

L-G VK Saxena chairs first meeting of Advisory Council

Council deliberates upon key issues – water security, agricultural sustainability, local employment, tourism promotion, among others

Leh, October 13: Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today chaired the first meeting of the Advisory Council of the Union Territory of Ladakh, convened to deliberate upon the major developmental projects being undertaken in the Union Territory.

The meeting witnessed detailed discussions on critical areas, including long-term water security, agricultural sustainability, local employment, tourism promotion, heritage conservation, Pashmina development, promotion of sea buckthorn, major infrastructure initiatives, and administrative reforms, among others.

The Lieutenant Governor underscored the Administration's commitment to ensuring water security in Ladakh through innovative interventions such as Project Him Sarovar, which envisages the creation of water storage ponds to harness glacial and snowmelt runoff. He urged the Advisory Council members to come up with out-of-the-box and innovative ideas, aimed at strengthening climate resilience, promoting tourism and creating new local employment avenues.

On the Pashmina sector, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated Ladakh's resolve to safeguard and promote its globally renowned heritage. He informed the members that the Administration has extended a 25 per cent subsidy to Pashmina wool growers and is targeting an increase in the Pashmina goat population to 4 lakh by next year. He emphasised that the Administration is prioritising Pashmina development to ensure sustainable livelihoods for Changpa herders and position Ladakh as a leading producer of premium-quality Pashmina.

Addressing the promotion of sea buckthorn, Shri Saxena noted that a Sea Buckthorn Conclave was successfully organised earlier this year, reflecting the Administration's commitment to harnessing the potential of this unique resource. He informed that Ladakh has achieved a production of 2,200 tonnes of sea buckthorn this year, and that a dedicated processing plant is coming up in Nubra to add value and expand market opportunities.

The Lieutenant Governor also drew attention to the urgent need for glacier protection in view of the challenges posed by global warming, which he described as a global phenomenon requiring collective action. He stressed that Ladakh, with its fragile ecology, must adopt proactive measures to safeguard its glaciers and ensure long-term climate resilience.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed appreciation for the constructive suggestions put in by the members of the Advisory Council and assured that the Administration will continue to work on basic issues affecting the people of Ladakh. He announced that the Advisory Council will meet again soon to review progress and chalk out the way forward.

The meeting was attended by Dr Mohammed Jaffer Akhon, CEC LAHDC Kargil; Shri Mohammed Hanifa Jhaan, Member of Parliament, Ladakh; Sheikh Nazir Mehdi, President Jamiat Ul Ulama Isna Ashariya Kargil; Syed Ahmad Razvi, representative of Anjuman-e-Sahib-Zaman Kargil; Shri C. Phuntsog, IAS (Retd.); Shri Tsewang Namgyal, IFS (Retd.); and senior officers of the UT Administration, including the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police. Shri Sunil Sethi and Shri Jai Prakash Tomar, members of the Advisory Council from different specialised fields, also attended the meeting virtually.

