

# CM chairs 22nd Board Meeting of Building & Construction Workers Welfare Board



HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JULY 25

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired the 22nd meeting of the Jammu & Kashmir Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (JKBOCW) here at the Civil Secretariat.

The aim of the meeting was to comprehensively review the implementation of various welfare measures and approve key initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for construction workers and their families across Jammu and Kashmir.

Appreciating the strides made by the Board, the Chief Minister lauded its efforts in expanding welfare coverage to over 2.85 lakh active construction workers.

He underscored the importance of transparent, timely and targeted delivery of benefits and directed officials to widen the outreach mechanisms, streamline application procedures, and ensure that no eligible worker is excluded from availing the Board's benefits.

The Chief Minister also called for a broader and more inclusive definition of 'construction worker' to bring within the fold all vulnerable and unorganized sector labourers.

He urged the Board to explore policy mechanisms that would maximize coverage and enhance financial security for workers, in alignment with national best practices and labour welfare standards.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief

Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Additional Chief Secretary Jal Shakti Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance, Principal Secretary PWD (R&B), Principal Secretary PDD, Commissioner Secretaries of Housing & Urban Development, Social Welfare, and Cooperatives, Secretary Labour & Employment, Secretary Law, Director General Budget, and representatives of Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh and Bhartiya Dastkar Union.

Senior officers from the Planning Department and other concerned departments also participated in the meeting.

Secretary Labour & Employment Kumar Rajiv Ranjan gave a detailed pre-

sentation highlighting the Board's key achievements, policy reforms and financial progress.

He informed the members that the Board continues to operate in accordance with the legislative mandate of the BOCW (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996. Under this mandate, the Board has been providing a wide range of benefits including ex-gratia relief in cases of accidental deaths, financial support for both permanent and temporary disabilities, and educational assistance for the wards of registered workers. It also offers one-time meritorious scholarships of ₹50,000 to students securing 90% and above in Class 10 and 12, in addition to marriage and maternity assistance, aid for chronic illnesses, and funeral expense coverage.

To ensure transparency and efficiency, the Board has implemented significant digital reforms. These include 100% Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for all financial assistance, Aadhaar integration to eliminate bogus registrations, an online portal for registration and renewals, and OTP-based authentication along with SMS alerts to keep workers informed about key deadlines and updates.

# SDA launches Shehjar Heights Phase-IIx

112 residential apartments to be constructed within 2 yrs

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JULY 25:

Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) has announced the launch of Phase-II of the Shehjar Heights project at Bemina envisaging construction of 112 more residential apartments, including 56 each 2-BHK and 3-BHK flats.

Shehjar Apartments is a flagship Vertical Housing project of SDA in Srinagar involving construction of around 450 residential apartments comprising around 13 towers. The Phase-I of the project completed with the construction of 140 apartments, is fully sold-out.

Given the overwhelming demand for quality residential apartments in Srinagar, SDA has expedited the execution of the project and has started the process for construction of 112 more flats under Phase-II after the Phase-I was fully sold out, said Mohammad Rafi, Vice-Chairman SDA adding that the possession of flats in Phase-II is likely to be handed over to the prospective allottees within 2 years.

He said vertical housing has become a necessity to ensure economical use of land in the fast-expanding Srinagar city. "Given the scarce land resources and sky-rocketing land prices in Srinagar, time has come for SDA to promote the concept of flatted accommodation in the city in a big way," Mr Rafi said.

HUDCO, he said, are the



projects consultants for the Shehjar Heights, who have formulated the overall layout plan and design of towers and individual residential units.

Mr Rafi said that Shehjar Heights are spread over around 100 kanals of land with 40 ft wide main road and 36 ft wide internal roads transecting various apartment blocks located adjacent to Srinagar-Bara-mulla highway in Bemina near Hajj House.

The Vice-Chairman said that the project has been provided with adequate parking facility including surface parking for around 550 vehicles and covered parking for around 220 vehicles. Besides it will have parks, community hall, children's play area, tennis court, amphitheater, health club, community market, gym, food court

and a dedicated STP.

He said the best thing about Shehjar Project is that it is suitably located on National Highway in easily accessible and buzzing Bemina area of Srinagar, with remarkable proximity to urban amenities like hospitals, schools and markets with hassle-free to SrinagarInternational Airport and Nowgam Railway Station.

