



Dr Thomas Rieger (centre) with Stanzin Tsephel and other participants during the first module of the Senior Leadership Training Programme at Ule Tokpo

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING First module

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) organised a four-day Senior Leadership Training Programme at Ule Tokpo from July 19 to 22.

It was the first module of the senior training leadership programme. Three more such modules will be held.

Dr Thomas Rieger, a social scientist and whose work focuses on change processes in public administrations and non-profit organisations, was the trainer and Stanzin Tsephel, Director, South Asia, BORDA, was the moderator for the training programme. The participants were Moses Kunzang, Additional Deputy

Commissioner (ADC) Leh; Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh; Jigmet Raftan, Sub-District Magistrate, Nubra; Padma Angmo, Sub-District Magistrate, Kharu; Tsering Paldan, ACD, Rural Development Department; Mohammad Taqi, Assistant Director District Employem; Zakir Hussain, District Panchayat Officer; Tsering Namgyal, Congress Youth Wing President; Dr Nordan Otzer, Executive Director, Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG); Tsewang Rigzin, Bureau Chief, State Times; Morup Stanzin, Editor, Times of Ladakh; Tashi Morup, Project

Director, Ladakh Art and Media Organisation; Tsetan Angchuk, President, All Ladakh Tours Operator Association (ALTOA); Delex Namgyal, general secretary, ALTOA; Eshey Lamo, Advocate, and Tsering Chorol, Office Secretary, Congress.

The objective of the training programme was to build capacities of local officials for the visualisation of Leh as a world-class liveable city and sustainable tourist destination.

Dr Thomas imparted training on leadership skills and took three sessions, with each session lasting two hours. He was assisted by Stanzin Tsephel.

Stories


 Page no. 4
 Liveable Leh Talk Series 2,3 and 4

 Page no. 7
 Changspa Street Redevelopment Meeting

 Page no. 9
 Rammed Earth Workshop

TIDE TECHNOCRATS EXPERTS VISIT LEDEG

Arun Kumar RS and Amresh from Tide Technocrats Private Limited, a Bangalore-based company, visited Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) office on June 6. Dr Norden Otzer, Executive Director, LEDeG, briefed the experts about the organisation and the Liveable Leh Project 2030.

The company, established in 1995, works on Solid Waste Management, Renewable Energy and Sanitation. They have to their credit the first thermal-based FSTP in India.

“Unlike other FSTP plants which are based on biotechnology, this particular plant is based on thermal technology. It does not emit any bad smell and the bio waste can be utilised as fertiliser,” shared Arun, Head of Sanitation Department at Tide Technocrats.

Arun informed that they were assessing all the FSTPs in India and had visited the FSTP at Bomb Guard. He further explained the procedure



Tide Technocrats officials with Dr Norden Otzer and Liveable Leh Team Members

“ Unlike other FSTP plants which are based on biotechnology, this particular plant is based on thermal technology. It does not emit any bad smell and the bio waste can be utilised as fertiliser”

-Arun Kumar

followed at the Thermal FSTP of pyrolyzing the faecal waste through a low-energy system. The process produces an end product called Bio-char, which is an excellent soil enricher.

The mission of Tide Technocrats is to provide innovative technology and consultancy projects and services in waste management thereby making an impact on the environment and on 10 million people of India.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



Dr. Nordan Otzer addressing the public on World Environment day

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) in collaboration with Municipal Committee Leh organised World Environment Day in the Leh Main Market on June 5.

The theme for this year's Environment Day was 'Beat Plastic Pollution.' Shri Tsering Sangdup, Executive Councillor (EC) Tourism, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), was the chief guest for the occasion. Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh; Tsetan Wangchuk, President of All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA); Dr. Jigmet Yangchan, Junior Scientist at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Tashi Khachutse from Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Haji Riyaz Ahmed, President of Merchant Association Leh, media persons from Times of Ladakh, Reach Ladakh, District Information Office, State Times, All India Radio, were present at the occasion.

