

## **Chief Secretary chairs 7th Ladakh Broadband Committee meeting to review Connectivity Initiatives**

Leh, March 17, 2026: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, chaired the 7th meeting of the Ladakh Broadband Committee to review the implementation of the National Broadband Mission and assess ongoing and upcoming connectivity projects across the region.

The meeting deliberated on key agenda items including the review of decisions taken during the 6th State Broadband Committee meeting, progress of 4G saturation projects being executed by BSNL, the implementation roadmap for 5G services, the “Call Before u Dig” (CBuD) initiative, amended BharatNet projects, and other related issues concerning telecom infrastructure in Ladakh.

Rama Babu, Director, J&K LSA, Department of Telecommunications (DoT), delivered a detailed presentation highlighting the formation, structure, and objectives of the State Broadband Committee in Ladakh. The presentation covered key components such as Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) schemes, 4G saturation initiatives including Border Outposts (BOP) and Border Intelligence Posts (BIP), requirements of Army Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connectivity, amended BharatNet programmes, and connectivity challenges in remote hamlets across Ladakh.

During the review, the Chief Secretary emphasized the critical importance of a robust and reliable telecom network in Ladakh, particularly in border areas and Vibrant Villages. He noted that strengthening connectivity is a priority mission for the administration, in line with directions from the Hon’ble Lieutenant Governor. He stressed the need for ensuring interoperability of telecom systems and assessing the role of infrastructure providers in expanding network reach.

Highlighting the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach, the Chief Secretary directed the Public Works Department to undertake a detailed survey of national and state highways to identify connectivity gaps and prioritize areas requiring immediate intervention. He also instructed that joint surveys be conducted in collaboration with the Department of Telecommunications and the Rural Development Department to ensure effective planning and execution.

The Chief Secretary further reviewed the Army’s fibre network requirements and directed that necessary formal communication be initiated regarding BTS fibre connectivity for defence purposes. He set a timeline of one week for conducting surveys in identified villages, particularly under the Vibrant Villages Programme, and emphasized gathering ground-level feedback to enhance outcomes.

Kush Kumar, Chief General Manager, BSNL, provided an update on the progress of the 4G saturation project in Ladakh, outlining key challenges and the status of village coverage. He assured that the project is on track and committed to completing 4G connectivity in Vibrant Villages by the end of August.

The meeting was attended by Secretary IT Shashanka Ala, Secretary PWD Baseer ul Haq Chaudhary, Secretary Power Development Department Rudra Goud, senior officers from the Forest and Wildlife Department, and representatives from various agencies including the Department of Telecommunications and BSNL. Other officials present included Khushwant Ravi, Additional DGT, Punchok Dorjey, SGM BSNL, Kunchok Gyalson, CPO, and Tsewang Paljor, Chief Engineer, Leh, along with other senior officers from concerned departments.

