

CM Omar Abdullah chairs preliminary meeting of Mission SKILL framework for J&K

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 05



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a preliminary meeting to discuss the formulation of an action plan for Mission SKILL in Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive, mission-mode strategy to equip youth with market-relevant skills.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary Finance Shailendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Tourism & PDD, Commissioner Secretary Planning, Development & Monitoring, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce, Secretary Labour & Employment, Managing Director and CEO Jammu and Kashmir Bank, Vice Chancellors of all universities of Jammu and Kashmir, Directors of Indian Institute of Management and Indian Institute of Technology, senior professors and other concerned officials.

Addressing the participants, the Chief Minister underscored that the traditional education system often does not fully equip students with the skills required for the evolving job market or entrepreneurship.

“Formal education more often than not does not prepare us with the skills that we require in the job market or as entrepreneurs. What this presentation and the idea behind this mission seeks to achieve is to bridge that gap between education and employability,” the Chief Minister said.

He noted that the proposed mission recognizes the existing gap between the skills youth possess and the skills demanded by the market.

“This mission acknowledges that there is a gap between what we want and what we have. The challenge before us is how to fill that gap and at what stage we begin the process,” he said, adding that while ideally skill development would begin from the early stages of schooling.

Emphasizing the importance of a large-scale and structured approach, the Chief Minister said Jammu and Kashmir must adopt a mission-mode framework to systematically address the skill deficit.

“Jammu and Kashmir needs to adopt a mission scale. We need to plug the gap between education and employability and identify the skills that are actually required in the job market,” he said.

Highlighting the rapidly evolving nature of modern employment, the Chief Minister said that skill requirements change quickly with technological advancements.

“What is required today may not be required tomorrow. You will require skills tomorrow that you haven’t even heard about today,” he observed.

Referring to emerging technologies, he noted how quickly innovations have reshaped everyday life.

“Three or four years ago, very few of us were talking about artificial intelligence. Perhaps those in institutions like IIT or IIM were, but for the rest of us, our idea of using intelligence on the internet was limited to search engines. None of us imagined the impact tools like ChatGPT or Gemini would have on our lives,” he said.

The Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of the concerned department in preparing the initial framework for the mission.

“The department has done an excellent job in putting this report together. It will certainly require some tweaking and consultation, but we must also be mindful about keeping the process efficient,” he said.

Calling for a clear implementation roadmap, the Chief Minister emphasized the need for defined timelines and resource planning.

“We must decide what we want to achieve over the next six months, one year, one and a half years and two years. Within the constraints we have, we need to identify the resources required and commit to them,” he said.

He further stressed the importance of collaboration

with universities, academic institutions and the private sector to make the mission impactful and sustainable.

“We must determine how universities and other institutions will be involved and how we can effectively bring the private sector into this effort. Once that framework is in place, the mission can be rolled out in a structured manner,” he added.

Earlier, participants shared their feedback and suggestions to help refine the framework and ensure the successful implementation of Mission SKILL in Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, Secretary Labour & Employment Kumar Rajeev Ranjan delivered a detailed presentation outlining the proposed action plan for skill development under Mission SKILL.

He highlighted the mission’s objectives, proposed institutional framework and phased implementation strategy aimed at equipping youth with industry-relevant skills. The presentation also emphasized aligning education with evolving market demands, strengthening collaboration between government, academic institutions and the private sector, and creating a sustainable ecosystem to enhance employability and entrepreneurship opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a high-level virtual review meeting to assess the overall developmental scenario of Doda district, with emphasis on expediting key infrastructure projects, strengthening irrigation facilities, improving road connectivity and ensuring optimal utilisation of allocated funds.

MLA Doda, Shakti Raj Parihar and MLA Baderwah, Daleep Singh Parihar, District Development Commissioner, Doda, Krishan Lal besides district officers attended the meeting.

The Minister directed the officers to ensure timely completion of all ongoing works and stressed strict adherence to quality standards during project execution. He emphasized outcome based monitoring and called for intensified efforts in sectors witnessing slow progress.

The District Development Commissioner briefed the Minister about the physical and financial

achievements of the district. He presented the ongoing status of various developmental works and projects being executed by different departments.

