

L-G VK Saxena approves ₹7.62 crore project for comprehensive infrastructure upgradation and beautification of Old Town Leh

Project to transform heritage precinct through a common underground utility network, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and improved urban aesthetics

L-G had directed upgradation of infrastructure and aesthetics of Old Town during his visit to area on March 15

Leh, June 07: In a major step towards preserving the heritage character of Leh city, while improving urban infrastructure and visitors' experience, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, has approved a project for comprehensive infrastructure upgradation and beautification of Old Town Leh. This includes the "Construction of Multipurpose Trench and Common Utility Duct in the Old Town" for underground placement of overhanging electric cables, sewerage lines, water supply networks, and communication cables. This also includes developing public amenities and beautification works around the historic Leh Palace.

The project includes development of heritage-compatible pedestrian footpaths, façade improvement, parking facility, installation of ornamental lighting and benches in sync with the local architecture, flower pots, heritage-style signage, wayfinding infrastructure and other public amenities, aimed at enhancing the overall visitor experience in the Old Town.

The project comes in the wake of the L-G's directions for a complete makeover of the Old Leh Town on March 15, i.e., just two days after he took over as the Lt. Governor. The works will be completed by September this year, at an estimated cost of ₹7.62.

Notably, on March 15, L-G Shri Saxena had undertaken a visit to Old Town Leh and directed the concerned departments to prepare a comprehensive plan to address issues relating to sanitation, infrastructure improvement, utility management and overall urban development in the historic area, which is a major heritage and tourist zone in Leh city. He had taken strict note of the broken pavements, dug-up streets, haphazard construction, including drainage in the middle of the streets and overhanging electric wires, that ruined the aesthetics of the area, besides causing considerable woes to the visitors and locals.

The initiative is in line with the LG's vision of transforming Leh into a clean, organised, pedestrian-friendly and world-class tourist destination, while preserving its unique heritage and architectural character. The project aims at providing a sustainable and long-term solution for coordinated utility management, minimising repeated excavation works and promoting environmentally sensitive urban infrastructure in the heritage area.

"Old Town Leh is the cultural and historical heart of Ladakh and one of the most iconic heritage precincts in the Himalayas. Our endeavour is to preserve its unique character while providing modern, efficient and sustainable urban infrastructure. This project will not only improve public utility services and pedestrian facilities but also enhance the overall experience of residents and visitors. It is a major step towards creating a clean, organised, heritage-sensitive and tourist-friendly urban environment that reflects the rich legacy of Ladakh while meeting the aspirations of a modern society," said L-G Shri Saxena.

Old Town Leh, one of the most prominent heritage and tourism destinations in Ladakh, has been facing challenges arising from unplanned utility services, exposed overhead cables, repeated road cutting, inadequate pedestrian facilities and deterioration of its traditional aesthetic character. The project aims to provide a sustainable, long-term solution to these issues through integrated urban infrastructure development.

The integrated utility corridor will facilitate the coordinated management of public utilities, minimise repeated road excavations, improve maintenance efficiency, and significantly enhance the visual appeal of the heritage precinct in Leh.