Dr Norden Otzer, Executive Director of LEDeG, gave the welcome speech and apprised the public about

scarcity of water and menace of soak pits that has led to the contamination of drinking water in Leh. He also appealed to the public to make Leh free of plastic waste.

Northern Art and Cultural Society, led by its president Tsering Sonam Sopari, presented a skit on the exploitation of Mother Earth by the humans. They also performed a song, 'Amey Nyngstam' (Mother's Plight), which addresses the current issues faced by people of Ladakh. The Art of Motion, a dance group from Leh, also performed on the occasion.

President, ALTOA, Tsetan Wangchuk shared that tour operators in Leh would clean plastic waste at Stok Kangri base camp under the Swacch Bharat Abhiyan in collaboration with the Government of India.

Shri Tsering Sangdup, the chief guest, thanked LEDeG and MCL for organising the event. Speaking on the occasion, the EC Tourism said that Rs 12 crore, amassed from the environment fee levied upon the tourists, will be spent on a project which is beneficial for the people of Leh.



LIVEABLE LEH

talk series

PROJECT 2030


 2nd Talk With ALTOA and ALHGHA

 3rd Talk With Mr. Rigzin Spalgon

 4th Talk With Mr. Mipham Otsal

2ND TALK OF LIVEABLE LEH TALK SERIES

The need for Solid Waste and Waste Water Management in Leh

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) organised the Second Talk of the Liveable Leh Talk Series under the Liveable Leh Project 2030, at LEDeG Office on June 11. Tsetan Wangchuk, President of All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA), and Tashi Motup, President of All Ladakh Hotels and Guest House Association, were the speakers on the occasion and they spoke on the need for Solid Waste and Waste Water Management in Leh due to the booming tourism.

The prominent guests present were Mohammad Iqbal from PAGIR, Bob Anderson and Sherab Woesser from Tibet Fund, Eshey Tundup, Principal of Lamdon Model School, Punchok Dolma from Women's Alliance of

Ladakh, Delex Namgyal, General Secretary of ALTOA, Rajesh Kunal from Moravian Mission School, Klaus Schaette from Amitabha Travels, and Lars Lidstrom and Thinlas Chorol from Ladakhi Women's Travel Company.

Dr Norden Otzer, Executive Director of LEDeG, gave the welcome speech and asked the presidents of the concerned association about their Plan, Vision and Steps to counter the problems of Solid-Waste and Waste-Water arising due to Tourist activities in Leh town.

Tsetan Wangchuk, ALTOA, President, said that the uncontrolled nature of tourism in Leh is putting a lot of strain on its natural resources. He added that ALTOA would carry

out a pilot project at Stok Kangri. It would be funded by the Government of India. Thereafter, Tashi Motup pointed out two reasons for the contamination of ground water:

A) Inappropriate design of septic tanks, and B) Irregular cleaning of the septic tanks. He said that the FSTP constructed by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council with technical help from BORDA and LEDeG, has been a blessing for them.

Earlier, they would spend Rs 10,000- 12,000 for cleaning the septic tanks, but post-FSTP they only spend Rs 3,500 for a tank of 3500 litres. It was followed by a Question & Answer session after which Tenzin Motup gave the vote of thanks.

3RD TALK OF LIVEABLE LEH TALK SERIES

‘Walkability in Leh’

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) organised its third talk of the Liveable Leh Talk Series at Moravian Mission School Auditorium hall on 25th June. The topic was ‘Walkability in Leh’ and the speaker for the occasion was Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh (MCL). The talk series is a part of the Liveable Leh Project 2030 which is funded by European Union and co-funded by BMZ.

Unlike the other three talks which were held at LEDeG Office campus, this talk was conducted at Moravian Mission School Auditorium hall keeping in mind one of the assignments taken up by LEDeG for the Redevelopment of the Changspa Street and making it pedestrian-friendly.

The prominent guests present on the occasion were Tsering Nurboo,

president of Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) Nubra; Ghulam Rasool Lassu, Working Committee Member, LEDeG; T Chorol and Tsewang Dolma from Women’s Alliance of Ladakh, Tondup Wangail, Senior Transport Planner; Lobzang Visuddha, Chairman of Wildlife Conservation and Birds Club of Ladakh, and many foreign tourists and locals.

