

Ladakh region is dear to us in many ways

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The Union Minister of Earth Sciences, Science & Technology and Health & Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Meteorological (Met) Centre at Leh(Ladakh) via video conferencing at an event today in Ministry of Earth Sciences, New Delhi. Guest of Honour, Shri Radha Krishna Mathur, Lieutenant Governor, Ladakh and Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP Ladakh also joined the event virtually. Dr. M Rajeevan, Secretary, MoES; Dr. Vipin Chandra, JS MoES; Dr. M. Mohapatra, DG IMD; Shri Gopal Iyenger, Scientist- F, MoES and other officials were also present on the occasion.

At the outset, the Union Minister thanked the administration of Ladakh for extending full support and their active cooperation in establishing the Met Centre facility at Leh. Shri Radha Krishna Mathur, Lieutenant Governor, Ladakh and Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP Ladakh also expressed their gratitude to the government for setting up of the Met Centre at Leh.

Elaborating on the need for a Met Centre at Leh, Dr Harsh Vardhan said that the Ladakh region has lofty mountains with high slopes and no vegetation and lot of loose soil and debris making the region vulnerable to various kinds of natural hazards like Cloud burst (of 2010), Flash Floods, Avalanches and Glacial Lake Outbursts, etc. To avert losses due to such weather events in future, the Government felt the need to establish a State of the Art Meteorological (Met) Centre at Leh in 2020 to strengthen weather related Early Warning System in Ladakh. Located at a height of 3500m, Meteorological Centre Leh is creating history, as it will be the highest meteorological centre in India, he added.

He also said that to help the administration and the people of Ladakh, IMD will provide a range of weather forecast services, ranging from short (3 days) and medium (12 days) to extended (1 month) period to all the stakeholders on a daily basis for both the districts (Leh and Kargil). "Apart from district level forecast, IMD will provide forecast for important tourist places like Nubra, Changthang, Pangong Lake, Zaskar, Kargil, Drass, Dha-Baima (Aryan valley), Khalsi, etc. Some of the important services to be made available are Highway Forecast, Forecast for Mountaineering, Trekking, agriculture, flash flood warning, low and high temperatures among others", Dr Harsh Vardhan explained.

Dr Harsh Vardhan assured that the Government will make every effort to provide the best possible weather services to the administration and the people of Ladakh and make Ladakh safe and secure from the vagaries of weather. "The Met Center will be a world class facility for high altitude meteorology and will cater to the various kinds of weather and climate needs of the people and the administration of Ladakh", Dr Harsh Vardhan said.

Speaking about the achievements of MoES, the Minister outlined that MoES in particular IMD is ranked among the best in the world. It is among the best on many fronts such as early Tsunami Warning and accurate weather forecast. Weather forecast through text message is provided to over 40 million farmers, helping them in planning their farming activities, he added.

Shri Radha Krishna Mathur, Lieutenant Governor, Ladakh emphasised upon the need for micro-climatic forecasting keeping in view the climatic variety of the Ladakh region. He highlighted the importance of localised weather information and the need to create a Weather App for all stakeholders.

Dr. M Rajeevan Secretary, MoES said Ladakh region is dear to us in many ways, be its unique topography, culture, food, climate or strategic importance for national security. He assured that Ministry of Earth Sciences will extend all technical as well as administrative support to IMD.

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