



## Ladakh Gets Divisional Status

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The government of Jammu Kashmir has granted **Ladakh a divisional status**, thus creating **three administrative units** in the state which are **Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh**.

- The J&K government has approved the creation of a separate an administrative and revenue Division for Ladakh. This **division will comprise Leh and Kargil districts** with its headquarters at Leh.
- **Ladakh was earlier a part of the Kashmir division.**
- Earlier the government established the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC) Leh and Kargil to give more autonomy to Ladakh region. These hill development councils have local administrative powers.
- Now the **Kashmir valley is geographically the smallest division at 15,948 sq. km, Jammu division at 26,293 sq. km and Ladakh, the biggest division, at 86,909 sq. km.**

## Why a Separate Division?

- During winter months the entire Ladakh region, comprising both Leh and Kargil, remain **cut-off from rest of the country for almost six months** and air travel via Leh is the only mode of transport available to this region, which makes it impossible for people to visit other parts of the country for various purposes.
- Consequently, the region faces problems with respect to the delivery of developmental schemes, redressal of public grievances, the conduct of administrative affairs and governance as such.
- **The remoteness and inaccessibility of the area make the area eligible for establishing a separate Division.**

## About Ladakh

- Ladakh is one of the most sparsely populated regions in Jammu and Kashmir and is the highest plateau in the State of Jammu & Kashmir, with most of it being over 9,800

feet above sea level.

- The Ladakh has a population of 1.33 lakh. The biggest ethnic group is **Buddhist having 77.30%** of the population followed by **Muslims with 13.78%** and **Hindus with 8.16%**.
- **The Jammu and Kashmir Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Act, 1997**
  - Under the Act, the Hill Development Councils were established both for Leh and Kargil Districts.
  - An order to strengthen the respective Hill Development Councils Leh and Kargil, the LAHDC Act, 1997 have been amended further in 2018 to give them more powers