



Tips on Mobile Phone Connectivity in Zanskar Valley

In today's lifestyle, it is tough to accept that you will not be able to connect with your family or friends on social media. However, while visiting places like Zanskar Valley (or Ladakh or Spiti Valley) in the Himalayas, you must be prepared to stay disconnected with the world. The following tips will be most relevant for the Kargil – Suru Valley – Zanskar Valley region.



Only post-paid mobile connections work in Zanskar Valley

Zanskar Valley falls under the jurisdiction of Jammu & Kashmir, hence only postpaid connections of other states works in Zanskar or Suru Valley. Therefore, you must carry a postpaid SIM card from your home or else your phone is going to be useless in the whole trip of Zanskar Valley.



Connection works in limited areas only

Once you leave Kargil, the mobile connection will die, and for the next 200 odd KMs throughout Kargil – Padum road, you will get a cellular connection back about 15-20 KMs before Padum town of Zanskar Valley. Once you reach Padum, the postpaid mobile connection will work only in the vicinity.



Keep your family and friends informed whenever possible

It's always better to inform the family about your plans before leaving Kargil and Padum. It is still better to tell them upon reaching Kargil and Padum too. Providing over information is always much better than no information in places like Ladakh, Spiti Valley, and Zanskar Valley.



Use satellite phones only in an emergency

Some remote villages in Zanskar and Suru Valley do have satellite phones available at Rs 2/minute for STD/ISD to make a call in case of emergency. Use judiciously. Avoid using for personal use.



Only BSNL / MTNL Connection Works

In Padum or nearby Padum, only BSNL or MTNL postpaid connections work. Sometimes you will find only SMSs working, and that will be your chance to at least send your well-being messages. The connectivity and reach have improved in the last few years and growing every year.



Data connectivity in Zanskar Valley

Data connectivity in Zanskar Valley is mostly limited to 2G/GPRS that too in Padum and Kargil, that also in the night only. You rarely experience the 3G connectivity. You can use (slow) WIFI available in hotels or cyber cafes or guest houses in Padum / Kargil. Whatsapp messages are the most effective in such a case.



Always carry a couple of power banks to charge your mobile

Electricity in Zanskar Valley may be erratic, and power banks may come in handy. Not just to keep the phone on, but to enable them to take more pictures and videos too. It is always wise to carry a right power bank of 20000 mAh or more.



Never plan for connectivity in Zanskar Valley

You should not plan a trip to Zanskar Valley and rely on mobile connectivity. Be it office calls or to plan the next day or to get connected with the hotel or taxi guy. If you have something important, then complete that work before the trip to Zanskar Valley.



Be proactive and disciplined

Be ready to be active & disciplined because, at times in remote places, the mobile connectivity tower will work just in the morning working hours and or when there is light. So, make the best use of connectivity you get any time in the day at any remote place to connect with your family and friends.



Be patient

Last but not least, have patience in yourself and consider you are back in an era of landlines with poor connections. Hence, tell your family and friends not to worry before leaving for a Zanskar Valley trip because they may also face the same issues. Be ready to have some missed call alert messages once you return.



Himalayan Travel Tips

- Have Buffer Days
- Stay Warm & Hydrated
- Avoid Alcohol
- Carry Required Clothing, Food & Water
- Drive with Caution & Care
- Start Early, Sleep Early



#SaveOurHimalayas

- Spread Smiles Not Plastic
- Stop Littering
- Bring Back Your Own Trash
- Avoid Plastic Water Bottles