

Ladakh Welcomes Mercedes-Benz S-Class as Global “140 Years of Innovation” Expedition Begins from Shanti Stupa



Leh, July 17, 2026: In a significant milestone for Ladakh's growing international profile as a premier destination for adventure, endurance, and experiential tourism, the Department of Tourism, Union Territory of Ladakh, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and Mercedes-Benz India, today flagged off the prestigious “140 Years of Innovation” Global Expedition from the iconic Shanti Stupa, Leh.

The ceremonial flag-off was done by Shri Sanjit Rodrigues, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture, UT Ladakh, in the presence of representatives of Mercedes-Benz India.

The expedition forms part of Mercedes-Benz's global celebration of 140 years of automotive innovation, engineering excellence, and pioneering spirit. As part of this commemorative initiative, 140 iconic destinations across the world have been shortlisted to feature on the expedition route. Notably, only eleven locations in India have been selected, with Leh, Ladakh earning a place among this distinguished group, underscoring its global reputation for spectacular landscapes, high-altitude mobility, and transformative travel experiences.

The specially designated Mercedes-Benz S-Class commenced its journey from Leh and will span some of the world's most demanding mountain terrain, culminating in Hanle and Umling La. The expedition is particularly significant as it seeks to achieve a historic milestone, with the Mercedes-Benz S-Class set to become the first S-Class sedan to reach Umling La, the world's highest motorable road, further demonstrating the vehicle's engineering capability while showcasing Ladakh's extraordinary road network and terrain on a global stage.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Sanjit Rodrigues, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture, UT Ladakh, said: "We are proud that Leh, Ladakh has been selected among just eleven destinations in India and 140 globally for this landmark expedition. The journey reflects Ladakh's unique appeal as a destination of adventure, resilience, and discovery. We welcome Mercedes-Benz to Ladakh and look forward to showcasing our exceptional landscapes and culture to audiences across the world."

Representatives of Mercedes-Benz India stated that the expedition is a tribute to the brand's legacy of innovation and excellence, while celebrating destinations that embody exploration, achievement, and human endeavour. Ladakh's unparalleled natural beauty, world-renowned high-altitude roads, and enduring appeal among driving enthusiasts made it a natural choice for inclusion in the global route.

This unique expedition represents a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, the Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh, and Mercedes-Benz India to showcase India's iconic destinations and engineering achievements to a global audience. The Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh welcomed the initiative as

an important opportunity to further elevate Ladakh's international visibility and reinforce its position as one of the world's most extraordinary destinations for road journeys, adventure tourism, and high-altitude experiences. Through this global expedition, Ladakh's breathtaking landscapes, vibrant cultural heritage, and unparalleled adventure offerings are expected to reach audiences across the world, further strengthening its position on the international tourism map.