



**Government of India
Earth System Science Organization
Ministry of Earth Sciences
India Meteorological Department**

**Press Release
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Establishment of Meteorological Centre-Leh

Objective:

At 3500 m above sea level, Leh is the capital city of Ladakh. Located in the northernmost part of India, Ladakh lies on the strategically important Western Himalayan Region bordering China, Pakistan, Tibet and Afghanistan. Ladakh has got two districts Leh & Kargil. Ladakh has a complex mountain terrain with little annual precipitation of only 10 cm/year, thus it is a cold desert. However, it being a mountainous region, the place has got very harsh and extreme climate and experiences various kinds of disastrous weather events like Cloud Bursts, Flash Floods, Glacial Lake Outbursts(GLOFs), avalanche, drought etc. leading to loss of life and property. Recent examples being the severe Cloud Burst in August 2010, 2015, Avalanche at Khardongla Pass in Jan 2019 and frequent Blockage of Leh-Manali and Leh-Srinagar Highways due to heavy snowfall on passes.

To avert losses due to such weather events in future, the Government of India (GOI) felt the need to establish a Meteorological (Met) Center at Leh in 2020 to strengthen weather related Early Warning System in Ladakh. At 3500m, Meteorological Center Leh will be the highest meteorological center in India.

To begin with, India Meteorological Department (IMD) established a surface observatory at Leh for reporting daily meteorological parameters like pressure, humidity, temperature, snowfall, etc. At present Ladakh has got 4 Automatic Weather Stations (AWS), two each in both districts of which one is at Drass, the coldest place in India. Realtime weather data is available online on IMD AWS site. To improve the network of observations, IMD proposes to install more AWSs next year at the remotest of places like Nubra, Zaskar, Changthang, Parkachik, etc. thus covering the whole of Ladakh. IMD will install instruments for monitoring of Radiation, Air Pollution, opening of Agro-meteorological Unit, Hydro-meteorological unit, Upper Air Instruments, Doppler Weather Radar etc. IMD will make every effort to make Meteorological Center Leh a world class scientific and service department in the coming years.

With the availability of quality data from Ladakh, IMD will generate city specific forecast based on numerical models.

To help the administration and the people of Ladakh, IMD will provide a range of weather forecast services, ranging from short (3 days) and medium (12 days) to extended (1 month) period to all the stake holders on a daily basis for both the districts (Leh and Kargil). Apart from district level forecast, IMD will provide forecast for important tourist places like Nubra, Changthang, Pangong Lake, Zaskar, Kargil, Drass, Dha-Baima(Aryan valley), Khalsi, etc. Some important services are Highway Forecast, Forecast for Mountaineering, Trekking, agriculture, Flash Flood warning, information on gusty winds, low and high temperatures, etc.

GOI will make every effort to provide the best possible weather services to the administration and the people of Ladakh and make Ladakh safe and secure from the vagaries of weather.

This office is dedicated to the people of Ladakh by GOI on 29th December 2020 and is inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister, for Health & Family Welfare, Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Sh.R K Mathur, Hon'ble Lt. Governor (UT-Ladakh) , Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Ladakh in the presence of Dr. M. Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Sh. Suagat Biswas, IAS, Divisional Commissioner/Secretary Disaster Management (Ladakh), Dr. M. Mohapatra, Director General of Meteorology, IMD, Sh. Anand Sharma, Head Regional Met Centre, New Delhi and Sonam Lotus, Sc-E, Head, Met Centre, LEH. The establishment of this office is a shining example of the concern of the GOI for the people of Ladakh.



Some photos of the rented Office