

LADAKH UMLING-LA CHALLENGE

OFFICIAL RACE GUIDE

(Applicable to 70 km, 50 km, 42 km, 21 km & 10 km Categories)

ABOUT THIS RACE GUIDE

This Race Guide is the **primary operational document** governing participation in the Ladakh Umling-La Challenge.

It must be read in conjunction with:

- Participant Handbook
- Medical SOP & Safety Cards
- **Category-Specific Race Annex** (available on respective race pages)

Failure to comply with instructions in this guide **may result in disqualification, medical withdrawal, denial of start, or evacuation**, without refund or appeal.

1. EVENT OVERVIEW

Event Name: Ladakh Umling-La Challenge

Organiser: Sarmang Society

Location: Umling-La Region, Eastern Ladakh, India

Highest Point: ~5,799 m AMSL (Umling-La Pass)

Terrain: High-altitude paved roads, extreme hypoxia, cold desert conditions

The Ladakh Umling-La Challenge is among the **highest road-running endurance events in the world**.

This is **not a conventional marathon or trail race**.

1A. WHO THIS EVENT IS NOT FOR (IMPORTANT)

This event is **NOT suitable for:**

- First-time marathoners or ultra runners
- Participants without prior high-altitude exposure

- Individuals with untreated or unstable cardiac, pulmonary, neurological, or altitude-related conditions
- Participants seeking a leisure, tourism-based, or casual running experience

Registration does not guarantee eligibility to start.

Final participation is subject to **medical and safety clearance**.

2. RACE CATEGORIES (SUMMARY)

Category	Start Altitude	Finish Altitude	Risk Level
70 km	Umling-La (~5,799 m)	>4,300 m	EXTREME
50 km	Umling-La	>4,300 m	VERY HIGH
42 km	Umling-La	>4,300 m	VERY HIGH
21 km	Umling-La	>4,300 m	HIGH
10 km	Umling-La	>4,300 m	CRITICAL (short but severe)

Exact finish points, cut-offs, and checkpoints are detailed in **category-specific annexes**.

3. ALTITUDE & ACCLIMATIZATION (NON-NEGOTIABLE)

- All participants **must complete the official acclimatization protocol**
- Staying in Leh alone **does not guarantee altitude readiness**
- Descent is the **primary and most effective treatment** for altitude illness

Failure to follow acclimatization protocol may result in:

- Denial of bib collection
- Denial of race start (DNS)
- Medical withdrawal without appeal

Any participant showing signs of altitude illness **will be immediately withdrawn**.

4. ELIGIBILITY & MEDICAL CLEARANCE

All participants must:

- Be **18 years or older**
- Complete mandatory medical declarations
- Pass pre-race medical screening

Medical Authority

The Event Medical Director has **absolute authority** to:

- Deny start (DNS)
- Withdraw participants mid-race
- Mandate descent or evacuation

All medical decisions are **final and non-appealable**.

5. RACE WEEK FLOW (SUMMARY)

- **Arrival:** Leh
- **Acclimatization:** Leh & designated regions (as per protocol)
- **Race Base Camp:** Koyul (~4,217 m)
- **Race Start:** Umling-La Pass
- **Post-Race:** Mandatory medical observation + controlled descent to Leh

Detailed day-wise schedules are published separately.

6. START-LINE PROTOCOL (UMLING-LA PASS)

Expected conditions:

- Severe cold and wind chill
- Extreme hypoxia
- Rapid weather changes

Mandatory at start line:

- Full gear check
- Medical screening
- Oxygen saturation assessment

Indicative SpO₂ Values

- Oxygen saturation may range between **65–75%**
- Values outside medically acceptable ranges, rapid decline, or symptoms may result in **DNS**

No Start (DNS) Conditions

- Confusion or impaired balance
- Severe headache, nausea, or disorientation
- Abnormal medical readings

- Medical team decision
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7. ON-COURSE SUPPORT

Aid Stations

- Located at strategic altitude points
- Hydration, nutrition, medical presence

Medical Support

- Doctors, paramedics, oxygen systems
 - Evacuation vehicles deployed along the course
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8. CUT-OFFS & WITHDRAWALS

- Cut-off times are **strictly enforced**
- Missing a cut-off = **mandatory withdrawal**
- Medical withdrawals are **non-negotiable**
- No refunds or compensations apply

Cut-off enforcement is critical due to:

- Weather volatility
 - Limited evacuation windows
 - Military road movement protocols
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9. WEATHER & ENVIRONMENT

Expect:

- Sub-zero wind chill
- Intense solar radiation
- Rapid weather deterioration

Environmental Responsibility

- No littering (strict enforcement)
 - Respect wildlife, local communities, and military zones
 - Violations may result in disqualification
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10. MANDATORY GEAR (ALL CATEGORIES)

- Thermal layers
- Windproof jacket
- Head covering & gloves
- Hydration system
- Energy nutrition
- Bib (visible at all times)

Category-specific gear requirements may apply.

Failure to carry mandatory gear may result in:

- Denial of start
 - Time penalties
 - Immediate disqualification
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11. SAFETY RULES (ABSOLUTE)

- Follow marshal and medical instructions at all times
- Report symptoms immediately
- Do not assist beyond your physical capacity
- Do not leave the marked course

Violations may lead to **disqualification or withdrawal**.

11A. COMMUNICATION LIMITATIONS

- Mobile network coverage is **unreliable or absent**
 - Participants must **not rely on personal devices** for emergency response
 - Official race communication and marshal instructions are final
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12. EMERGENCY & EVACUATION

- Immediate reporting of symptoms is mandatory
 - Evacuation priority is **rapid altitude loss**
 - Helicopter evacuation is **not guaranteed** and weather-dependent
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13. RESULTS, AWARDS & CERTIFICATES

- Results published only after medical clearance
 - Awards subject to verification
 - Official finisher certificates issued post-event
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14. MEDIA & PHOTOGRAPHY

- Official event photography released post-race
- Personal recording devices permitted unless restricted

By participating, athletes grant the organiser **irrevocable rights** to use images and footage for promotional and documentary purposes without compensation.

15. LEGAL & COMPLIANCE

- Indian law applies
 - Jurisdiction: Courts of India
 - Mandatory waiver signing for all participants
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16. IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- This is **not a regular marathon**
- Altitude can impair judgment and perception
- Safety always overrides competition

Finishing is optional. Returning safely is mandatory.

DOWNLOADS AVAILABLE ON RACE PAGES

- Category-Specific Race Annex (1 page)
 - Acclimatization Protocol
 - Medical SOP Summary
 - Quick Safety Card
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The Ladakh Umling-La Challenge is a test of respect — for altitude, for the body, and for life.

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