

Ladakh dPal rNgam Dus-sTon 2025 Honours Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena with Festival's Highest Award; Celebration Concludes with Message of Unity, Compassion, and Cultural Pride

Leh, August 6: The 9th edition of the Ladakh dPal rNgam Dus-sTon 2025, held under the aegis of the 6th LAHDC Leh, concluded yesterday at the NDS ground in Leh with a vibrant cultural and spiritual celebration that honoured Ladakh's rich heritage and its evolving aspirations. Drawing a massive gathering of nearly 10,000 people, the festival reflected the deep-rooted emotional and cultural connection the people of Ladakh share with their traditions. The central theme of this year's festival was "Compassion", echoing the teachings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, whose 90th birth anniversary the Council celebrated by declaring July as the Month of Compassion.

The evening programme commenced with the ceremonial opening and the arrival of VVIPs and guests. In his welcome address, DC/CEO LAHDC Leh, Shri Romil Singh Donk, described the festival as a living bridge between Ladakh's glorious past and a promising future. He highlighted ongoing environmental efforts, including the Indus River Clean-up drive, and stressed the need to preserve Ladakh's ecological, cultural, and moral values. He hoped that such events would continue to inspire unity, cultural consciousness, and a shared sense of responsibility among the people.

A visual documentary on the Month of Compassion showcased Council-led activities promoting harmony, wellness, and empathy throughout July. The audience also witnessed the formal launch of three major initiatives — the revival of Ladakh's traditional knowledge (Norskal), a documentary on the achievements of the 6th LAHDC Leh, and the digitalisation of grameen homestays, a collaboration between LAHDC Leh, Firgun Society, and the Department of Tourism aimed at sustainable and community-led tourism development.

In his keynote address, Hon'ble Chairman/CEC LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, reflected on five years of dedicated work by the Council and reaffirmed its commitment to the people's welfare. He expressed heartfelt gratitude to every stakeholder and citizen, and shared key milestones of the Council, such as the free cervical cancer vaccination drive and the announcement of the upcoming Singay Tsangspo Tsangday Lasgul on August 12. It is a community-driven initiative rooted in environmental and social well-being. He called upon all to observe the year with renewed compassion, inspired by His Holiness.

The evening's most prestigious honour, the Ladakh dPal-rNgam Award 2025, was conferred upon Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena, Founder of the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre. In his spiritually grounded and emotionally resonant address, he began with a prayer to the Three Jewels and offered heartfelt prayers for the long life and continued guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, calling him the eternal spiritual light of Ladakh and the world.

He expressed deep gratitude to the people of Ladakh, the Mahabodhi family, and supporters across India and abroad, extending special thanks to the Hon'ble CEC, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, and the Council for their enduring support.

Ven. Bhikhu Sanghasena acknowledged that the formation of Ladakh as a Union Territory has brought in many new avenues of development and progress, while also remembering the sacrifices made by countless individuals to achieve UT status. In a separate reflection, he spoke of the historical journey of LAHDC Leh, describing it as a powerful democratic institution born of struggle, vision, and people's will. He urged the youth to honour and protect this legacy, as the autonomy and powers enjoyed today were hard-earned.

He concluded by dedicating the award to the people of Ladakh, the Mahabodhi family, and to all who walk the path of compassion, unity, and inner development.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Dr. Lobzang Tsewang for his longstanding work in translating the teachings of His Holiness and making them accessible to the wider public. A Special Appreciation Award was given to internationally renowned author and activist Madam Helena Norberg-Hodge for her decades-long contribution to cultural and environmental conservation in Ladakh. The award was received on her behalf by Shri Ishey Tundup, Director of LEDeG.

Special Awards were presented to Sh. Moses Kunzang (KAS) for his service in administration and youth development, Sh. Thupstan Shanfan for preserving traditional knowledge and wisdom, Smt. Ishey Yangzom for promoting tourism through tours and travel, Sh. Ghulam Mustafa and Sh. Ghulam Mohiuddin Abdu for their contributions to the hospitality sector and Sh. Ghulam Musa for his dedicated public service.

The awards were conferred in the presence of distinguished dignitaries including the Lieutenant Governor Shri Kavinder Gupta and First Lady Smt. Bindu Gupta, Hon'ble CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson, Deputy Chairman Shri Tsering Angchuk, Executive Councillors Shri Tashi Namgyal Yakzee, Shri Ghulam Mehdi, and Shri Stanzin Chosphe, Leader of Opposition Shri Tsering Namgyal and councillors, Former MP Sh. Thupstan Chhewang, DGP, UT Ladakh Dr. S.D Singh Jamwal, GOC Sub Area Major General Ravindra Kumar SM, Secretaries of UT Administration, DC/CEO LAHDC Leh Romil Singh Donk, SSP Leh Smt. Shruti Arora, President LBA Shri Tsering Dorjey Lakruk, President Anjuman Moin-Ul Islam Dr. Abdul Qayoom, heads of religious organisations from both women and youth wings, senior Army, Air Force and Paramilitary officers, officials, and prominent citizens including State Awardees, Spal Ngam Awardees, District Awardees and respected elders of the community members.

The stage came alive with folk performances and a vibrant traditional costume showcase, followed by contemporary music and dance that celebrated Ladakh's fusion of modernity and heritage. The evening reached its crescendo with a captivating performance by Bollywood and Indian Idol star Rito Riba, whose presence delighted the audience and ended the celebration on a high and festive note.

The 9th Ladakh dPal rNgam Dus-sTon concluded on a note of profound celebration, leaving behind not just memories of applause and festivity, but a deeper reaffirmation of Ladakh's unity, cultural pride, and the timeless spirit of compassion that binds its people together.