He said adequate and latest technological interventions have been ensured to make the structures earthquake resistant and HUDCO has got the structural design of the project approved by IIT Kanpur. "For the first time Liquefaction Resistance technology is being used in the construction of Phase-II to make the towers earth-quake resistant," he said and added that

HUDCO is also providing consultancy for drainage, water supply and sewerage design, energy management, communication system, fire detection, fire protection and security systems for the Shehjar Apartments.

The Vice-Chairman said that each 3-BHK flat is spread over a net surface area of 1250 sq ft with 3 bedrooms, Drawing Room, Living Room, Kitchen, 3 washrooms, utility and veranda while 2-BHK flat has a surface area of 1012 sq ft comprising 2 bedrooms, drawing room, 2 washrooms, kitchen, utility and veranda. Rafi said the tendering process of Phase-II has been initiated and SDA is going to soon announce the booking for Phase-II with flexible payment mode.

# Smart Public Distribution System to go live by mid August 2025: Satish Sharma

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JAMMU, JULY 25

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Information Technology, Transport, and Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma, today said that the much-anticipated Smart Public Distribution System (Smart PDS) will be made functional across Jammu and Kashmir by mid August 2025.

The Minister was reviewing the progress on Smart PDS implementation in the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, Saurabh Bhagat, along with other senior officers and technical teams involved in the migration process.

The Minister stated that Jammu and Kashmir is on track to become the first Union Territory in the country to fully migrate to



the Smart PDS under the national RCMS (Ration Card Management System) framework, as directed by the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

"Smart PDS is a transformative reform in food distribution that ensures transparency, efficiency and portability of services. With this shift, over 25 lakh ration card holders and approximately 1.02 crore ration beneficiaries in J&K will experience a seamless and more accountable system," the Minister said.

The meeting was told

that under the Smart PDS system and under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) the beneficiaries from Jammu and Kashmir can now avail their entitled ration PAN India and vice-versa.

Similarly, it was also informed that all the feeding of the Smart PDS is under testing phase and optimization for unique needs of Jammu and Kashmir and would also include various categories like SAAAY, NFSA and PMSES. The automation shall democratize the entire PDS system and beneficiaries can use

applications like Mera Ration and Annapurna to get real time information about his ration quota.

It was also given out that all the ration distribution shall be based on Aadhar enabled POS machines of L1 configuration which are 4G enabled. This shall help the department in improving the storage efficiency, economize transportation and provide effective services to the Consumer. It was also clarified that all the other allied services like ration distribution, Ayushman card will not be effected by this transition.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to expedite testing, ensure training of FPS (Fair Price Shop) dealers and launch public awareness campaigns ahead of the rollout. He emphasized that the success of Smart PDS depends on its accessibility to even the remotest parts of the Union Territory.

# DC Budgam chairs DLTCF meeting on Climate Change & Health

**BUDGAM, JULY 25:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Udin Bhat, who is also chairman of the District level Multi-Sectoral Task Force Committee (DLTCF) under the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH), today chaired a high-level review meeting to discuss the district's action plan for addressing health impacts arising from climate change.

The meeting, held at the DC office complex, featured a detailed presentation by Prof. (Dr.) Ashfaq Ahmad, Head, Dept. of Community Medicine, SKIMS Bemina, highlighting the vision of a climate-resilient health system and Budgam's vulnerability to air pollution, water contamination, heat waves, floods, and vector-borne diseases.

Speaking on the occasion, DC said, "Climate-related health risks originate outside the health sector but impact



it directly. There is a need for an integrated, coordinated strategy across all departments to protect public health in the face of rising climate threats."

Dr Bilal emphasised the need for institutional coordination and synchronized response mechanisms, citing examples of how inadequate infrastructure or delayed communication during snowstorms or floods can lead to avoidable health crises.

He highlighted key issues

including Air Quality Monitoring & Emission Regulation (Pollution Control Board, Transport Dept.), Resilient Infrastructure for PHCs/ Schools (PWD, Health, DDMA), Water Quality & WASH Co-Initiatives (Jal Shakti, Health, Education), Waste Management and Vector Source Control (Municipality, PRI, Health), Heat-Health Awareness and Early Warning Systems (IMD, Education, Health), Joint Campaigns & Emergency

Readiness via wall art, FM radio, IEC drives, and fogging operations.