Dr Norden Otzer, Executive Director of LEDeG, made the welcome speech and stressed on the need to promote walking in Leh for its positive impact on health, society and the environment.

Thereafter, Rigzin Spalgon spoke about walking in Leh. He addressed that Leh was not a planned city and that the roads in and around Leh town was sufficient for the people of Leh to walk on. He said the road was meant for the pedestrians but is now

dominated by vehicles. He said the number of vehicles has now increased to 30,000, including used cars, and that has led to increase in cases of road rage and accidents.

He said that there was a need for a Strategy or a Plan to promote walking and making roads pedestrian-friendly. He also added that the footpaths in Leh are designed in such a way that they discourage people from walking. He said that there are illegal parking on footpaths. To overcome these problems, Rigzin shared that he approached LEDeG and asked them to provide a design which gives preference to pedestrians. He then informed the audience about the re-development of the Changspa Street. He said it was not a trial and error method but rather an effort to promote people to walk.

Faisal Ashoor and Nurboo regaled the audience with melodious songs.



Faisal Ashoor and Nurboo



Rigzin Spalgon

4TH TALK OF LIVEABLE LEH TALK SERIES

Traditional solutions for Contemporary problems



Mr. Mipham Otsal

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) organised its fourth talk of the Liveable Leh Talk Series at the meeting hall in its office premises in Karzoo on July 9. Mipham Otsal, one of the most well-known theatre artist of Leh, was the speaker for the occasion. Mipham spoke about traditional solutions for contemporary problems. The talk was attended by Alex Jensen from Local Futures, Kasia Gnyra, a journalist-cum-traveller, Ann Riquier, who does volunteer work in Leh, Stanzin Lamo, a restaurateur, Lars from Ladakhi Women's Travel Company, students from SECMOL, foreign tourists and locals.

Tenzin Motup, our event manager, gave the Welcome Speech and apprised the audience about the ongoing development work that has completely transformed Leh town. Thereafter, Mipham Otsal spoke about traditional values, underlining its importance in

the contemporary Ladakhi society. He said that Ladakhis should learn values from others. He also added that people of his generation are sad to see the ongoing unplanned development and changes in Leh town. He said that when Ladakh was opened for tourists in early 70's, there were unwanted changes which bamboozled the locals. Mipham said that their ancestors were very smart and intelligent

He mocked the current generation who takes pride in their education but are in fact creating problems for the society. He said that we are clinging on to things which were created by our ancestors. The irony, Mipham stressed, was that we have not been able to preserve the legacy left behind by our ancestors. Mipham shared with the audience that he worked with Helena-Norberg, who founded LEDeG in 1983, and staged plays to highlight the changes in Leh.

According to Mipham, change is

necessary, but the changes should be above our culture. He also said everyone should create new things instead of putting their faith in duplication. He added that huge amounts of money is spent by the government on imitation. Mipham said the people engaged in tourism activities earn crores of rupees but do not spending even a penny on the preservation of our culture and heritage.

The speaker said that people are looking for solutions to their problems now. He said that India is a developing country and every citizen should have a taste of development and that when we have tasted everything only then we can come up with solutions to our problems. He appreciated the foreigners for helping the Ladakhis in preservation of their culture. He requested them to share their knowledge in order for us to preserve the culture.

CHANGSPA STREET

Redevelopment meeting



Member of Parliament Thupstan Chhewang and Member of Legislative Assembly Leh Nawang Rigzin Jora with DC Leh Avny Lavasa during the meeting

A meeting was held at the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Meeting Hall on the 21st of June, for the Redevelopment of Changspa Street.

