Ladakh notifies Sankoo as its eighth district – carved out of Kargil district

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News

On 16 Oct 2026 the Revenue Department of the UT of Ladakh issued notification S.O. 284 creating 'Sankoo' district, approved by Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. Four tehsils of Kargil district – Sankoo, GM Pore, TSG and Taisuru – form the new district, with headquarters at Sankoo. The notification was issued under Section 5 of the J&K Land Revenue Act, 1996. Five new districts notified on 27 Apr 2026 had taken Ladakh to 7 districts; with Sankoo it now has 8.

Key facts

Notification	S.O. 284, 16 Oct 2026 – Ladakh Revenue Dept; approved by LG Vinai Kumar Saxena
Parent district	Kargil – 4 tehsils: Sankoo, GM Pore, TSG, Taisuru
Location	Suru valley; about 42 km south of Kargil town
Original districts	Leh, Kargil (Ladakh district split in 1979)
Apr 2026 districts	From Leh: Nubra (Diskit), Sham (Khaltse), Changthang (Nyoma); from Kargil: Zanskar (Padum), Drass
Total	8 districts

Background

- History: the Union Home Ministry announced five new districts on 26 Aug 2024; they were notified in the gazette on 27 Apr 2026. Residents of Sankoo and Shakar-Chiktan protested at the time, demanding districts of their own.
- Polity: under the J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, Ladakh became a Union Territory without a legislature on 31 Oct 2019, headed by a Lieutenant Governor. Vinai Kumar Saxena took oath as the 4th LG on 13 Mar 2026, succeeding Kavinder Gupta. Leh (1995) and Kargil (2003) have Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC).
- Sixth Schedule demand: the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) seek statehood and Sixth Schedule safeguards. The Sixth Schedule – Articles 244(2) and 275(1) – provides autonomous district councils for tribal areas of 4 States: Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- Geography: the Suru is a tributary of the Indus, flowing south to north past Kargil. At Sankoo the Lingber Lungpa stream joins the Suru. NH-301 (Kargil–Pensi La–Padum) runs through the area.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link. For comparison – Tamil Nadu has 38 districts; Mayiladuthurai (2020), carved out of Nagapattinam, is the 38th. Five districts – Kallakurichi, Tenkasi, Chengalpattu, Tirupathur and Ranipet – were created in 2019.

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