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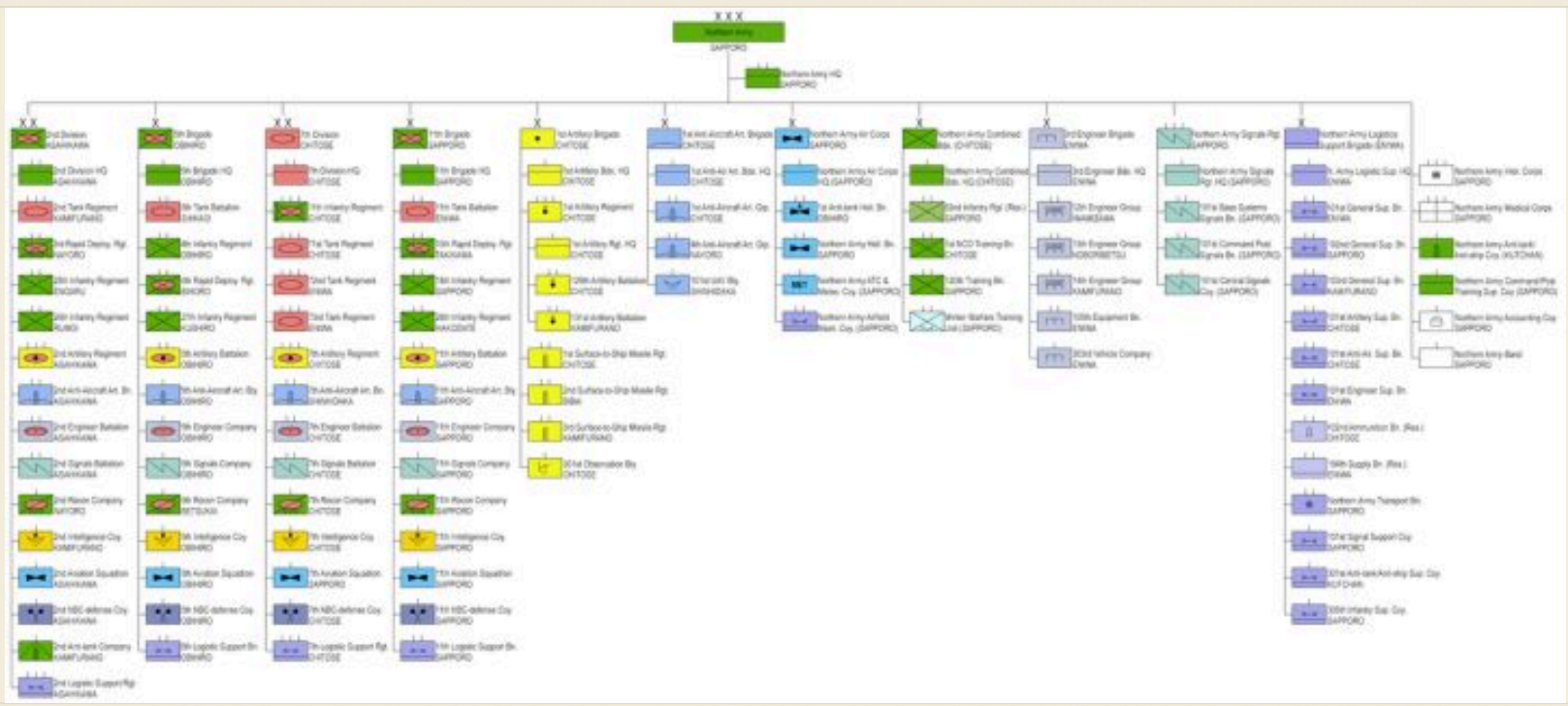
DEFENCE

Northern Army commander inspected soldiers at the Siachen Glacier



A senior officer of the Indian Army's Northern Command visited the Siachen Glacier this week and met the troops stationed at the world's highest battlefield. Together with senior staff, he toured further camps, inspected living facilities and examined the equipment used for high-altitude combat.