The meeting was attended by Thupstan Chhewang, Member of Parliament (MP); Nawang Rigzin Jora, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Leh; Avny Lavasa, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Leh; Moses Kunzang, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC); Tsering Wangdus, Executive Councillor, Agriculture, LAHDC; Mumtaz Hussain, Executive Councillor, Minority Affairs and Cooperative, LAHDC; Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh; Phunchok Dorjey, Dr Norden Otzer, Executive Director, LEDcG; Councillor Phyang; Tashi Namgyal, Councillor Tangtse; Delex Namgyal, Private Secretary to Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) LAHDC; Thinless Dorjay, PA to DC Leh; Tsering Angchok, Xen,

R&B Division Leh; T Phunchok, Abdul Wahid, Zulfiqar Ahmad, Gulzar Ahmad, Sonam Rigzin, Tashi Gyaltsan, Sonam Angchuk, Tsering Angchuk, Deachen Palmo and Ishey Angmo-all residents of Changspa.

The objective of the meeting was to inform the Stakeholders and reach a consensus with them on the redevelopment of an 450-metre stretch on the Changspa Street to make it a one-way street, pedestrian friendly and promote walking and cycling on the street.

Avny Lavasa, DC Leh, made the welcome speech and signalled the commencement of the meeting. Smanla Dorjey Nurboo and Prithvi Aravind, Planner and Architect respectively, presented the Design and research studies. They presented the challenges that Changspa faces currently and the solutions for the identified issues.

PROPOSAL : Before and After



In their presentation, the Planning and Development Team highlighted four major issues on Changspa Street:

- Traffic Congestion
- Lack of Footpaths
- On-street Parking
- Safety

They presented the solutions for these issues- such as one-way system to reduce the traffic, provision for pedestrians, no-parking zones and introduction of speed-breakers and bollards to calm the traffic. They explained how, as part of the design halting bays have been proposed for the cars and trucks to drop-off passengers or goods.

Post-presentation, there was a question and answer session, in which certain points were raised.

The MP also expressed his concern during the meeting. He said that the parking issue needs to be addressed and there should be an option for parking the vehicles nearby Changspa. There was also a discussion on the material to be used for the pavements.

The MP and MLA suggested that the most durable and cost-efficient material should be considered for the purpose. The residents of Changspa also raised their concerns during the meeting. One of the residents agreed that making

Changspa Street one-way is the only solution to their problem and also supported footpaths on the road. Majority of the stakeholders informed the officials of their financial loss due to delay in completion of the work on the Changspa Street.

The stakeholders also raised other concerns related to their health, contamination of irrigation channels to their fields, entry of heavy vehicles to transport materials for construction of houses, provision to safeguard pedestrians from rash driving of bikers, and allowance of flow of traffic from both ways on Changspa Street in winters.

Deputy Commissioner Avny Lavasa assured the stakeholders to address their concerns. Meanwhile, MP Thupstan Chhewang and MLA Nawang Rigzin Jora gave the go ahead for the project.

MP Thupstan Chhewang asked the estimated time for the completion of the plan keeping in mind the non-stop work on Changspa Street since the last few years. He also asked DC Avny Lavasa to submit a detailed Cost Estimate for the plan and assured that he would try to collect funds from CSR. MP Thupstan Chhewang and MLA Rigzin Jora told the stakeholders that the outcome of the plan will be beneficial for all.



Lobzang Tsering, LEDeG Working Committee member, with the participants on the concluding day of the Rammed Earth Workshop

Rammed Earth Workshop

A three-day Rammed Earth Workshop was conducted at Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) Office premises in Karzoo from 9th to 11th July. The workshop was organised by the Planning and Development Team under the Liveable Leh Project 2030, which is funded by European Union and co-funded by BMZ. Architect Sandeep Bogadhi was the expert conducting the workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to spread awareness about the vernacular construction techniques and sustainable architecture among the participants. During the

workshop, the participants gained hands-on experience of local soil and tested various samples with different compositions.

On the opening day, Architect Bogadhi gave a presentation on Earth Architecture which was based on Ladakh and its local construction techniques. He explained to the participants the techniques to identify resources, and also presented images of his work.

He further added that Earth Architecture can be made fashionable and can be done without any extra finishes. Bogadhi

also explained and informed the participants about the difference between Adobe, Cob and Rammed earth.

