

Ladakh’s ‘Sanjeevani’ gets national push; high-level panel to explore Research Centre in Nubra

LG Saxena says, “Ladakh’s Sea Buckthorn can emerge as a National Sanjeevani through research, value addition and sustainable commercialisation”

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Ladakh has taken a major step towards transforming its high-value Himalayan crop, Sea Buckthorn, into a major centre of scientific research, value addition and sustainable rural enterprise, with the Union Agriculture Ministry constituting a High-Level Committee to examine the establishment of a dedicated National Sanjeevani Research Centre at Nubra.

Lieutenant Governor Ladakh Vinai Kumar Saxena announced the development, describing it as a crucial move to harness the medicinal, nutritional and commercial potential of Sea Buckthorn, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi has referred to as Ladakh’s “Sanjeevani.”

The committee was constituted following the LG’s request to Union Agriculture



Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on August 14, with the Minister directing its formation within a week. The committee has already arrived in Ladakh and is scheduled to meet farmers, cooperatives and officials in Nubra as part of its assessment.

According to the LG, the committee will submit its re-

port within 45 days and undertake a comprehensive review of Sea Buckthorn in Ladakh, covering its natural distribution, cultivation, production, utilisation and ongoing research.

It will also explore interventions in genetic improvement, propagation, standardised cultivation, scientific

harvesting, post-harvest management, processing and quality assurance—areas that could determine whether the crop can move from a largely natural Himalayan resource to a scientifically developed and commercially viable value chain.

Sea Buckthorn has considerable nutritional and commercial significance. The naturally occurring Himalayan plant is rich in Vitamins A, C and E and contains Omega-3, Omega-6, Omega-9 and the relatively rare Omega-7 fatty acid. Its potential spans food, nutrition, wellness, cosmetics and other value-added sectors.

The proposed research centre could therefore provide an institutional framework for bringing together scientific research, farmer production, processing, quality standards and market ►P11

Tibetans hold protest outside UN office

GENEVA: Tibetans in Switzerland gathered outside the United Nations Office at the historic Palais des Nations in Geneva to mark the 49th day since the self-immolation of Tibetan activist Lobga Rangzen, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) reported.

According to the CTA, they gathered to draw international attention to what they described as China’s continuing repression and assimilation policies in Tibet.

The peaceful demonstration on August 22 focused particularly on China’s ‘Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress’, which Tibetan groups have criticised as a tool to further undermine Tibet’s distinct cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

The protesters initially assembled outside Palais Wilson, the headquarters of the UN Office ►P11

India, China seek to consolidate border calm as Doval, Wang hold key talks

BEIJING: India and China on Tuesday held the 25th round of Special Representatives’ talks on the boundary question, with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi holding high-level discussions aimed at maintaining peace and tranquillity along the frontier and giving further momentum to the gradual stabilisation of bilateral ties.

The talks in Beijing come at a strategically important juncture, barely weeks before India hosts the BRICS Summit in New Delhi on September 12-13, with Chinese President Xi Jinping’s participation expected, though Beijing has not yet formally confirmed his visit. The timing has raised expectations that sustained diplomatic engagement could help consolidate the fragile thaw between the two Asian powers.

In his opening remarks, Doval underlined the direct connection between stability



25th round of Special Representatives’ dialogue comes ahead of Xi Jinping’s expected India visit; eastern Ladakh remains central to the fragile thaw

along the border and improvement in the wider relationship, saying that the return towards normalcy had resulted from both sides maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

Doval and Wang also stressed the need to implement the “clear and positive” direction provided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping for improving bilateral relations.

Wang, meanwhile, said the relationship had acquired wider global and strategic significance and called for greater communication, mutual trust and removal of obstacles between the two countries.

The tone reflects a carefully calibrated effort by both sides to separate the management of the boundary dispute from the broader relationship while recognising ►P11

Ladakh gets 19 J&K officers on deputation as six JKAS officers recalled

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LEH: The Union Territory of Ladakh is set to receive 19 officers from Jammu and Kashmir on deputation, even as the J&K Government has recalled six Junior Scale JKAS officers currently serving in Ladakh, under a major administrative reshuffle ordered on August 25.

The Jammu and Kashmir General Administration Department, through Government Order No. 1443-JK(GAD) of 2026, ordered the recall of six Junior Scale JKAS officers from Ladakh to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. They include Mohd. Ismail Ganie, Imtissal Rasool, Sanjat Bhardwaj, Atul Singh Mankotia, Tufail Iqbal

and Waseem Ramzan Dar.

