

Chief Secretary chairs 6th Steering Committee Meeting of UT Ladakh CAMPA

Leh, September 4, 2026: Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, today chaired the 6th meeting of the Steering Committee of the UT Ladakh Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) to review the implementation of approved activities under the CAMPA Annual Plan of Operations (APO) 2026-27 and emphasise timely execution of conservation and community-oriented initiatives across Ladakh.

At the outset, Mandeep Mittal, IFS, Wildlife Warden, made a detailed presentation covering the agenda items, ratification of the minutes of the previous Steering Committee meeting, proposals approved by the Chairman during the intervening period, and the CAMPA APO 2026-27. The presentation also covered division-wise allocation of approved funds and activities under the Leh Wildlife Division and Leh Forest Division.

The meeting reviewed a wide range of activities proposed under CAMPA, including human-wildlife conflict mitigation in Leh and Kargil, crop protection through chain-link fencing, management of free-ranging dogs, sanitation and waste-management initiatives, provision of waste-management facilities in schools across 20 villages, community livelihoods and eco-tourism, awareness and environmental education programmes, training of local communities, and capacity building through scientific studies and field-based interventions.

Reviewing the proposals in detail, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to ensure that the tendering process for approved works is initiated without delay, particularly for activities that need to be completed before winter. He stressed the need for clear work plans, proper identification of beneficiaries and transparent criteria for extending benefits. In the case of crop-protection fencing, he directed that village-wise beneficiary lists, the basis for selection and detailed budget requirements be clearly documented and submitted.

The Chief Secretary also emphasised that CAMPA interventions should focus on practical, high-impact activities rather than excessive spending on high-value items. He called for greater support to local communities and entrepreneurs through initiatives such as promotion of local wool and yak-wool products, improved basic facilities, water filters, heating solutions and other locally relevant livelihood opportunities.

Discussing tourism-linked initiatives, the Chief Secretary stressed that clean and functional toilets and other basic amenities are essential for improving the visitor experience, particularly in and around protected areas. He directed that registered homestays covered under the programme should be provided appropriate training and support kits within a defined timeline, and called for early tendering and immediate commencement of approved activities.

The meeting also discussed community-based eco-tourism, nature education and awareness centres, visitor benches in protected areas, opening and digital mapping of foot-patrolling routes, and capacity building of local youth in areas such as organic agriculture, horticulture and adventure sports. The Chief Secretary suggested making optimum use of existing government buildings for nature education and awareness centres instead of unnecessarily creating new infrastructure, thereby saving time and resources.

On capacity building, he called for exposure visits for local farmers, entrepreneurs and communities to successful initiatives outside Ladakh so that practical knowledge and field experience could be incorporated into local programmes. He also suggested establishing linkages with relevant associations for adventure sports and exploring collaboration with specialised organisations for wildlife conservation, including brown bear conservation in Kargil.

The Chief Secretary further stressed the importance of strengthening public awareness about wildlife and suggested installation of appropriate signages highlighting important species, including the Himalayan brown bear, to promote responsible behaviour and improve awareness among residents and visitors.

The meeting also reviewed plantation and nursery-related activities. The Chief Secretary stressed that afforestation and plantation efforts in Ladakh should be community-driven and aligned with the broader vision for environmental conservation. He directed the concerned officers to prepare the plan based on current requirements and obtain the necessary approval.

Discussing the proposed international conference on mountain mammals, the Chief Secretary emphasised that the event should have strong practical and field-oriented components, with opportunities for experts and participants to gain first-hand experience of Ladakh's wildlife and conservation challenges. He also stressed the importance of developing a clear implementation plan for the proposed activities.

The Chief Secretary directed all concerned departments and implementing agencies to adhere to timelines, complete preparatory work at the earliest and ensure that approved benefits reach the intended beneficiaries without further delay.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner/Secretary, Health, Lalinthakhuma Franklin; Secretary, Planning, Himanshu Gupta; Secretary, Tourism, Sanjeet Rodrigues; Secretary, Finance, Tsewang Tharchin; Mandeep Mittal, IFS; members of the CAMPA Steering Committee and other concerned officers. Additional DCCF Rajesh S. and the Wildlife Officer from Kargil also participated virtually.