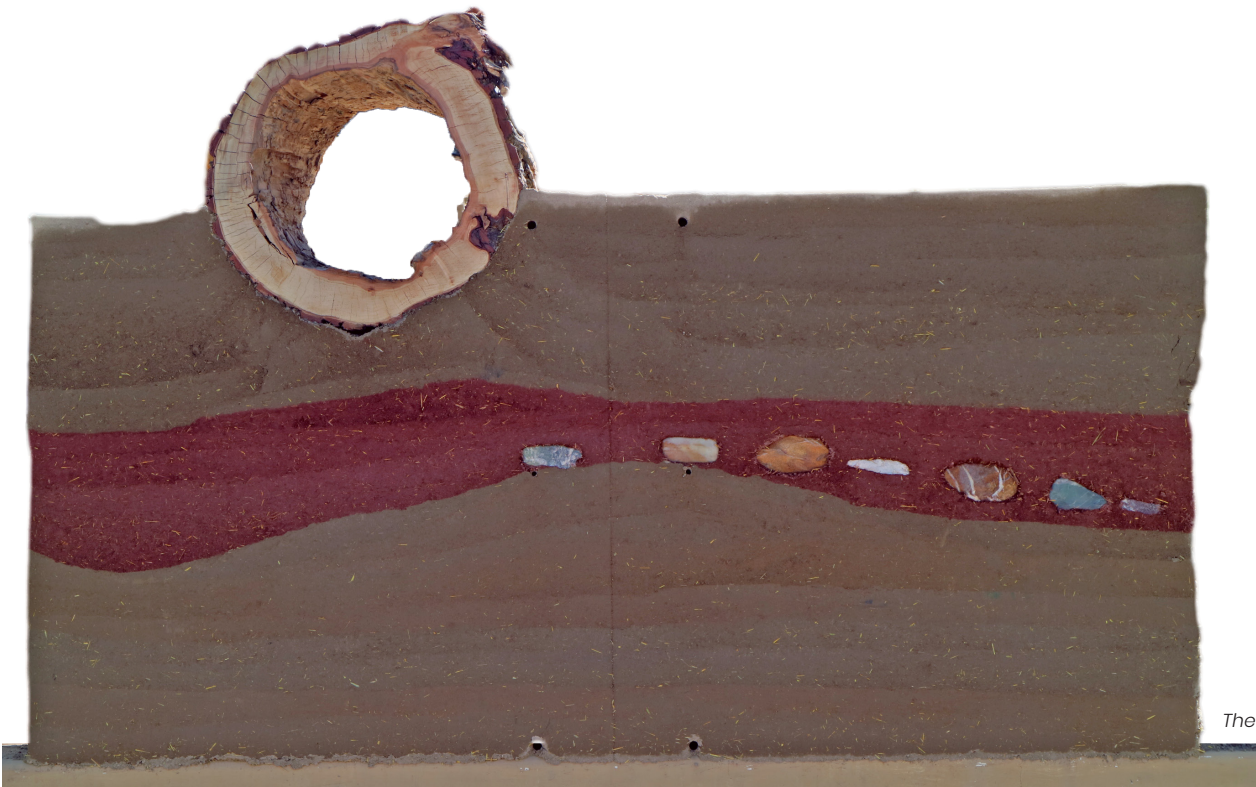
He then shared the arrangement of formwork, mixing and the ramming technique of earth. Post-lunch, the participants were divided into four groups of five people. It was followed by a brainstorming session over the Design and Formwork of the Rammed Earth Wall which they planned to erect near the main gate of LEDeG Office. As the group comprised people from different backgrounds, there were plenty of creative ideas for the design and the formwork.

*Testing the Soil**Putting up the Framework*

The participants analysed the soil samples through sedimentation test by mixing soil samples in different jars. This helped them in calculating the sand, silt, clay and organic matter composition of the soil, which they later used in preparing the mixture for the rammed earth.

On the second day, the participants started the construction of rammed earth wall. They started by preparing the mixture which comprised 1/10th cement and 9/10th soil. One team set the formwork while the others prepared the mixture for the wall. Thereafter, a six-inch layer mixture was put in the formwork and with a wooden rammer the ramming process began. The process continued to complete the wall of 3 feet height with different layers of soil.

