

Chief Secretary assesses Conservation of Ancient Petroglyphs and High-Altitude Medicinal Flora on Third day of Nubra Visit

Nubra, August 1, 2026: On the third and final day of his visit to Nubra district, the Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Ashish Kundra, visited the renowned petroglyph site near Murgi village and reviewed the region's rich medicinal plant resources, reaffirming the Administration's commitment to preserving Ladakh's unique cultural heritage while promoting sustainable utilisation of its natural wealth.

Continuing his visit from the Village Lab Foundation at Sumoor, the Chief Secretary proceeded to the petroglyph site at Murgi village, where he was briefed by noted archaeologist Prof. Tashi Ldawa on the historical significance of the ancient rock engravings. The petroglyphs, believed to be thousands of years old, depict ibex, human figures, masks, hunting scenes and other motifs that offer valuable insights into the cultural and social life of the region's early inhabitants. The Chief Secretary was informed that the area is among the largest concentrations of petroglyphs in Ladakh and represents an important archaeological heritage site.

During the visit, Shri Kundra interacted with local residents and enquired about tourist footfall and the measures being undertaken for the conservation and promotion of the site.

Emphasising the need to preserve the invaluable heritage, he suggested developing visitor-friendly infrastructure, including improved pedestrian access, informative signages describing the historical significance of the engravings, and appropriate lighting to enhance the site's visibility and visitor experience while ensuring the protection of the rock art. Members of the local community also submitted a memorandum seeking improved road connectivity, construction of a bridge, better healthcare facilities and other basic civic amenities. The Chief Secretary assured them that their concerns would be examined by the concerned departments.

Later, the Chief Secretary reviewed the medicinal plant resources of the region in the presence of Divisional Forest Officer, Leh, Shri Vishal, and Dr. Punchok Angmo, Consultant, State Medicinal Plant Board, UT Ladakh. During the field visit, he was introduced to several naturally occurring high-altitude medicinal plant species found in the Warila mountain region and was briefed on their medicinal properties, ecological importance and traditional applications in the Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine.

The Chief Secretary subsequently visited a medicinal plant cultivation field, where he inspected ongoing cultivation practices, irrigation facilities, seed production and post-harvest management. He interacted with farmers and officials regarding cultivation techniques, marketing channels, commercial viability and opportunities for expanding the cultivation of medicinal plants.

Stressing the immense potential of Ladakh's medicinal flora, Shri Kundra emphasised the need for scientific research, conservation, value addition and market linkages to promote the sector on an industrial scale while ensuring sustainable harvesting practices. He observed that medicinal plants not only hold immense value for healthcare and traditional medicine but also present significant opportunities for livelihood generation and environmental conservation.

The Chief Secretary also explored the feasibility of introducing additional medicinal plant varieties suited to the region's agro-climatic conditions and highlighted the importance of integrating traditional knowledge with scientific innovation to unlock the full potential of Ladakh's medicinal plant resources.

The Chief Secretary was accompanied by Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, Shri Himanshu Gupta; Deputy Commissioner, Nubra, Shri Mukul Beniwal; Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Nubra, Shri Tashi Jorgais; Superintendent of Police, Nubra; Divisional Forest Officer, Leh; Director, Health Services; Officer on Special Duty to the Chief Secretary; and other officers from the concerned departments.