He informed that under District Capex, a total of 2432 works have been taken up across various departments and sectors, of which, 1625 have been completed achieving an expenditure of 71 percent, so far. Under the Rural Development Department (RDD), 2272 works had been taken up during 2025-26, of which, 1656 have been completed till date.

Reviewing the department wise progress, the Minister was informed that under the Jal Shakti Department, 52 works have been taken up, of which, 36 have been completed. The Public Works Department has undertaken 245 works

with 99 completed, so far. Similarly, 52 works have been taken up by the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited, of which, 18 stand completed.

Taking stock of the progress under the centrally sponsored Jal Jeevan Mission, the Minister was apprised that 212 schemes have been taken up in the district, of which, 122 have been completed while the remaining are at various stages of execution.

Stressing the need to achieve Har Ghar Jal certification, he directed the officers to expedite completion of all pending schemes to ensure assured tap water supply to every household.

The Minister also reviewed the progress on road connectivity under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. It was informed that under PMGSY, a total of 179 schemes have been taken up, targeting connectivity to 258 habitations in the district.

Under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, it was informed that 3,122 applications have been received in the district, of which, 822 rooftop solar systems have already been installed.

Other key projects reviewed included construction of a shopping complex, development of the Chenab riverfront, widening of National Highway-244 and other critical infrastructure initiatives.

The Minister directed the officers to hold weekly review meetings for close monitoring and timely completion of these projects.

Nalwa gives call to foster solidarity, strengthen hands of PM Modi

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Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, president of J&K Minority Morcha, today gave a clarification call to the different party units, & workers to foster solidarity and strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi by reaching out to people and apprising them of the party’s policies aimed at their welfare and for the nation’s progress.

“It is our job to strengthen the party further and take its ideology to people’s doorsteps. We belong to party whose core ideology is to serve people and the nation,” he said while chairing a meeting of minority morcha’s border district, Jammu, here.

“Different party units, like minority morcha and SC/BC/OBC units, are like flowers of the same garden. We need to keep on nurturing this garden, and work as one unit to strengthen the hands of PM Modi,” Nalwa asserted.

He credited the party’s unprecedented success since 2014 to the hard work of party workers who left no stone unturned to reach out to people across the length & breadth of the country with the BJP ideology and PM Modi’s massive development agenda for the nation.

On the occasion, newly elected border area minority morcha district president, border Jammu, Gurdeep Singh and his team members were also present.



Nalwa called upon them to spare no effort to strengthen the party at the grassroots level.

He termed BJP as a party with a difference. “Other parties’ work is focused only on remaining in power but our party is not like this; it only works for the welfare and betterment of people. Our party is not guided by the hunger to remain in power. It follows the path of truth and honesty unlike other parties whose foundation was based on lies and manipulations,” he said.

“Our party believes in selfless service and dedication. It works for the nation and nation is supreme for it,” he added.

“People of the country have voted BJP to victory as they are well aware of its pro-people credentials. For the party, nothing above truth & honesty. I tell you

one thing that if one takes the route of dishonesty to achieve something, one can’t retain it for long. That is why it is said that honesty is the best policy. That is why I want that in our minority morcha, honesty & discipline be given top priority. Without discipline, organisations won’t be able to survive,” Nalwa said.

He took pride in saying that BJP is the most disciplined of all the parties in the country and called upon the morcha members to imbibe in them these traits to further strengthen the party.

“He who works for the party will definitely grow. Please forget that luck has any role to play in the growth of BJP workers; your work done with honesty & dedication will contribute to your growth in the party,” he said.

Nalwa also showered

praises on MLA Gharu Ram, who was also present in the meeting, for being available to people all the time. “You ought to reach out to the MLA as he himself has urged you all to meet him anytime with your problems,” Nalwa added.

Among others present on the occasion included BJP district president Rinku Choudhary, minority morcha general secretary Jasmeet Kour Pandey, minority morcha general secretary Damanjeet Singh, minority morcha vice-presidents – Manjeet Singh, Surjeet Singh, Kamaljeet Singh & Ricky Singh, general secretary Sukhvinder Singh, secretaries – Rajinder Singh & Surjeet Singh, office secretary Omkar Singh, media secretary Ranjeet Singh, Bachan Singh, Balbir Singh & Swaran Singh.