During the visit, the commander stressed the strategic importance of maintaining a strong presence on the glacier and urged vigilance despite harsh weather. He also listened to reports on supply-chain difficulties and medical facilities.

Soldiers operating above 6,000 meters described the personal visit as morale-boosting, given the sub-zero temperatures and limited daylight. The commander assured that the army would continue to prioritise supply and welfare measures.

This inspection completes a series of regular high-altitude reviews that assess the readiness of forces deployed at Siachen and address the unique challenges they face.

DEFENCE

IAF Heavy-Lift Aircraft Lands for First Time at 13,600-Foot Elevation on Nyoma Air Base, Ladakh



Earlier today, the Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out a historic landing of a heavy-lift aircraft at Nyoma Air Base, situated at 13,600 feet in Ladakh. The operation demonstrated the IAF's capability to operate large aircraft in extreme altitude environments.

Nyoma Air Base, one of the world's highest operational airports, has long been a critical point in India's northern defence strategy. The first landing of a heavy-lift aircraft at this altitude underscores advances in aircraft performance and pilot skill.

The aircraft, used for transporting large cargo and equipment, was landed at Nyoma by an experienced IAF crew. The landing was completed without incident, attesting to the meticulous planning and training involved in the mission.

Military officials highlighted the achievement as strengthening India's logistical flexibility in high-altitude frontier areas and its readiness to respond swiftly to any emergency.

POLITICS

Ladakh Administration Deploys Three JKAS Officers for Upcoming LAHDC and Panchayat Elections in Leh



The Ladakh administration has decided to deploy three Junior Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers to aid in the conduct of the upcoming Local Development Council (LAHDC) and panchayat elections. These officers will work alongside local election commission staff to manage polling station arrangements, voter verification, and logistical support, ensuring a smooth process.

The administration says the additional personnel will help address potential challenges across multiple stages of the election and strengthen oversight. The move reflects the government's commitment to making grassroots elections in Ladakh transparent and effective.

Kashmir Life reported that the three officers will be stationed in key districts, including Leh, and will coordinate with district election officers and local bodies. No detailed information about the officers' names or specific duties has been released yet.

DEFENCE

IAF Pilot Gajraj Sets World Record Landing at 13,629 Feet in Ladakh



On a clear morning over Ladakh, IAF pilot Gajraj set a world record by landing a fighter aircraft at an altitude of 13,629 feet. The flight began from Leh Air Base, a strategic location in the high-altitude region.

The aircraft, a modern fighter jet equipped with advanced avionics, displayed exceptional performance under extreme conditions. The pilot's precise control and the aircraft's robust design enabled a safe touchdown.

Military officials described the feat as evidence of India's operational capabilities at high altitudes. The record underscores Ladakh's strategic importance and the Indian Air Force's readiness to operate in challenging environments.

The IAF issued a statement praising the pilot's skill and the crew's teamwork, noting that such operations enhance India's regional deterrence capacity.

POLITICS

MHA Transfers Two IAS Officers from Jammu & Kashmir to Ladakh



The Ministry of Home Affairs announced that two senior IAS officers, previously posted in Jammu & Kashmir, have been transferred to Ladakh. The officers will be assigned administrative responsibilities in Ladakh. This move is part of a regular cadre management initiative to strengthen governance in the region. No additional information about the officers' names or specific positions has been provided. The ministry stated that the transfer is effective immediately and will ensure continuity of public services in the area.

DEFENCE

Two Soldiers Killed When Vehicle Fell Into 600-Foot Deep Trench Near Kargil



Earlier, a military truck carrying two Indian Army soldiers fell into a 600-foot deep trench near Kargil, resulting in the deaths of both soldiers.

The accident occurred in the high-altitude terrain of Kargil, known for its steep topography and strategic importance along the Line of Control.

The armed forces immediately commenced rescue operations, but the steep slope and remote location made retrieval difficult.

The army has yet to release a statement on the cause of the incident, and an investigation is ongoing.

