

Ladakh Chief Secretary Reviews Zojila Tunnel Progress; 12 km Completed, Project on Track for 2028 Finish

Kargil, November 20, 2025: Chief Secretary, Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal visited the Eastern portal of the Zojila Tunnel today to review the ongoing progress of the project. The Chief Secretary was accompanied by SDM Drass, Vishal Atri.

During the visit, he interacted with the officers of NHIDCL, including the Project Manager MEIL, Col. A. K. Shiv Kumar, ICT Team Leader, Yousuf Es'hagpour, engineers, and on-site workers. He took a detailed assessment of the work.

He was informed that approximately 12 km of the tunnel has been completed, while nearly 1,200 meters remain under execution. The officials informed him that the breakthrough of Tunnel is expected by April next year. The officials also briefed him on the tunnel's ventilation and safety features, including the semi-transverse air-circulation system, as well as the various technical processes involved in tunnelling.

It was highlighted that the pace of work varies depending on the type of rock strata encountered, due to which progress sometimes accelerates and at other times slows down. He was further apprised that the target for project completion is February 2028.

Engineers also explained the challenges posed by the altitude and terrain of the Zojila axis, noting that an average of 2.5 to 3 meters of excavation is achieved per day, while the stitching and stabilization process requires additional time. They reiterated that, in case of emergencies involving critical patients, an early breakthrough by next April is expected to provide significant relief.

Dr. Kotwal appreciated the dedication and hard work of the workforce and encouraged them to achieve the breakthrough at the earliest for the benefit of the people of Ladakh. He noted that the Zojila Tunnel will be one of the longest and most challenging tunnels in the region, acknowledging the hardships faced by the people of Ladakh.

He also inspected the surveys conducted inside the tunnel and reviewed how the eastern and western portals are being aligned. Officers from Project Vijayak informed him that continuous measurements from advanced survey machines on both portals guide the precision and direction of the excavation work. Overall, the visit proved highly productive, and Dr. Kotwal commended the efforts of the engineers and workers involved in this critical national project.



