

New Places Added to Ladakh Map: UPSC Current Affairs 2026

The Government of India, in consultation with the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh, has formally identified **28 places and geographical features** in Ladakh using standard place and feature names on the official **Survey of India (Sol) map**.

The move aims to facilitate accurate recognition of these geographical features and improve public awareness about them.

What Has Been Added?

The 28 identified features include:

- **Peaks:** Atisha Giri, Kanishka Peak, Martand Giri, Zorawar Peak, Rinchen Zangpo, Sakyasri Giri, Marpa Lotsava Ri, Milarepa Kangri, Shiva Ri and Maheshvara Ri
- **Mountains:** Karun Pir, Drak Karpo and Jolmori
- **Passes:** Chapchingal Pass and Shachmirk Pass
- **Glaciers:** Parpik and Skamri Glacier
- **Valley:** Shkorga Valley
- **Lake:** Guru Rinpoche Lake
- **River:** Yangpa River
- **Water body:** Hot Spring
- **Other land areas/points:** Brangsa, Kuksel, Dehra Compass, Gogra, Kumarayana Point, Panglung and Shamal Lungpa

Why is this Important?

1. Geographical Identification

Standardising geographical names on official maps helps ensure consistent identification of locations for administration, research, disaster management and infrastructure planning.

2. Strategic Significance

Ladakh is a strategically important Himalayan region bordering **China and Pakistan**. Accurate mapping and documentation of geographical features are important for border management, infrastructure planning and national security.

3. Cultural and Historical Significance

Several of the newly identified names have links with **Buddhist history and the cultural heritage of Ladakh**, including names associated with figures such as Guru Rinpoche, Rinchen Zangpo and Milarepa.

4. Administrative Context

The development comes amid wider administrative restructuring in Ladakh. In April 2026, five new districts—**Sham, Nubra, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass**—were formally created, taking the total number of districts in the UT to seven.

Ladakh: Key UPSC Facts

- Ladakh became a **Union Territory in 2019** under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
- It is one of India's largest Union Territories by geographical area.
- **Leh and Kargil** were the original districts.
- Five additional districts were created in 2026: **Sham, Nubra, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass**.
- Ladakh's geography is dominated by high-altitude mountains, glaciers, cold desert landscapes and important passes.
- The region is strategically significant because of its location along India's northern borders.

UPSC Relevance Prelims

Questions may focus on:

- Newly identified geographical features
- Location of Ladakh and its neighbouring regions

- Himalayan passes, glaciers and rivers
- New districts of Ladakh
- Survey of India and official mapping

Mains - GS Paper I

The topic can be linked to:

- Himalayan geography
- Glaciers and climate change
- Border geography
- Mountain ecosystems

GS Paper II & III

It is relevant to:

- Governance in remote areas
- Border-area development
- Infrastructure and national security
- Disaster management

Possible UPSC Mains Question

“Ladakh’s geographical location gives it both strategic and ecological significance. Discuss the importance of accurate mapping and geographical identification in the region.”

Conclusion

The identification of 28 additional places and geographical features on the official Survey of India map highlights the importance of **accurate geographical documentation, cultural heritage and strategic mapping** in Ladakh. For UPSC aspirants, the development should be studied along with Ladakh’s physical geography, border

significance, administrative restructuring and Himalayan environmental challenges.

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