On the final day, the formwork of the Wall was opened and was later inaugurated by Lobzang Tsering, Working Committee Member, LEDeG. The participants were also awarded Certificate of Participation.

*The Finished Wall*



FIRST LIVEABLE LEH QUARTERLY MEETING

The first Quarterly Meeting of the Liveable Leh Project was held at LEDeG Office Meeting Hall on July 14. The Project is funded by European Union and co-funded by BMZ.

The objective of the meeting was to review and assess the progress of the Project in the second quarter, to identify key project implementation, and to update the project plan till the end of 2018.

Stanzin Tsephel, Director, South Asia, BORDA, was the moderator for the meeting. It was attended by the Project Management (PM), Planning

and Development (PD), Water and Sanitation (WatSan), and the Public Relations (PR) teams.

Stanzin Tsephel began the proceedings with a small assignment as he asked the members to make a list of things they felt good about and also the problems they faced while working on the project. Rishav Paul from PD team gave a presentation on the tasks which they performed in the second quarter.

It was followed by a presentation from Tashi Lundup on the achievements of the PR team. Smanla Dorje also showed the launch video of

Kaga Thelmet to the members. Post-tea, Parth Gohel gave a presentation on the work completed by the WatSan team. Ruchi Mathur made the last presentation on the behalf of the PM team.

Post-lunch, there was discussion on three issues raised by the teams-the need for a Project Manager, to have five working days in a week, and lack of coordination between the teams. Tsephel concluded the meeting by asking the teams to focus more on quality than quantity in the third quarter.



STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR LEH TOWN



BR Balachandran interacts with the councillors and officers during the meeting at LAHDC Meeting Hall

MEETING WITH CEC FOR Leh Town Strategic Planning

A meeting for Strategic Planning for Leh Town under the Liveable Leh Project 2030 was organised at the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Office Meeting Hall on July 25. The project is funded by European Union and co-funded by BMZ.

The objective of the meeting was to formulate a strategic plan for Leh Town to make it a resilient Himalayan City, and to form a committee to initiate the planning process. The meeting was attended by Dorjey Motup, Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) LAHDC, Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh (MCL); Zahida Bano, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Leh Development Authority (LDA); Lobzang Nyantak, Upper Leh Councillor LAHDC; Tsewang Paldan, District Youth Services and Sports; Mumtaz Hussain, Executive Councillor Minority Affairs, LAHDC; Tsering Sangdup, Executive Councillor Tourism, LAHDC; Delex Namgyal, Private Secretary to CEC LAHDC; Tsetan Angchuk, President, All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA); Deleks Namgyal, General Secretary, ALTOA; Stanzin Norboo, Secretary, ALTOA; NN Raina, Executive Engineer, PHE;

Tsering Angchok, PWD, Roads and Buildings (R&B); Ghulam Mohammad, Executive Engineer, Igoo Phey; VK Khajuria, Executive Engineer (I&FC); Dorjay Gyatso, Executive Engineer (PMGSY); Tsering Angchuk, AEE, PWD (Construction Division).

CEC Dorjey Motup welcomed the guests and signalled the commencement of the meeting. Manas Rath from BORDA apprised the audience of the current water situation in Leh and emphasised the need for a strong Urban Planning in Leh Town.

Before proceeding further, he showed the audience a video on 'How to Make an Attractive City?' and asked them if they could relate to the video. Once the audience shared their point of view with Manas, he said that Leh Town needs proposals that are well-planned and reduce the woes of the residents and tourists.

BR Balachandran, an architect and urban planner, gave a presentation on Strategic Planning for Leh Town. He emphasised on pedestrian paths to promote walking and the revival of the water system in Leh.

