LAHDC Kargil, District Administration and District Police Bid Farewell to Ladakh's First Chief Secretary Dr. Pawan Kotwal on his Superannuation

Kargil, December 24, 2025: Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Kargil, District Administration, and District Police Kargil jointly organized a farewell dinner in honour of Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS, the outgoing Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, on the occasion of his superannuation, today at Hotel The Kargil. Dr. Pawan Kotwal joined the Administration of Ladakh on 12 April 2021 as Principal Secretary, holding charge of key departments including Planning, Development & Monitoring, Health & Medical Education, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Revenue. He later assumed charge as Advisor to the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, UT Ladakh, on 9 June 2023. Subsequently, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, redesignated the post of Advisor to Lieutenant Governor as Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh on 12 February 2025, making Dr. Kotwal the first Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC Kargil, congratulated Dr. Kotwal on his superannuation and recalled his long association with him since he was working as professional doctor in health department in erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. The CEC praised Dr. Kotwal's cordial, people-friendly nature and highlighted that he always treated both districts—Leh and Kargil—equally, steering them on a common path towards the holistic development of Ladakh without regional bias.

The CEC also recalled Dr. Kotwal's active role and Ladakh-centric vision during meetings of the MHA High-Power Committee advocating for Ladakh's benefit. He stated that governance was strengthened through structural reforms focused on accessibility and inclusion, and highlighted the announcement of five new districts—Drass, Zanskar, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang—in 2024 as one of the major achievements under his guidance. The CEC added that Dr. Kotwal's services as the first Chief Secretary of Ladakh would be remembered in golden words, and wished him and his family a healthy and prosperous post-retirement life.

Speaking on the occasion, Member of Parliament, Ladakh, Haji Hanifa Jan, said that Dr. Pawan Kotwal played a pivotal role during the foundational phase of the new UT of Ladakh, administering key departments such as Health, Revenue, Planning, and Ecology & Environment in various administrative capacities. He stated that his overall contribution to the development of Ladakh would be remembered for decades by the people of the region. While addressing the gathering, Chief Secretary Dr. Pawan Kotwal thanked LAHDC Kargil, the District Administration, and District Police Kargil for organizing the farewell on the occasion of his superannuation. He said that being one of the first apex officials after formation of UT Ladakh, he had witnessed a remarkable transformation in developmental activities since its formation. He noted that, despite challenges, UT Ladakh has now reached a stable position to deliver efficient government services to the people.

Dr. Kotwal lauded the proactive role played by district officers of both Leh and Kargil in ensuring welfare-oriented governance across the region. He stated that the digitization of land records in Ladakh is at an advanced completion stage, which will enable citizens to access their land records digitally with a single click, offering near world-class accuracy and empowering people at their doorsteps. He further highlighted the domicile law and 95% reservation policy as landmark achievements, particularly for the youth of Ladakh. Expressing gratitude, Dr. Kotwal said he received immense love and respect from all sections of Ladakhi society, which he will cherish throughout his life.

Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, in his address, said that under the leadership of Dr. Pawan Kotwal, Ladakh achieved significant milestones, fostering growth, development, and prosperity. He described the digitization of land records as one of the pioneering achievements of UT Ladakh under his leadership, along with numerous developmental works including road development, hospital upgradation, sanctioning of new tunnels, ensuring a fair recruitment process, and other infrastructure projects. The DC expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to work as the first Deputy Commissioner of his career under Dr. Kotwal's guidance, which helped him learn vital aspects of administration, and wished Dr. Kotwal success in his future endeavours on behalf of the District Administration, Kargil.

On the occasion, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Ladakh Sh. Kavinder Gupta; Hon'ble Chairman/Chief Executive Councilor, LAHDC, Kargil Dr. Muhammad Jaffar Akhoon; Hon'ble Executive Councillors of LAHDC, Kargil; Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS Worthy Chief Secretary, UT of Ladakh; Sanjeev Khirwar principle Secretary, Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC, Kargil Sh. Rakesh Kumar, IAS; Senior Superintendent of Police, Kargil; Sh. Nitin Yadav, IPS; Hon'ble Councillors of LAHDC, Kargil; heads of religious and social organizations; district officers, and other distinguished guests were present.

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