Father-Son Motorcycle Journey in Ladakh Featured in Outlook Traveler



In the latest issue of Outlook Traveler, an extraordinary motorcycle journey undertaken by a father and his son through Ladakh's high-altitude mountain terrain is featured. The duo traversed desert plains, winding mountain passes, and remote villages, documenting the thrill of riding and the scenery in this rugged region. Their expedition extended beyond Ladakh, offering a glimpse of the diverse culture and natural beauty of the Himalayan valleys. The magazine presents the story with vivid photographs and personal reflections, providing readers with insights into preparation, logistics, and emotional aspects. Through this special article, Outlook Traveler aims to inspire adventure enthusiasts to travel safely and with respect for the environment. The reporting team covered major sites such as Pangong Lake, Nubra Valley, and the high mountain passes that connect Ladakh with neighboring areas. The feature highlights the growing trend of family travel, emphasizing experiential journeys and familial bonds. Practical advice on route planning, weather conditions, and essential gear for high-altitude motorcycling is also provided. The father-son narrative adds a human dimension to travel journalism, showing how inter-generational trips can foster courage and a deeper understanding of India's remote regions. The article will be published in the magazine's print edition as well as on its online portal, accompanied by photographs that portray Ladakh's harsh yet captivating landscape.

Ladakh Farmer Harvests 22 Grams of Saffron in Four Days, Offering Hope for New Income



A small barren plot of land in Ladakh was converted into a saffron field within 30 days, where farmers managed to harvest approximately 22 grams of the spice in just four days. This experiment, conducted by local agricultural researchers, demonstrates that saffron can thrive even in the region's harsh climate and offers a high-value alternative to traditional crops.

Although the yield is modest, this production is significant for Ladakh's agricultural economy. Saffron commands premium prices in both domestic and international markets, and its cultivation could provide farmers with a stable source of income, reducing their current reliance on limited crop options and seasonal tourism.

Officials are planning to expand this trial to additional plots and provide training on saffron cultivation, pest management, and post-harvest processing. If this initiative proves successful, Ladakh could establish itself as a distinct saffron producer, helping to diversify the livelihoods of rural communities.

CRIME

3.5 grams of suspect heroin seized at Leh airport



Leh airport has reported the seizure of approximately 3.5 grams of suspect heroin in the Union Territory of Ladakh. The substance was found by airport security personnel during a routine inspection, as reported by Kashmir Life.

Although the quantity is small, the incident underscores law-enforcement vigilance at remote entry points. Officials did not disclose the identity of the individual or vehicle involved, but highlighted the success of the interception.

The event is part of broader efforts to curb drug smuggling in the region, where multiple checks are conducted to control trafficking along high-altitude routes. The seized material will be sent to a forensic laboratory for further confirmation and legal action will be pursued.

IAF Achieves Historic Feat Near LAC in Eastern Ladakh



This is a remarkable achievement for the Indian Air Force (IAF) near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.

The landing of an IAF IL-76 aircraft at an altitude of 13,629 feet has set a new record.

This marks the highest-altitude landing by an IL-76 MD in the world to date.

- This landing sends a clear message to China that India can assume strategic and tactical control over the LAC in this region whenever it chooses, enhance its military buildup, and deploy tanks, artillery, air defense systems, or other heavy equipment at will.

It demonstrates that military logistics are not solely dependent on road networks.

Nyoma, an ultra-modern military airbase established on the LAC following the Galwan Valley clash, is one of the highest-altitude airbases in the world.

This airbase serves as a new security shield for highly sensitive areas along the LAC, including Demchok, Chushul, and Pangong.

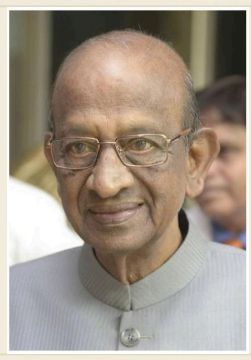
- Although the airstrip was originally built after the 1962 war and reactivated in 2009, it was developed into an ultra-modern airbase following the 2020 LAC standoff.

⚡ From here, the Indian Army has gained new capability for rapid response against China.