Post-presentation, Manas exhorted the LAHDC councillors to lend support for the formation of a committee to kick-start the planning process for Leh Town. Rigzin Spalgon of MCL shared with the audience the escalating tourism-related problems. He said that Leh has exceeded its carrying capacity of tourists and there is an urgent need to fix the problems. He also requested LAHDC

to empower the government departments. Although, CEC Dorjey Motup was not in a hurry to give the nod for the formation of the committee, he acknowledged that the planning process should start soon. Thereafter, Manas requested the CEC to give permission for the formation of a preliminary committee.

The CEC then appointed Rigzin Spalgon from MCL, Zahida Bano from LDA, Tsetan Angchuk from ALTOA and Tsering Angchuk AEE as members of the preliminary committee. He also asked for the nomination of urban experts for the committee. Delex Namgyal, general secretary, ALTOA, gave vote of thanks.



Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) LAHDC with other councillors and guests during the meeting

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS MEET

The first meeting of the preliminary committee for Strategic Planning for Leh was conducted at the Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) Office meeting hall on July 26. The Strategic Planning is a part of the Liveable Leh Project 2030 which is funded by European Union and co-funded by BMZ. The meeting was attended by Rigzin Spalgon, Administrator, Municipal Committee Leh; Zahida Bano, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Leh Development Authority (LDA); Sonam Chosjor, Assistant Commissioner (Revenue); Delex Namgyal, private secretary to CEC LAHDC, Deleks Namgyal, general secretary, All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA) and Stanzin Norboo, secretary, ALTOA.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss and draft terms of reference (ToR), and formulate method of working of the committee over the next three months. The points which were discussed in the ToR were: study

the extent and nature of urbanisation in Leh, prepare a preliminary list of stakeholders with which the committee would consult the impact of urbanisation, zero in on themes or sectors which are crucial for the development of Leh Town, explore planning processes relevant to Leh such as Master, Strategic, Action and Infrastructure Planning, assess the legal and institutional framework to prepare a statutory Master Plan, and identify 'quick-win projects.'

The committee members agreed on the draft of the ToR and suggested that it should be open for changes, if needed. Meanwhile, Zahida Bano, CEO LDA, was elected chief convenor of the committee and Rishav Paul, Coordinator of the Planning and Development Team was named the associate convenor.

The committee members also identified possible stakeholders for the core committee, such as Hotel and Guest House Association,

Market Association, GM Shaikh, Executive Councillor Tourism Tsering Sangdup, Angchuk- an engineer from INTACH, Tashi Morup from Ladakh Art and Media Organisation (LAMO), Sonam Zangpo, nambaradar Leh, All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA), Municipal Committee Leh, Leh Development Authority, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), LOTI, ACHI, Angchuk- Executive Engineer, Dr Samphel from Health Department.

It was also decided that Delex Namgyal, PS to CEC LAHDC, would provide periodic updates and progress notifications to the committee members. Few protocols were also set during the meeting, such as avoiding speaking to the media without a proper strategy. Few quick-win projects which were identified were, completion of parks and amphitheatre, before/after visuals of the Leh Market and install the images in the main market.

MEETING WITH DC, LEH On Water Management, 26th July



The meeting at DC's office in progress

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Leh Avny Lavasa called for a meeting on July 26 with the Water and Sanitation (WatSan) team from LEDcG to give a presentation on Integrated Water Management in Leh, and to provide information on the current water scenario in Leh.

The meeting was held at the Deputy Commissioner Meeting Hall and attended by DC Avny Lavasa, ADC Moses Kunzang, Executive Engineer PHE NN Raina, Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) PHE Wangyal Phuntsog; Researcher Arjun Sharma, Manas Rath and Geeta Singhal from BORDA, Thinles Dorjey and Parth Gohel from the WatSan team, and representative from Leh Town.

DC Avny Lavasa welcomed the guests and pointed out the illegal consumption and usage of water by hotels and guest houses in Leh. Manas Rath started his presentation and shared with the audience that 6.3 million litres per day (MLD) is the demand for water in Leh in 2018 which could increase to 9.4 MLD in 2022. He shared that out of 5.4 MLD water supply for public, there is 25% loss and only 4.1 MLD water is supplied to the public.

