

World's largest solar telescope to come up in Ladakh

JAMMU: The world's largest solar telescope fitted with a 2m reflector — National Large Solar Telescope (NLST) — will be set up at Pangong Tso Lake at Merak in Ladakh.

Professor Tushar P Prabhu from department of science and technology, Indian Institute of Astrophysics, at a meeting with chief secretary Madhav Lal, said the site was selected after carefully studying scientific and environmental aspects.

He said it emerged from the studies that the Pangong Lake was promising and offered longer sunshine hours. "The site will permit scientists to carry out cutting-edge research to understand the fundamental processes taking place on the sun."

The solar telescope will help the scientific community to study long-term changes in

earth's climate and environment and also provide data to carry out research in order to minimise or remove disruptions in communications network and satellites due to periodic solar winds.

Chief secretary Lal said the state government would extend cooperation to the department of science and technology in its endeavour to set up the telescope. "The facility will provide employment opportunities to locals," he added.

The meeting was attended by Shantmanu, commissioner secretary, forest; Kuldeep Chandar, consultant, Indian Institute of Astrophysics; Pankaj Chandan, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), India; AK Singh, chief wildlife warden, J&K; and Lal Chand, chairman, Pollution Control Board.