



REGULATORY

# Born Of Mountains, Built On Resilience: The Ladakh Sports Policy 2025 As A Beacon Of Inspiration

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**PUBLISHED** 5 January 2026

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## Introduction

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Ladakh, often hailed as a paradise for adventure seekers and nature lovers, is one of India's most enchanting destinations. Its towering snow-capped peaks, pristine high-altitude lakes like the ethereal Pangong Tso, and the rugged expanses of the Nubra and Zaskar valleys create a landscape so striking it feels almost otherworldly. Home to the world's highest motorable passes, including the iconic Khardung La, Ladakh draws travellers into an untouched wilderness, where every turn reveals breathtaking vistas and a sense of awe-inspiring solitude.

Through the approval of the **Ladakh Sports Policy 2025**, by the Lieutenant Governor on December 29, 2025, intended to further strengthen opportunities for athletes and build a world-class sporting ecosystem in the region, Ladakh now seeks to transform this natural advantage into structured sporting excellence. Emerging from playgrounds where life's most formative lessons are learned, the policy elevates sports from mere recreation to a structured, thriving career ecosystem, reflecting Ladakh's post-J&K (Jammu and Kashmir) reorganization priorities.

Spearheaded by the Directorate of Youth Services & Sports and the Ladakh Sports Council, the policy unites athletes, institutions, and communities in a coordinated effort to achieve high-altitude sporting excellence. It emphasizes talent identification, facilitation, and recognition, while outlining a 10-year roadmap to build a dynamic ecosystem that promotes physical literacy from the school level onward and develops athletes capable of excelling at both the national and international stages.

## Where Mountains Forge Champions: The Natural and Cultural Roots of Ladakhi Sport

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In Ladakh, sport is not an imported idea, it is a natural extension of the land, the culture, and the people. The region's stark landscape of towering mountains, frozen lakes, and thin air forges physical endurance and mental resilience from an early age. Daily life at high altitude demands stamina, balance, and adaptability, qualities that seamlessly translate into excellence in sports such as ice hockey, skiing, mountaineering, and endurance disciplines. Unlike many regions where sporting facilities must be artificially created, Ladakh itself is a living training ground that is raw, demanding, and transformative.

Beyond its natural wonders, Ladakh thrives as a vibrant cultural tapestry, woven with centuries-old traditions. The region's spiritual heart beats in its majestic Buddhist monasteries, such as Hemis and Thiksey, where the serene atmosphere offers a glimpse into a peaceful and profound way of life. Festivals like the Hemis Tsechu, with its mesmerizing masked dances, celebrate Ladakh's rich cultural heritage, while practices like yak herding, polyandry, and the intricate art of Thangka painting preserve the timeless spirit of the Himalayas amid the march of modernization.

Rooted in Buddhist philosophy, community living, and harmony with nature, Ladakhi society values discipline, patience, and inner strength. Generations have grown up navigating extreme climates, preserving traditions like yak herding and seasonal migration, and celebrating life through vibrant festivals and collective effort. This deep sense of community and resilience shapes athletes who compete not just for personal glory, but for shared pride and identity. It is this rare fusion of geography, culture, and character that sets Ladakh apart from other states, turning sport into a reflection of lived experience.

## The Foundational Tenets of the Policy: Scout, Facilitate and Recognize.

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The Ladakh Sports Policy 2025 envisions a Union Territory infused with a robust sports culture and comprehensive physical literacy, beginning at the school level and extending to national and international platforms. The policy establishes a 10-year framework grounded in the strategic pillars of ‘Scout, Facilitate, recognize’, creating an innovative ecosystem that integrates mass participation, competitive excellence, public health, and socio-economic development.

To operationalize this vision, the policy delineates eleven key objectives: (i) promoting fitness as a lifestyle, (ii) fostering discipline, teamwork, and social cohesion among the masses (iii) supporting athletes in national and international pursuits, (iv) enhancing coaching standards and professional capacity, (v) To encourage the promotion of sports as a tool for individuals, (vi) ensuring code of ethics and code of conduct, (vii) enabling inclusivity for underrepresented and marginalized groups, (viii) developing strategies for high-performing athletes, (ix) facilitating national and international conferences in the arena of sports, (x) mobilizing human, financial and material resources to accomplish the vision & mission and (xi ) identifying sports talent in Ladakh at the grassroots level and its structured growth in a scientific manner. Collectively, these goals position Ladakh as a model for high-altitude sporting excellence, demonstrating how policy, culture, and community can converge to produce sustainable athletic success.

### Powerhouse Structure: From Secretariat to Stadiums

The Ladakh Sports Department hierarchy includes the Administrative Secretary, District Youth Services and Sports Officers (Leh/Kargil), and Joint Director. The Ladakh Sports Council, registered under Societies Registration Act (No. 349-UTL of 2024), is chaired by the Lieutenant Governor (President) with Chief Secretary Union Territory of Ladakh as Vice President.

The governing council comprises Administrative Secretaries from Youth Services & Sports, Finance, and Planning Departments, Ladakh Sports Council, outstanding sportspersons of national/international repute, and representatives of sports associations. Council functions cover promoting activities, infrastructure provision, regulating associations, coaching, assistance to athletes, advising administration, and engaging youth against vices like the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs.