At the same time, the order places the services of 19 JKAS officers at the disposal of the UT of Ladakh on deputation with immediate effect, significantly strengthening the pool of administrative officers available to the Union Territory.

Among the officers being deputed to Ladakh are Raj Kumar Katoch, Mohd. Latif, Mohd. Jhangir, Mohammad Yousuf Ganaie, Mohd. Rafie, Shivam Sharma, Rafaqat Aziz, Ayush Sharma, Jasif Amin Sheikh, Zahoor Ahmad Hadi, Yassar Ahmad Bhati, Saqib Sharief Khan, Bhuvnesh Pargal, Deepak Bharti, Arshad Hussain, Mohd. Anjum, Sadam Hussain, Anup Kumar and Aju Kundal. ►P11

UT admin begins detailed Budget Exercise for 2027-28, reviews spending and new development priorities

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: The Union Territory of Ladakh has begun preparations for its Budget Estimates (B.E.) for 2027-28 and Revised Estimates (R.E.) for 2026-27, with the Finance Department scheduling a comprehensive series of departmental meetings from August 31 to September 7 to assess spending, implementation of schemes and future financial requirements.

The exercise, ordered through a Finance Department circular issued under the approval of the competent authority, is aimed at ensuring that the next budget is based on realistic expenditure projections, actual imple-

FINANCE DEPARTMENT SETS OUT WEEK-LONG SCHEDULE TO SCRUTINISE EXPENDITURE, ONGOING WORKS, LIABILITIES AND FRESH PROJECT REQUIREMENTS ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

mentation progress and clearly justified financial requirements.

The meetings will be chaired by Tsewang Tharchin, Commissioner/Secretary, Finance Department, UT of Ladakh, and will bring together Heads of Departments, nodal officers, drawing and disbursing officers and dealing assistants for detailed scrutiny of departmental proposals.

The Finance Department

has directed all departments to submit their B.E. 2027-28 and R.E. 2026-27 proposals to the Directorate of Accounts & Treasuries by August 28, ahead of the scheduled discussions.

The budget exercise goes beyond simply projecting allocations for the coming financial year. Departments have been specifically asked to review their actual expenditure against budgetary provisions, likely savings and

surrender of funds, progress of ongoing works and schemes, committed liabilities and requirements for new projects and schemes.

They have also been instructed to separately examine recurring and non-recurring expenditure and identify any additional financial requirements requiring consideration by the Finance Department.

The proposals are to be furnished Major Head-wise, Sub-Head-wise and Object Head-wise, with proper justification for significant variations between the Budget Estimates for 2026-27, Revised Estimates for 2026-27 and proposed Budget Estimates for 2027-28. ►P11

Rajnath approves DRDO missile technology transfer to private sector

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Tuesday approved the transfer of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)-developed technologies for all conventional missile systems to Indian industry for domestic production.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh cleared the proposal, allowing DRDO to transfer missile technologies to qualified private-sector companies. The move is aimed at increasing industry participation in the defence ecosystem and accelerating indigenous production of advanced weapon systems.

In military terminology, conventional missiles are those that destroy targets using high explosives, fragmentation or kinetic impact, and

do not carry nuclear, biological or chemical warheads.

While the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has not released a list of missile systems covered under the Transfer of Technology (ToT) framework, the category could include systems such as the Akash air defence missile, the Astra air-to-air missile and the Nag anti-tank guided missile, among others.

Announcing the decision on social media platform X, the Defence Minister’s Office said Rajnath Singh had approved the transfer of DRDO-developed technologies of all conventional missile systems to Indian industries for production within the country.

“This Transfer of Technology (ToT) marks ►P11

Congress promises two-year Ladakh campaign, makes Sixth Schedule, Statehood key political planks

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: The Congress on Tuesday announced an intensified political campaign in Ladakh, placing Sixth Schedule protection, restoration of democratic institutions, withdrawal of cases related to last year’s agitation and employment at the heart of its strategy for the Union Territory.

Addressing a press conference in Leh, senior Congress leader and former NSUI president Nadeem Javed, who is overseeing the party’s organisational creation campaign in Ladakh, said the Congress would spend the next two years strengthening its grassroots organisation and taking up what it described as the fundamental concerns of the people.



Congress leader Nadeem Javed addresses a press conference in Leh on Tuesday

Javed said the party’s national-level organisational drive was aimed at rebuilding the Congress from the ground up, with greater emphasis on direct engagement with workers and communities rather

than relying solely on organisational structures at district headquarters. He said the team had undertaken extensive consultations in Ladakh, including meetings in remote areas and interactions with

civil society members, intellectuals and opinion-makers.

