

Chief Secretary visits Chilling Village, reviews Cultural Heritage, Traditional Craftsmanship and Developmental Concerns

Leh, June 6, 2026: Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, today visited the historic village of Chilling in Leh district to gain firsthand insight into the region's rich cultural heritage, traditional craftsmanship, preservation practices, and the lifestyle of its inhabitants.

Upon his arrival, the Chief Secretary was accorded a warm and traditional welcome by the villagers at the Serzo Museum. During the visit, he interacted with representatives from Chilling, Sumdo, Tsogsti, Skyu, Kaya and Sumda villages, who apprised him of various issues and aspirations of the local communities.

The representatives highlighted the unique identity of Chilling as a centre of traditional copper craftsmanship and requested greater recognition for local artisans through awards, incentives, skill enhancement programmes and livelihood support initiatives. They stressed the need to preserve and promote the village's traditional artisan heritage while creating sustainable income-generating opportunities for local craftsmen.

The villagers also raised concerns regarding developmental restrictions arising from their inclusion within the Hemis National Park area. They sought improved road connectivity, enhanced infrastructure, better electrification, and the implementation of various developmental projects to improve the quality of life in the region.

During the interaction, the Chief Secretary deliberated on several developmental matters, including irrigation facilities, agricultural practices related to wheat and barley cultivation, pending works, and other issues concerning the welfare and progress of the villages. He assured the participants that their concerns would be examined and addressed through appropriate channels.

Later, Shri. Kundra visited the Serzo Museum, where the museum owner showcased a remarkable collection of traditional artefacts and tools reflecting the region's rich history and craftsmanship. The exhibits included approximately 1,500-year-old wooden carvings, slate tools, copper implements, traditional household items such as Skampa, Puri, Kharil, Jamthar, Rkhong Tou, Zong and Sdar, along with ancient musical instruments and hunting-gathering tools used by earlier generations.

Following the museum visit, the Chief Secretary proceeded to the Waru and Tsogsti Petroglyph Site, where he was briefed by archaeologist and researcher Tashi Ldawa and leading heritage anthropologist Viraf Mehta on the historical and cultural significance of the ancient rock art.

The site houses an impressive collection of petroglyphs depicting hunting scenes, human footprints, animal figures, blue sheep motifs, snow leopard representations, horse engravings, Tibetan inscriptions, fossils, and numerous other archaeological markings etched onto rock surfaces. These remarkable carvings provide valuable insights into the region's rich historical, cultural, and artistic heritage, reflecting the lives, beliefs, and environment of communities that inhabited the area several centuries ago.

The Chief Secretary appreciated the efforts of local communities and heritage custodians in preserving Ladakh's invaluable cultural assets. He emphasized the importance of safeguarding traditional knowledge systems, archaeological sites and indigenous craftsmanship for future generations while ensuring balanced and inclusive development in the region.