### Glory Rewards: Jobs, Scholarships, Awards & Life-Changing Incentives

Medal magnets secure 4% horizontal reservation in non-gazetted jobs; in-service stars grab increments/incentives/out-of-turn promotions per DoPT GoI Guidelines. Republic Day spotlights State Awards, triennial Rs 1 lakh coach honors (180-day training min), and Lt. Governor’s Gold Rolling Trophy Association for top associations, every three years.

**Scholarships empower:** Students who get First, Second and Third positions in all recognized National Competition and National School Games/Khelo India Games are eligible for scholarships.

### Scholarships Table

Competition Level	Gold (?/year)	Silver (?/year)	Bronze (?/year)
International	96,000 (?8,000/month)	72,000 (?6,000/month)	60,000 (?5,000/month)
National	60,000 (?5,000/month)	48,000 (?4,000/month)	36,000 (?3,000/month)
State	42,000 (?3,500/month)	36,000 (?3,000/month)	30,000 (?2,500/month)

### Epic Cash Awards Table (select highlights):

Event	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Olympic & Para Olympic Games	?1 Crore	?75 Lakhs	?50 Lakhs
Asian Games	?50 Lakhs	?30 Lakhs	?25 Lakhs
Commonwealth Games	?25 Lakhs	?15 Lakhs	?10 Lakhs
Commonwealth /Asian Championship (Senior)	?12 Lakhs	?5 Lakhs	?3 Lakhs

Event	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Commonwealth /Asian Championship (Junior)	₹8 Lakhs	₹4 Lakhs	₹2 Lakhs
World Cup (quadrennial)	₹8 Lakhs	₹4 Lakhs	₹2 Lakhs
Chess Grand Master	₹50 Lakhs	₹30 Lakhs (International Master)	–
Olympic/Paralympic Participation	₹10 Lakhs (individual) ₹5 Lakhs (team)	–	–

## Thriving Ecosystem: Associations, Infra & Elite Training – World Class Centres of Excellence

Policy prioritizes augmenting/maintaining facilities to global standards via committees with secretaries and association presidents, optimal public utilization, and sponsor advertisements in complexes. Coaches receive training via exchanges, seminars, Sports Authority of India SAI and International Olympic Committee (IOC) courses on physiology/nutrition/Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD), with performance-based awards/evaluation. Additional supports include injury rehabilitation centres (PPP/MoU with experts), mental well-being via psychologists/yoga, stakeholder engagement (education/corporates/media via Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives), Wall of Fame in complexes/schools, sportsperson databank with NIC, and sports tourism leveraging facilities for visitors.

## Discipline Dominion: 50+ Sports to Dominate

Ladakh's diverse terrain and resilient communities provide a natural arena for a wide spectrum of sports, from high-altitude endurance challenges to precision disciplines. The Ladakh Sports Policy 2025 empowers athletes to excel across over 50 Olympic and non-Olympic sports, turning the Union Territory into a hub of competitive excellence and opportunity.

**Olympic Powerhouses (31):** 1. Ice Hockey, 2. Athletics, 3. Badminton, 4. Basketball, 5. Volleyball, 6. Football, 7. Hockey, 8. Wrestling (International Style), 9. Handball, 10. Table Tennis, 11. Boxing, 12. Gymnastics, 13. Taekwondo, 14. Judo, 15. Weightlifting, 16. Kayaking & Canoeing, 17. Skiing (ice and snow), 18. Fencing, 19. Rugby, 20. Cycling, 21. Archery, 22. Rifle Shooting, 23. Swimming, 24. Tennis, 25. Rowing, 26. Triathlon, 27. Equestrian, 28. Yachting, 29. Ice Skating, 30. Curling, and 31. Para Sports

**Non-Olympic Trailblazers (20):** 1. Mountaineering, 2. Traditional Archery, 3. Ice Climbing, 4. Cricket, 5. Baseball, 6. Billard & Snooker, 7. Chess, 8. Golf, 9. Kabaddi, 10. Kho Kho, 11. Power lifting (composite events only), 12. Roller Skating, 13. Softball, 14. Wushu, 15. Yoga, 16. Karate, 17. Netball, 18. Pencak, 19. Polo, and 20. Squash

## From Peaks to Podiums: Shaping Ladakh's Global Sporting Future

By harnessing its unique landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and the strategic vision of the Ladakh Sports Policy 2025, the Union Territory is poised to transform high-altitude potential into a generation of world-class athletes, redefining excellence at the roof of the world. By offering substantial Olympic incentives, scholarships, employment security, and modern infrastructure, the policy empowers athletes to dream big without leaving their roots behind. More importantly, it acknowledges that sporting excellence can emerge from the margins when policy aligns with local strengths. Ladakh is not trying to imitate other states; it is defining its own model, one where landscape becomes infrastructure, culture becomes motivation, and people become champions.

For the rest of India, Ladakh offers a powerful lesson. Every state has its own unique geography, traditions, and human capital. The Ladakh model shows that when policies are grounded in local identity and backed by genuine institutional support, sports can become a vehicle for empowerment, pride, and global recognition. In redefining how sport is nurtured in extreme conditions, Ladakh is not only shaping future champions, it is inspiring a new national approach to sporting excellence.

For more details, write to us at: [contact@indialaw.in](mailto:contact@indialaw.in)

### References:

1. [Ladakh Sports Policy 2025](#)

# Related Practice Areas

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Sports