

Chief Secretary reviews Functioning of Geology & Mining Wing in Ladakh

Leh, May 04, 2026: The Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh today chaired a meeting to review the functioning of the Geology and Mining Wing of the Industries and Commerce Department, reaffirming the Administration's commitment to strengthening governance, enhancing transparency, and ensuring efficient implementation of mining policies across the region.

The meeting comprehensively examined the operational framework of the department, with a focus on streamlining procedures, improving regulatory mechanisms, and promoting environmentally sustainable mining practices.

Emphasis was laid on aligning departmental functioning with the broader developmental priorities of Ladakh, particularly in ensuring that mining activities contribute positively to the welfare of local communities.

Detailed deliberations were held on key issues including revision of royalty rates for minerals, alignment with the Jammu and Kashmir mining rules and schedules, identification and management of mining areas, and proper documentation of findings at the district level. The Chief Secretary stressed the need for scientific and technology-driven approaches, directing officials to use GPS-based systems to determine distances of mining blocks from forest areas to ensure compliance with environmental norms. He also called for maintaining separate and updated status notes on critical matters, including the District Mineral Foundation Trust.

The progress and functioning of the District Mineral Foundation Trust and the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) were reviewed in detail, particularly in Leh and Kargil districts. The meeting underscored the importance of effective utilization of funds, timely execution of projects, and increased community participation to maximize the impact of welfare initiatives in mining-affected areas.

Discussions also covered the current framework for minor mineral concessions and the proposed Ladakh Mining Affected Area Welfare Scheme, which is presently at the approval stage. It was informed that the draft of the scheme has been published and necessary documentation is being processed for notification. Directions were issued to expedite the submission of the foundation file and finalize the rules for formal notification, along with maintaining a comprehensive status note for submission to the Lieutenant Governor.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the need for stronger inter-departmental coordination, legal scrutiny, and institutional accountability to ensure smooth policy implementation and adherence to statutory provisions. He reiterated that responsible mining practices must go hand in hand with sustainable development and socio-economic upliftment of the region.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Shri Bhupesh Chaudhary; Director, Industries and Commerce; Deputy Director, Geology and Mining; District Mineral Officer; Divisional Forest Officer, Leh; and other senior officers from concerned departments.

