

## Zanskar Hosts Ladakh Astro Festival 2026 Celebration at Padum

Zanskar, May 23, 2026: The Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, today organised the Ladakh Astro Festival 2026 – Zanskar Celebration at Tourist Dak Bungalow, Padum. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, tourists, local residents, officials, cultural artists and various organisations.

Deputy Commissioner Zanskar, Omkar Rajendra Gundage (IAS ), SSP Zanskar, Rigzin Sangdup, Councillor Cha Constituency, Stanzin Lakpa, Councillor Karsha, Stanzin Jigmet, besides officers from various departments, teaching staff from different educational institutions and Government Degree College (GDC) Zanskar, representatives of political and religious organisations, cultural artists, students, local masses and tourists attended the programme.

The festival featured a variety of activities including exhibition stalls, astrophotography displays, cultural performances, astro talks and guided stargazing sessions. Cultural troops presented traditional performances showcasing the rich heritage and culture of Zanskar.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Zanskar said that with Zanskar becoming a new district, development activities in the region would further accelerate in the coming years. He described astrophysics as a highly knowledgeable field and encouraged students to take advantage of such educational events. He also thanked the UT Administration, Tourism Department and all associated departments for organising the initiative and assured full support for similar programmes in future.

SSP Zanskar, in his address, stressed the importance of students interacting with experts and learning about astrophysics, stating that the field offers immense opportunities and future scope.

Tourist Officer Zanskar, Ghulam Rasool Lal, said that the objective of organising the programme was to promote Zanskar as an important destination for Astro Tourism owing to its pristine dark skies and unique geographical conditions.

A special stargazing session was also conducted with the support of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru and Starcapes Company, where participants experienced observation of celestial objects under the clear night skies of Zanskar.



