

Social & Tribal Welfare Department celebrates National Tribal Fest 2025 to celebrate Ladakh's vibrant tribal heritage

Leh, July 01, 2025: The Department of Social and Tribal Welfare, in collaboration with the Tribal Research Institute, University of Ladakh, organised the two-day National Tribal Fest 2025 (Sas-Skyes Mi-Rigs Rgaston) at the Central Asian Museum, Leh. The festival was aimed at celebrating, preserving, and promoting the diverse and vibrant tribal culture and traditions of Ladakh.

The event served as a platform to showcase the rich cultural legacy, language, traditional knowledge systems, and artistic expressions of Ladakh's tribal communities. The celebration featured traditional music and dance performances, folk art exhibitions and film documentation that highlighted the unique identity and socio-cultural contributions of the tribal population of the region.

Earlier, the CEC LAHDC Leh, Adv Tashi Gyalson, along with CEC LAHDC, Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoon, and other dignitaries visited the various stalls at Main Market, Leh as part of the National Tribal Festival 2025. During the visit, the CEC interacted with local artisan and entrepreneurs appreciating their efforts in preserving and promoting the traditional craft, cuisines and cultural heritage of Ladakh tribal communities.

Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, underscored the vital role of these festivals in fostering unity, cultural pride, and socio-economic development among tribal populations. He also emphasised the need to encourage younger generations to remain connected with their cultural roots and heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoon, commended the efforts of the social and tribal welfare department in bringing tribal communities to the forefront through such vibrant and inclusive festivals. He highlighted the importance of preserving traditional knowledge systems, languages, art forms, and customs, many of which are at risk of being forgotten.

Secretary, Social & Tribal Welfare Department, Shashanka Ala, delivered a welcome speech to inaugurate the tribal festivals. In her address, she emphasising that these festivals are not merely celebrations of culture and tradition, but also a significant movement that fosters academic interest, promotes indigenous heritage, and strengthens the identity of tribal communities. She highlighted that such events serve as vital platforms for researchers and cultural enthusiasts to engage with and learn from the rich and diverse traditions of tribal societies.

Addressing the gathering, Director, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Deepali Mariskar expressed her immense pleasure at being part of the tribal festival. She emphasised the Ministry's unwavering commitment to the welfare and empowerment of tribal communities across the country. She further noted that these festivals align closely with the objectives of the Prime Minister's flagship initiatives, aimed at inclusive development, cultural preservation, and enhancing the quality of life for tribal populations.

The dignitaries launched a book titled *Kopong: History and Playing Techniques*, written by Angdu Khigu, which documents the origins, cultural significance, and traditional methods of playing Kopong. The dignitaries also presented an appreciation certificate to the achievers in various fields for their contribution in promoting the tribal community of Ladakh. The festival featured vibrant cultural performances by various traditional troupes representing different tribal communities. Each performance showcased the rich diversity, unique customs, and artistic expressions of the tribes, including traditional music, dance, and attire.

The inaugural session of the festival was graced by prominent dignitaries, including the Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson; Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Dr. Mohd Jaffer Akhoon; ; Secretary, Social and Tribal Affairs, Shashanka Ala; Secretary, Education Department, Bhanu Prabha; Director, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Deepali Masirkar; Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Romil Singh Donk; SSP Leh, Shruti Arora; Director, Department of Social and Tribal Welfare, Leh along with other officers and officials, representatives of various religious organisation, tribal community leaders, scholars and cultural enthusiasts. In the evening sessions, a panel discussion on heritage conservation and its challenges was held at the Central Asian Museum, and a traditional cultural performance was also showcased by various cultural troupes at NDS Stadium.





