

**The Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh
Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat**

Press Release

L-G Shri VK Saxena lays foundation stone for heritage-led transformation of historic Leh Old Town

Project to create modern urban infrastructure while preserving heritage and architecture of Ladakh's historic old town

Leh, July 23: In a landmark initiative aimed at the heritage-led transformation of Leh Old Town, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today laid the foundation stone for the comprehensive



Infrastructure Upgradation and Beautification Project of the historic town, marking a new chapter in transforming the living heart of Ladakh's vibrant culture and rich heritage.

Guided by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi," the project seeks to seamlessly integrate modern civic

infrastructure with heritage conservation, ensuring that Leh Old Town retains its priceless legacy, unique architecture and vibrant cultural identity while embracing the needs of a modern urban centre.

The project envisages the construction of a Multipurpose Trench & Common Utility Duct for underground shifting of water supply, sewerage, electricity, telecommunication and other essential public utilities through a common corridor. It also includes creating pedestrian-friendly pathways, heritage-sensitive streetscaping, improved drainage, ornamental lighting, heritage-style wayfinding signage, ample parking, landscaping, benches, upgraded public amenities and enhanced urban aesthetics, creating a cleaner, safer and visually appealing heritage precinct.

Just two days after assuming charge as the Lieutenant Governor, on March 15, Shri Saxena walked through the historic lanes of Leh Old Town,

along with Leh Main Market, to experience the ground realities firsthand. During the visit, L-G Shri Saxena observed that Leh Old Town, the historic heart of Ladakh, was facing several challenges, including unregulated construction, overhead hanging utility cables, drainage channels running through the middle of roads, repeated road cutting, inadequate public amenities and deteriorating urban spaces, all of which were affecting the heritage character and visual appeal of the centuries-old town.

The Lieutenant Governor, immediately after the visit, had directed the concerned departments to prepare a comprehensive plan for the heritage-led transformation of Leh Old Town, ensuring that every intervention respects and preserves its historical and cultural essence while introducing modern civic infrastructure.

Shri Saxena informed that the project, which represented the fulfilment of a dream very close to his heart, took nearly four months of detailed planning, consultations and design, and has now taken shape and is expected to be completed by the end of September.

The Lieutenant Governor said the project is a practical manifestation of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi," where development and heritage conservation progress together. He observed that Ladakh has witnessed unprecedented infrastructure development after becoming a Union Territory, along with efforts to preserve its unique cultural identity and fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the project would not only improve the quality of life of residents of the Old Town but also significantly enhance the experience of tourists by creating an attractive, organised and pedestrian-friendly heritage precinct. He added that the initiative would further strengthen heritage tourism while creating new livelihood opportunities for local artisans, shopkeepers, homestay owners, guides and others associated with the tourism sector.