DC directed that monthly progress reviews be conducted; supported by an integrated monitoring dashboard tracking solar installations, air quality, IEC coverage, and IHIP reports under NPCCHH.

"We must act not only to treat illness but to prevent it. That means cleaner air, safer water, better infrastructure, and informed citizens. Climate resilience begins with coordinated action," DC remarked.

DC directed to make an eco-friendly five years futuristic plan for the district.

He further directed stakeholders for department-wise implementation of the Action plan both five year as well as District Action Plan, including preparedness drills, stockpiling of medicines and fuels in remote areas, and community-based awareness drives.

**SRINAGAR, JULY 25:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress on ongoing Information Technology (IT) initiatives undertaken across J&K to enhance the governance and citizen-centric services.

The meeting besides Special DG, BISAG-N, Vinay Thakur was attended by Secretary, IT Department and concerned Administrative Secretaries; DG, Planning; SIO, NIC and other senior officers.

The Chief Secretary took detailed appraisal of the digital interventions being implemented to promote ease of living for the people.

Emphasizing the need to make IT platforms more impactful, he called for significant improvements in the design and functionality of dashboards related to various government schemes. He suggested that they be made more vibrant, informative and outcome-driven through integration with other relevant platforms.

Regarding the Kisan Khidmat Ghar Dashboard, the Chief Secretary directed that it should reflect real-time data on the functioning of Krishi Udhayamis and describe the support mechanisms to be made available to them for improved efficiency and productivity.

He also reviewed the upgrade roadmap of the



YUVA App, calling for deeper insights into application usage patterns, application submission tracking, DPR generation and integration with the MSME Health Clinic and ONDC platforms for enhanced user experience and benefit.

Importantly, he stressed the linking the app with the UDISE and APAAR databases of the School Education Department to monitor student skill development and career outcomes, thus enabling a seamless track of their educational and vocational journeys.

In healthcare, Dulloo suggested comprehensive integration of the JK Sehat App with the ABDM and HMIS frameworks. He emphasized making the platform more user-friendly while enabling support for registered home-care providers to access diagnostic tools and improve treatment delivery.

The Chief Secretary also proposed creation of a uni-

fied search engine dedicated to indexing websites hosted by the J&K and Central Government, to help the citizens and employees easily access official data and resources.

Looking ahead, he advised the IT Department to explore the development of an AI-based Legal Counselling App to assist individuals in navigating legal issues with informed and automated guidance. The meeting also discussed initiatives such as development of AI-based learning tools, introduction of educational TV channels and exposure of students to AI modules like AI-101 and AI-201 from an early stage to foster technological competence.

Further updates were taken on the status of the Centre of Excellence in Emerging Technologies, the 360° Tourism App, Land Records Digitization, HADP 360, JKICP, Agri Output Tracking Apps, Village

Planning App and IT-based platforms under PDD and Jal Shakti Department.

Special DG, BISAG-N, Vinay Thakur, shared the progress on ongoing projects being developed in collaboration with the UT Government. He assured continued support from BISAG-N in building robust, scalable and citizen-centric IT solutions. He also provided technical insights and affirmed BISAG-N's commitment to timely execution of tasks in consultation with the respective departments.

Earlier, Secretary IT, Dr. Piyush Singla, gave a comprehensive overview on key milestones achieved, current developments and future plans under the Digital J&K framework. He elaborated on the transformative potential of several digital initiatives underway and their anticipated impact on service delivery and governance across the length and breadth of the UT.

# DC Srinagar chairs DLSCC meeting



lated incidents in Srinagar district. After a detailed examination, the Committee recommended 30 cases to the government for consideration for compassionate appointment under the

SRO-43 in the first go.

Speaking on the occasion, DC stressed the concerned officers to ensure speedy disposal of all such cases for timely clearance of the cases. He empha-

sized that in a streamlined & coordinated manner, the effort should be to bring down the pendency of such cases to nil.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Adil Fareed; SP Headquarter, Umer Shah; Additional SP CID, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Medical Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, all Tehsildars, senior officers from BSF, Army, and other security agencies, besides officials from the concerned departments.