

Principal Secretary Sajeev Khirwar chairs meeting to review the functioning of CFCs in Changthang Region

Leh, April 10, 2025: The Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Ladakh Sanjeev Khirwar, chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat to review the functioning of Common Facility Centres (CFCs) in the Changthang region.

The meeting began with a formal introduction of all participants. This was followed by a lively and interactive session where attendees actively voiced their concerns, shared personal experiences, and proposed thoughtful suggestions. The core theme of the discussion centered around devising effective strategies to retain individuals, especially the younger generation, in traditional livelihoods—specifically, the age-old practice of pashmina rearing.

During the deliberations, Sh. Sanjeev Khirwar highlighted a critical issue: the diminishing interest in these traditional occupations due to inadequate financial incentives. He underlined the urgent need to improve the remuneration and economic conditions of farmers and herders who are engaged in pashmina production. He said that unless, these communities are provided with sufficient earnings and a sense of economic security, they may be compelled to abandon their ancestral trades in pursuit of more lucrative, modern alternatives. He emphasized that ensuring better economic returns is not only essential for the sustainability of this heritage-based livelihood but also crucial for encouraging the youth to take pride in and continue these time-honoured practices.

The challenges faced by local entrepreneurs were also thoroughly discussed. One of the major areas of concern was the need for stronger branding and marketing of Ladakh pashmina. The Principal Secretary highlighted the importance of obtaining certification and a Geographical Indication (GI) tag to ensure the authenticity and uniqueness of Ladakh pashmina. He further stressed the need for quality checks and standardization to enhance trust and recognition in wider markets. He also emphasized that value chain should as far possible be captured in Ladakh. Councillors from the region actively participated in the discussion, sharing on-ground realities and offering suggestions. Key focus areas included the need to increase productivity, aggregate local demand for dehaired pashmina, fulfil the requirements for spinning machines, and standardize the quality of pashmina products.

A significant decision taken during the meeting was the formation of a dedicated committee under the leadership of the Deputy Commissioner, Leh. This committee will work closely with local entrepreneurs, experts, and stakeholders to thoroughly assess and identify the existing gaps in the entire pashmina value chain—from herding and raw wool collection to dehairing, spinning, weaving, marketing, and export. The objective is to streamline processes, improve infrastructure, and address quality control and certification challenges. The committee was asked to submit a comprehensive report outlining practical solutions and strategies to strengthen the sector within 10 days. The broader aim is to enhance the viability and visibility of Ladakh pashmina in both domestic and international markets, ensuring it remains a sustainable source of livelihood. By professionalizing the sector and building and retaining a robust value chain, the initiative seeks to inspire and enable the younger generation to take pride in and continue this culturally significant and economically valuable tradition, thereby bridging the generational gap and securing the future of Ladakh's iconic pashmina heritage.

Secretary Tourism was also asked to explore experiential tourism in the Changthang region as has been done in part of India where 'Rural living' of tourists for a brief period has been systematically promoted. The administration has assured full support and committed to implementing necessary measures so that people continue working in this valuable sector. The overall objective remains to enhance the livelihood of pashmina herders and ensure the economic and cultural sustainability of this traditional profession in the Changthang region.

The meeting was attended by Sh. Laltinkhuma Franklin, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Planning Department and Monitoring Department, Sh. Vikram Singh Malik, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Tourism Department, Sh. Santosh Sukhadeva, IAS, Deputy Commissioner Leh and the Councillors of the region, local entrepreneur and concerned officials.



