

L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena launches Project Him Sarovar to strengthen water security in Ladakh

Says scientific snow-harvesting initiative will address water scarcity, boost irrigation, and enhance climate resilience in region

L-G calls for collective efforts to create new “green and blue assets” for long-term ecological balance

Leh, April 10: In a proactive step towards ensuring long-term water security in the cold desert region, the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today launched Project Him Sarovar. The project aims at scientific snow harvesting and the creation of water bodies to address the pressing challenge of water scarcity in Ladakh.

The initiative focuses on harvesting snow and conserving snowmelt to strengthen water security across Ladakh, where water availability remains a critical concern due to unique climatic and geographical conditions.

Shri Saxena launched the project with the beginning of excavation works for the creation of 50 water bodies, simultaneously in Leh and Kargil. These water bodies, measuring 40x30 meters and 2 meters deep, are designed to store the snowmelt / glacial-melt that otherwise goes to waste every year. This will provide the people of Ladakh a reliable source of water for irrigation.

Describing the initiative as historic, the Lieutenant Governor stated that Project Him Sarovar marks a decisive and scientific intervention to tackle the growing issue of water availability in Ladakh, where water is not merely a resource but a lifeline for the people.

Notably, soon after assuming office as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh on March 13, Shri Saxena had directed the Chief Secretary to identify locations and prepare an action plan for the construction of 50 small water bodies across the Union Territory.

Highlighting the importance of the project, the Lieutenant Governor said that it is directly linked to Ladakh's water security and will play a crucial role in addressing irrigation challenges faced by farmers who depend on limited water sources. He emphasised that these water bodies will help conserve both rainwater and the annual snowmelt, which otherwise goes to waste, thereby creating a reliable source of water for agricultural purposes.

He stated that Project Him Sarovar will not only fulfil irrigation needs but also generate sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. The project is being designed using scientific methods, taking into account Ladakh's fragile ecosystem and climatic conditions.

The Lieutenant Governor said Project Him Sarovar would serve a larger goal of reversing the degradation of land, which is aligned with Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of restoring 2.6 crore hectares of degraded land by 2030.

The Lieutenant Governor further stated that the initiative has received strong support from various stakeholders, including the Indian Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Border Roads Organisation (BRO), and the local population. He also lauded the people of Ladakh for their encouraging support of Project Him Sarovar.

Shri Saxena informed that Project Him Sarovar has been conceptualised keeping in mind Ladakh's unique geographical and climatic conditions. He also highlighted that these water bodies will be developed in consultation with local communities to ensure that they meet specific regional requirements. In addition to water conservation, the project will also support plantation efforts along roadsides and enhance green cover.

Addressing the broader environmental context, the Lieutenant Governor pointed out the visible impacts of climate change in Ladakh, including declining snowfall, melting glaciers, rising temperatures, and falling water tables. He stressed the urgent need for sustainable water management practices to mitigate these challenges.

The Lieutenant Governor also underscored the importance of preserving traditional irrigation systems while simultaneously developing modern water-harvesting and conservation mechanisms. He called for collective efforts to enhance Ladakh's natural landscape by creating new “green and blue assets” that will contribute to long-term ecological balance.