Manas requested Avny Lavasa to

instruct owners of hotels and guest houses to get permit for drilling of borewells to extract groundwater. He also asked the DC to launch a campaign to spread awareness on water issues in Leh.

BR Balachandran then gave a presentation on Strategic Planning for Leh Town. During the presentation, Bala informed the DC that a preliminary committee have been formed to start planning process for Leh Town. Bala also emphasised the need for promoting walking in Leh and rejuvenating the water systems. He made few recommendations to the DC: to have a stronger civil society in Leh, have enough resources at disposal, encourage the people to come forward for the registration of borewells, and start a comprehensive study plan of Leh Town.

Researcher Arjun Sharma also made few recommendations: test quality of drinking water, identify pipes which could be used throughout the year for supply of water, encourage the traditional method of conservation and supply of water in Leh.

Speaking to the DC, the representative of the Leh Town informed her that the traditional Chhurpon system (elected water officials who ensure equitable water

distribution for the farmers) has been affected. He also informed the DC about the meeting to be held on August 9 with well-known personalities of Leh. He also highlighted the problem arising due to extraction of water by the Indian Army. He suggested that revival of Chhurpon system and said they could check the illegal extraction of groundwater through bore-wells in Leh Town.

ADC Moses Kunzang suggested that the administration could consider pumping water out of Spituk instead of the Indus River. He said water could also be drawn from Takmar River in Nubra.

Thereafter, DC Avny Lavasa shared with others the steps the administration has taken, such as registration of borewells, to counter the shortage of water. She said the Chhurpons could work with the representatives of PHE Department.

She also instructed the PHE Department to prepare a list of hotels and guest houses which are using borewells. She also requested the WatSan team to prepare a framework following which the operation of public water supply would be handed over to Municipal Committee Leh from PHE.

TREATMENT OF WORKERS AND OPERATORS AT OUR FSTP SITE

Sanitation is a dirty business. The business is informal, wages low and the workers are untrained and ungeared. Those who are engaged in this business are looked down upon. After years of oppression and apathy, the workers have accepted this as status quo.

Newspapers are flooded with incidents of deaths of sanitation workers working as manual scavengers while cleaning and fixing septic tanks, sewer lines and gutters. In just over a month, ten sanitation workers died between mid-July to mid-August last year in Delhi. These sanitation workers were engaged in poorly-paid and extremely hazardous task of manual scavenging. An alarming number of sanitation workers regularly are dying due to toxic gases from the human waste when they enter to manually clean the septic tanks and sewers.

But, as they say, the show must go on!

However, the Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP) in Leh aims to buck the trend. Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG) firmly believes and acknowledges that the sanitation business runs because of these workers. And, it is



A group photo outside LEDeG Office, Karzoo

their fundamental right to not only get a fair compensation for the work they do but must be provided good protective equipment and proper training.

Taking into account all the above factors, the workers and operators at the FSTP site are trained and also apprised of the dangers involved while cleaning septic tanks and sewer lines. The workers and operators on their part have signed an undertaking wherein they have confirmed that they would not enter any containment units.

Proper personnel equipment, including gloves, masks, glasses, boots and uniforms, are issued to the workers and these uniforms are sent for cleaning twice a week. The engineers at the FSTP site have developed a mechanized system for

cleaning, which does not require manual scavenging.

A lot of steps have been taken to change the public perception about the status of the workers. For example, the operators have been provided a comfortable, clean and equipped residence at the FSTP site. This has been done for the ease of workers and to ensure that they are not considered different to those working in other sectors.

John Mohammad (in pic), who is the operator at the FSTP, was skeptical about working at the site. However, even after three months he is not only continuing to work and flourishing but is also keeping the site and the residence clean. He also invites his relatives over dinner and tea, and proudly shows them the FSTP site and discusses his work with them.

This is John with his nephew at the FSTP site. He likes to take his nephew around the site and play cricket with him. It clearly shows that the divisions and contempt are all in the mind and this age-old issue can be tackled easily. We hope that this serves as an example for sanitation workers working for treatment plants across the states.

Know Your Team

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (PD)



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