— Ajaz Hussain

NATIONAL

Chief Justice Surya Kant Kal will inaugurate the new branch of the Ladakh High Court



Chief Justice Surya Kant Kal will travel to Ladakh for the inauguration of the new branch of the High Court. The ceremony marks a step towards bringing the higher judiciary closer to the region.

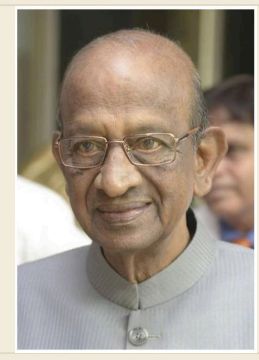
The new branch aims to reduce the travel burden for lawyers and litigants who previously had to go to Singapore or Delhi. It is part of India's effort to deliver justice across its diverse geography.

Ministry of Law and Justice will accompany the Chief Justice. Local legal professionals, government representatives and the media will also be invited to the event.

The presence of the High Court in Ladakh will streamline the management of regional cases and accelerate judicial processes. It reflects the judiciary's commitment to inclusive governance.

NATIONAL

Chief Justice of India, four Supreme Court judges and the Chief Justice of Jammu & Kashmir arrive in Leh today



New Delhi – The Chief Justice of India (CJI) arrived in Leh today accompanied by four Supreme Court judges and the Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court. The delegation has come to meet local officials in the capital of the Union Territory of Ladakh and to review regional judicial issues. Their arrival underscores the importance of overseeing the justice system in the remote Himalayan region. A detailed agenda has not yet been released, but the visit forms part of routine judicial outreach. After the conclusion of all programmes, the officials will depart from Leh.

The trip comes as the judiciary is emphasizing the strengthening of access to and oversight of justice across all parts of the country, especially Union Territories. The local administration welcomed the senior members of the higher judiciary, highlighting the significance of direct dialogue with the CJI's leadership.

Further information will be provided as the schedule progresses.

POLITICS

Delhi Government Offers Alcohol Sales in Ladakh, Calls Gujarat "Dry State"



The Kashmir Media Service quoted local leader Wangchuk, who said that the Delhi government is actively promoting alcohol sales in Ladakh. He added that this policy shift would render Gujarat a dry state, thereby highlighting the differences between the two regions.

became a separate Union Territory, where strict restrictions on alcohol availability had traditionally prevailed. The proposed change would represent a significant shift in existing rules that limit retail sales and consumption.

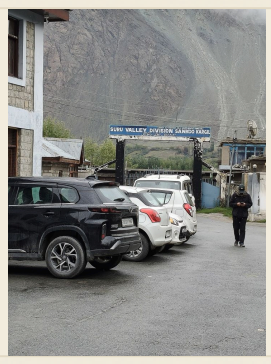
The announcement has sparked debate among policymakers and citizens. Supporters argue that regulated alcohol sales would boost revenue and curb illegal trade, while opponents worry about social impacts and the erosion of Ladakh's cultural values.

Wangchuk's comment also underscores the political symbolism of the move, drawing a comparison between Ladakh's new policy and Gujarat's long-standing prohibition. The statement reflects a broader discussion on state-level autonomy and the central government's influence over local regulations.

So far, no official response has been received from the Delhi administration, and the proposal may only be finalized after further deliberation.

LOCAL

Ladakh Administration Declares Sankoo as New District



The Ladakh administration announced today that the Sankoo sub-division of Kargil district will be granted district status, marking the first such transformation since Ladakh became a Union Territory in 2019.

An official notification issued by the Lieutenant Governor's office details the administrative boundaries and outlines plans for establishing a district headquarters in Sankoo, along with the creation of new government offices and infrastructure.

Officials state that this move is intended to improve service delivery, bring development projects closer to the local level, and address the long-standing demands of residents for administrative autonomy.

The reorganization will necessitate changes in resource allocation, staffing, budgeting, and coordination with the Kargil district, while both districts will function in tandem.

The government has stated that public feedback will be invited in the coming months for the implementation of the new arrangement.