# Ladakh Bench of the J&K and Ladakh High Court opens at Melongthang, Leh – India's highest HC bench; 4 initiatives incl. 'Green Wall', e-Filing

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## News

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant inaugurated the Ladakh Bench of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh at the High Court complex, Melongthang, Leh, on 18 Oct 2026. At about 3,500 m above sea level, it is the highest-altitude High Court bench in India. Four initiatives were launched: (1) the Green Wall, (2) an e-Filing portal for the Ladakh Bench, (3) a Document Management System (DMS) and (4) the High Court's online recruitment portal. A Division Bench of Chief Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Sanjay Parihar hears the first cases; 75 pending cases from Ladakh were transferred to it.

## Key facts

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| **Inauguration** | 18 Oct 2026 – CJI Surya Kant |
| **Place** | HC complex, Melongthang, Leh (~3,500 m altitude) |
| **High Court** | Common HC of J&K and Ladakh; Chief Justice: Pushpendra Singh Bhati |
| **4 initiatives** | Green Wall, e-Filing portal, Document Management System, online recruitment portal |
| **First bench** | CJ Bhati + Justice Sanjay Parihar; 75 pending cases transferred |

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| **Benefit** | Leh and Kargil litigants need not travel to Srinagar/Jammu |

## Background

- The J&K High Court was set up in 1928 under Maharaja Hari Singh. Under the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 it has functioned since 31 Oct 2019 as the common High Court for the two UTs of J&K and Ladakh; principal seats – Srinagar and Jammu.
- Constitution: Art 214 – a High Court for each State; Art 231 – Parliament may by law set up a common High Court for two or more States (and a Union Territory); Art 226 – writ jurisdiction of High Courts; Art 241 – High Courts for Union Territories.
- Art 217: High Court judges are appointed by the President after consulting the CJI, the Governor and the Chief Justice of that High Court; retirement age 62. Common HC examples: Gauhati (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh), Punjab & Haryana (+ Chandigarh).
- Technology: e-Filing, document management and video hearings are part of the e-Courts drive towards paperless courts. The CJI said the Supreme Court would list all Ladakh matters on a single day once adequate video-conferencing is available.

**Tamil Nadu link:** The Madras High Court was set up by Letters Patent under the Indian High Courts Act, 1861 on 15 Aug 1862 – one of the three Chartered High Courts with Calcutta and Bombay. Its Madurai Bench has functioned since 24 July 2004. The Madras HC's jurisdiction also covers the UT of Puducherry.


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