The strongest political message from the Congress was its renewed demand for immediate implementation of the Sixth Schedule in Ladakh, which Javed said was part of the party’s manifesto and represented a commitment of its central leadership.

He argued that Sixth Schedule protection was necessary to safeguard Ladakh’s cultural identity, fundamental rights, historical interests and rights over land. Drawing parallels with Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura, he said the Congress would seek to work out a similar constitutional protection mechanism for Ladakh.

Responding to a question on how the party ►P11

UT constitutes SDGC to strengthen data sharing and digital governance

Committee has been tasked with aligning Ladakh’s data procedures, frameworks and policies with nationally prescribed standards and maintaining an inventory of State-owned datasets.

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: The Administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh has constituted a State Data Governance Committee (SDGC) to promote integrated and interoperable government databases, streamline data sharing among departments and

strengthen data-driven governance across the Union Territory. The committee has been constituted under Order No. 388-LA(GAD) of 2026, issued by the General Administration Department, following directions from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

The Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh, will head the committee as Chairperson, while senior representatives from key departments, including Finance; Planning & Development; Agriculture, Horticulture & Floriculture; Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; Health & Medical Education; Industries & Commerce; and School Education, have been designated as

members.

A Joint Secretary from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) will also be part of the committee, while the Administrative Secretary/Secretary of the Information Technology Department, Ladakh, will serve as Member-Convenor. Senior representatives from industry and industry associations, besides other officers or experts nominated by the Chairperson, may participate as special invitees or co-opted members.

The newly constituted SDGC has been tasked with aligning Ladakh’s data procedures, frameworks and policies with nationally prescribed standards and maintaining an inventory ►P11

Students, cops faceoff in Patna

PATNA: Protesting students broke through police barricades in their bid to gherao the Bihar Chief Minister’s residence here, and when the law enforcers used water cannons to disperse the agitators, instead of budging, they started a ‘rain dance’.

A large number of BPSC (Bihar Public Service Commission) job aspirants, along with other students, began their pre-announced march from Patna’s Gandhi Maidan and reached the Dak Bungalow crossing, where police detained several individuals.

The students, many of whom were carrying the Tricolour in their hands, jostled with the police and broke through barricades at the Dak Bungalow ►P11

DSE reviews Pre-Board performance, shifts focus to closing learning gaps in Kargil schools

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KARGIL: Director School Education Ladakh, Tsering Paldan along with the Chief Education Officer (CEO), Kargil, held a comprehensive review of the subject-wise performance of students in the 1st Pre-Board Examination with Principals and Headmasters of schools from Kargil, Zaskar and Drass at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS), Kargil.

The review focused on a detailed assessment of students’ academic performance, with particular emphasis on identifying subject-wise learning gaps, areas of weak performance and emerging academic concerns requiring



timely intervention. The exercise sought to move beyond a conventional review of examination results and establish a clear academic roadmap for improving learning outcomes across schools.

During the interaction, the Director engaged extensively with school heads to understand the factors con-

tributing to the identified learning gaps. Discussions covered possible academic and pedagogical challenges, classroom-level issues and the need for more focused support to students who are struggling in particular subjects.

The Director stressed the importance of adopting targeted academic interventions



and remedial measures based on the specific needs emerging from the examination data. School heads were encouraged to strengthen remedial teaching, provide additional academic support to weaker students and adopt effective and learner-centric teaching strategies to address identified deficiencies.

Particular emphasis was placed on the performance of students in Classes 10 and 12, where academic preparedness assumes added significance in view of the forthcoming Board examinations. The Director underscored the need for schools to use the intervening period effectively to address conceptual ►P11

Kharge, Rahul Gandhi urge Modi to withdraw caste census questionnaire

NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi have jointly urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to withdraw the government’s existing caste census questionnaire, stating that its open-ended format could render the exercise inaccurate and undermine efforts to ensure social justice.

In a letter to Modi, the two Congress leaders stressed that a credible assessment of the population and socio-economic status of India’s caste groups is possible only if caste enumeration is carried out systematically and uniformly across the country.

“Your government has



chosen an open-ended question format to record caste information in the Census, which is misleading. Under this system, the caste name provided by each individual will simply be recorded as stated,” the letter said.

They also criticised the

decision to allow respondents to enter their caste names freely, saying the same caste may be identified by different names, sub-castes and linguistic variations in different regions. According to them, such an approach could ►P11