

A meeting of the Program Approval Committee (PAC) for the implementation of the SMILE Sub-Scheme Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in Begging under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

A meeting of the Program Approval Committee (PAC) for the implementation of the SMILE Sub-Scheme Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in Begging under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was held on 15th September, 2025 in the VC Room of the DC Office, Leh.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner, Romil Singh (IAS), in the presence of Senior Superintendent of Police, Shruti Arora (IPS), and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Dolma Chuskit and other committee members were also present.

Representatives of three NGOs—Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre, Umeed, and Rojavanam Trust—also attended the session.

During the meeting, the NGOs one by one pitched their agendas and goals for project implementation in Leh district, presenting detailed PowerPoint presentations on their proposed strategies. Members of the committee posed questions to each NGO, following which the PAC was instructed to evaluate and assign marks as part of the ongoing selection process.

The SMILE initiative is a dual-purpose scheme aimed at transgender welfare—through medical support, counselling, and educational opportunities—and begging rehabilitation, by providing comprehensive support for dignity, empowerment, and integration. The vision of the mission is to achieve a “Biksha Vritti Mukh Bharat” (Begging-Free India).

The scheme will be implemented in Ladakh through a Four-Pillar Approach comprising survey & identification, mobilisation, rescue & shelter, and comprehensive resettlement.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to collectively work towards the vision of a begging-free Ladakh, in alignment with the national objective of Biksha Vritti Mukh Bharat.



