

## **Ensure uninterrupted connectivity in Ladakh's remote areas: LG Kavinder Reviews implementation of 4G Saturation project in Ladakh Says UT Admin ready to assist BSNL in success of saturation project**

Leh, December 31: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, emphasised the critical need for uninterrupted network and internet connectivity in the modern world, underscoring the Digital India initiative led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He pointed out that the success of various online portals launched by the UT Administration to enhance governance accessibility depends on effective connectivity, particularly in remote and far-flung areas of Ladakh, to ensure access to essential services to the public.

This was stated by Shri Kavinder while chairing a high-level meeting at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat to review the progress of the flagship 4G Saturation Project being implemented by BSNL in the Union Territory.

Administrative Secretary, IT Department, Smt. Shashanka Ala, presented a detailed overview of the project funded through Digital Bharat Nidhi (formerly Universal Service Obligation Fund), utilizing indigenous Atmanirbhar Bharat 4G technology stack. She informed that 375 4G towers were sanctioned across Ladakh to ensure uninterrupted network and telecommunication services for residents in remote areas, including Army and ITBP personnel. Under beyond Category 3 (new site additions), 154 sites were offered by Deputy Commissioners following demands from Hill Councils, but BSNL cleared only 89 as eligible.

Addressing the meeting, the Lt Governor highlighted network complaints raised by delegations during his field visits across Ladakh, terming it a serious issue requiring immediate resolution. He pointed out that various online portals launched by the UT Administration to enhance governance accessibility were rendered ineffective due to poor connectivity, particularly in remote and far-flung areas, depriving people of essential services.

The Lt Governor stated that the UT Administration had extended full support—including equipment transportation to remote areas and administrative facilitation—yet BSNL remained behind schedule, urging them to demonstrate eagerness for timely completion.

Directing Power Development Department (PDD) to ensure uninterrupted power supply to towers, especially during winter, to keep them radiating, Shri Kavinder Gupta instructed BSNL to coordinate joint inspections with both Deputy Commissioners for existing and new sites, and to distribute 4G SIMs replacing 2G in villages.

The Lt Governor also expressed anguish over the delays and operational challenges in the 4G Saturation Project, directing all stakeholders to work with urgency to ensure uninterrupted connectivity in Ladakh's remote areas. He reaffirmed UT Administration's commitment to extend all possible assistance for the success of the project.

The Chief Secretary, Dr Pawan Kotwal, also highlighted the Administration's commitment to supporting the 4G Saturation Project, emphasising coordinated efforts with BSNL and local authorities to ensure seamless connectivity for all residents, including those in remote and strategically sensitive areas.

BSNL officials also raised operational challenges and difficulties faced during the implementation of the 4G Saturation project in Ladakh.

Among those present in the meeting were Administrative Secretary Shashanka Ala, Deputy Commissioner Leh Romil Singh Donk, Deputy Commissioner Kargil Rakesh Kumar, General Manager BSNL Leh Phuntsog Dorjey, Chief Engineer PDD Ladakh, officials from Army, ITBP and BSNL and other senior government officials.

