

L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena approves ₹9.12-crore DSTP for Leh to protect Ladakh's fragile ecology

New DSTP at Agling-1 to prevent untreated sewage from entering rivers and drains, improve sanitation and public health

Leh, June 13: In a major step towards protecting Ladakh's fragile environment by preventing the discharge of untreated wastewater into rivers, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, has approved the construction of a Decentralised Sewerage Treatment Plant (DSTP) in Leh, at an estimated cost of ₹9.12 crore.

The project has been conceived as a sustainable and long-term intervention to strengthen wastewater management in Leh town, while preserving the ecologically sensitive environment of Ladakh. The DSTP will ensure treatment of sewage close to the point of generation, thereby significantly reducing the burden on large sewer networks and preventing untreated sewage and faecal sludge from entering stormwater drains and river basins.

The Lieutenant Governor has accorded administrative approval and expenditure sanction for the project amounting to ₹9.12 crore, along with an initial allocation of ₹1.80 crore from the overall UT savings in favour of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department for commencement of the new work.

The decentralised approach has been adopted to ensure source-level treatment of wastewater, rejuvenation of rivers and drainage channels, water recycling and reuse, reduction of environmental and health hazards, and optimum land utilisation. This would also avoid the requirement of large tracts of land, huge investment and prolonged time frame, required for setting up centralised treatment facilities.

"Environmental conservation and sustainable urban development must go hand in hand in Ladakh. Decentralised sewerage treatment is an innovative and environmentally responsible solution that will help protect our rivers and water bodies, improve public health, enable water recycling, and support planned urban growth while preserving the fragile ecosystem of the region for future generations," said L-G, Shri Saxena.

The proposed plant at Agling-1 (Camp 6 & 7) will cater to a current population of about 915 persons, with infrastructure designed to serve a projected population of 1,464 persons over a 15-year design period. The facility will have an offered treatment capacity of 200 KLD (kilolitres per day) against the required capacity of 158 KLD.

The project includes the installation of a Portable Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) Package Plant, a technology considered highly suitable for Ladakh's unique geographical, climatic and topographical conditions. The project also envisages the construction of a 3,200-metre gravity sewer network, a one-lakh-litre collection tank, and the restoration of roads affected during the laying of the sewerage infrastructure.

The treated wastewater generated by the plant will be reused in the lower areas of the Abi Canal for landscaping and other suitable purposes, thereby promoting water conservation and reuse in the water-scarce cold desert region.