world-class technical education and industry-oriented skill development to the youth of Ladakh. The newly inaugurated

Centre has been equipped with advanced technologies covering Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC), Electric Vehicle Technology, Pneumatics, Hydraulics, Industrial Automation, Engineering Simulation Systems and Industry 4.0 technologies, enabling trainees to acquire practical competencies required by modern manufacturing and engineering industries. The Lieutenant Governor also interacted with the first batch of 22 trainees, who have commenced a two-month specialised training programme at the Centre. As part of their ►P11

Sheikh Hasina plans B'desh return in Dec

NEW DELHI: Former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina plans to return to Bangladesh in December along with senior leaders of her Awami League to surrender voluntarily, Reuters reported. This could mark a dramatic turn in the country's turbulent political landscape. Hasina, who has been living in India since being ousted following a student-led uprising in August 2024, said she was prepared to face arrest, or even death, upon her return. She is facing a death sentence handed down in absentia by a Bangladeshi court, a verdict she has rejected as politically motivated. According to the news agency, the 78-year-old leader said she and senior Awami League ►P11

UPSC extends application window for Ladakh Recruitment Posts

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LEH: In a major relief for aspirants seeking government employment opportunities in the Union Territory of Ladakh, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has decided to reopen the online application portal for Ladakh Recruitment Posts advertised under Advertisement No. 06/2026 and extend the application period for posts under Advertisement No. 07/2026. As per the communication issued by the UPSC Recruitment Branch, the online application portal for Advertisement No. 06/2026, specifically for posts under the Administration of UT Ladakh,

will be reopened as a one-time measure from July 10 to July 24, 2026. However, the crucial date for determining age, essential qualification, experience and other eligibility criteria will remain July 3, 2026, which was the original closing date of the advertisement. The decision follows a request from the General Administration Department (GAD), Administration of UT Ladakh, seeking reopening of the application portal and extension of the deadline to ensure wider participation of eligible candidates. The Commission has also extended the application window for Advertisement No. 07/2026, which is currently live. The application ►P11

BRO's Project Himank restores connectivity on Upshi–Mahe Road after landslides

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Demonstrating its exceptional disaster response capability in the challenging high-altitude terrain of Ladakh, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) swiftly restored traffic movement on the strategic Upshi–Mahe Road after multiple landslides disrupted connectivity amid incessant rainfall. The sudden landslides at several locations along the vital road stretch brought movement to a standstill, leaving Army vehicles, tourist vehicles, and commuters stranded. Responding promptly to the situation, personnel of Project Hi-



mank, BRO, mobilised men and machinery to undertake immediate restoration operations despite difficult weather conditions and unstable terrain. With precise engineering intervention and round-the-

clock efforts, BRO teams cleared the debris, reopened the affected stretches, and ensured the safe movement of stranded vehicles. The Army convoy was facilitated through the restored route, while tourist ►P11

Ladakh Tourism draws robust trade response on opening day of TTF Kolkata 2026

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Ladakh has opened its campaign at the Travel & Tourism Fair (TTF) Kolkata 2026 on a positive note, with the Union Territory's pavilion drawing strong interest from travel trade professionals, tour operators and visitors on the opening day, signalling renewed momentum in its efforts to expand its presence in eastern India and promote year-round tourism. The three-day travel exhibition, which began on Friday at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan in Kolkata, has brought together tourism boards, industry stakeholders and travel companies from across the country. Ladakh's pavilion at Booth B-300



emerged as one of the active attractions, recording sustained visitor engagement and business interactions throughout the day, according to the Department of

Tourism. The pavilion was inaugurated by Mohd Taqi (JKAS), Deputy Director of Tourism, UT Ladakh, who said the Union Territory is ►P11

Ladakh introduces new legal metrology rules to ensure fair trade, accurate weights and consumer protection

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Strengthening consumer protection and ensuring transparency in commercial transactions across the Union Territory, the Administration of Ladakh has notified the Union Territory of Ladakh Legal Metrology (Enforcement) Rules, 2026 under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. The new rules aim to regulate the use of weights and measures, prevent unfair trade practices and establish a robust mechanism for verification and enforcement throughout Ladakh. The rules, notified by the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department on July 7, 2026, have come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette and will apply across the entire

Under new framework, all weights and measuring instruments used in trade or for consumer protection must conform to prescribed standards regarding accuracy, construction, performance and permissible limits.

Union Territory of Ladakh. Under the new framework, all weights and measuring instruments used in trade or for consumer protection must conform to prescribed standards regarding accuracy, construction, performance and permissible limits as laid down under the Legal Metrology Act and the Ladakh rules. The new rules make it mandatory for manufacturers, repairers and dealers of weights and measures to obtain registration from the Controller of Legal Metrology, UT Ladakh. The registration process will be based on self-declaration, with a one-time registration provision and no requirement for renewal. Registered entities will have to maintain prescribed records, registers and submit periodic reports as specified by the authorities. They will also be required to display their registration certificates prominently at their business premises. The registration fee has been fixed at Rs 5,000

each for manufacturers, repairers and dealers of weights and measures. The rules provide for regular verification and stamping of weights and measures by Legal Metrology Officers or authorised testing centres. Any instrument used for commercial transactions must be verified and stamped within the prescribed period to ensure accuracy. In cases where instruments cannot be moved, such as large weighing machines or fixed equipment, verification will be carried out at the place of installation after prior intimation to the Legal Metrology Officer. The verified instruments will carry official stamps indicating the year and quarter of verification, while certificates of verification will be issued to users. The rules introduce strict standards for transactions ►P11

J&K Bank convenes Mega Financial Inclusion Saturation Campaign 2026



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Reinforcing its commitment as the Convener of the Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory Level Bankers' Committee (UTLBC), J&K Bank today

organised a Mega Financial Inclusion Saturation Campaign – 2026 at the Auditorium Hall of Government College of Education, Srinagar, in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India under the theme "Together To-

wards Financial Empowerment." The programme was attended by Chief General Manager - in charge, FIDD, Reserve Bank of India, Nisha Nambiar, Regional Director, RBI (Jammu), Chandrashekhara Azad, ADDC Srinagar, Rifat Aftab Qureshi, Bank's Chief General Manager Imtiyaz Ahmed Bhat, General Manager (UTLBC/FID) Khurshed Muzaffar, Nodal Principal Colleges, Kashmir Division, Dr. Seema Naaz, Joint Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Nuzhat Qureshi, besides senior officers from various government departments ►P11