Rana reviews development works in Doda; stresses timely completion of projects

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RDD secy reviews implementation of O&M, FSSM policies under SBM-G

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Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Thursday chaired a review meeting to finalise the implementation framework for Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of sanitation assets and Faecal Sludge & Septage Management (FSSM) under Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G).

The meeting was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation Anoo Malhotra, Director Finance Umar Khan, Joint Director Planning Kamal Kumar, Superintending Engineers REW Jammu/Kashmir and other officials.

The Secretary reviewed the status of sanitation infrastructure created under SBM-G and stressed the need for a structured mechanism for maintenance of assets such as community sanitary complexes, solid and liquid waste management facilities and faecal sludge treatment systems.

It was informed that over 20 lakh sanitation assets, including individual household toilets, Community Sanitary complexes, compost pits, Soak pits, segregation sheds and other sanitation facilities have been created across rural Jammu and Kashmir under SBM-G. The O&M policy aims to ensure their long-term sustainability and upkeep.

Emphasising decentralised implementation, the Secretary directed that operational powers related to sanitation management be streamlined through the Directorate while execution of activities be ensured at the district level under Deputy Commissioners. He also called for strengthening digital monitoring systems, including development of an online SBM dashboard for asset tracking, user-charge monitoring and grievance redressal. Highlighting financial sustainability, he noted that 10 percent of PRI Capex allocation has been earmarked for operation and maintenance of sanitation assets and stressed the need to mobilise additional resources through user charges and community participation.

The Secretary further directed that regulatory provisions relating to waste management be aligned with the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, with a clearly defined

penalty and appeal mechanism. It was decided that BDOs will enforce sanitation regulations at the block level, with appeals against penalties lying before the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD). He also stressed strengthening door-to-door waste collection systems, rationalising user charges and developing a dedicated IEC strategy for the O&M policy.

Highlighting the importance of scientific treatment of faecal sludge, the Secretary emphasised effective functioning and expansion of Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs). He also called for systematic surveys and mapping of toilets and containment systems to assess desludging demand and ensure proper linkage of villages with treatment facilities.

Earlier, Deputy Director Employment Abdul Majid Tantray welcomed the chief guest and briefed the participants about the objectives and progress of Mission YUVA in the district.

The training programme was conducted in four sessions covering application mobilization, credit follow-up with banks, post-sanction procedures and onboarding of sellers on the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to enhance market access for local entrepreneurs.

Singh also joined virtually and shared valuable insights regarding the mission’s framework and the responsibilities entrusted to Yuva Doots.

Joint Director Employment Jammu Paramjeet

One-day Orientation Programme held for YUVA DOOTs at Poonch

POONCH, MARCH 05: A one-day Training-Oriented Programme for Yuva Doots was held at Poonch to strengthen the implementation of Mission YUVA at the grassroots level.

Yuva Doots from different blocks of the district participated in the programme.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik was the chief guest. He emphasized the crucial role of Yuva Doots in mobilizing youth, spreading



awareness about government schemes and providing handholding support to aspiring entrepreneurs.

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The government has initiated steps for establishing the Jammu & Kashmir Artificial Intelligence Mission (JK-AIM) to promote adoption of Artificial Intelligence and emerging technologies in governance across the Union Territory.

A meeting in this regard was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Piyush Singla, Administrative Secretary, Information Technology Department, to deliberate on creating a

structured institutional framework for enabling AI-based solutions in government functioning and public service delivery.

During the meeting, the growing role of Artificial Intelligence in strengthening governance, enabling data-driven decision-making and improving citizen service delivery was discussed. It was observed that AI technologies can help analyse large volumes of data generated by government systems and improve policy formulation,

operational efficiency and service accessibility.

Secretary IT emphasized that the proposed JK-AIM will promote the use of Artificial Intelligence and emerging technologies across government departments and support development of AI-based solutions such as intelligent chatbots, automated grievance systems, multilingual communication platforms, predictive analytics and AI-enabled cybersecurity solutions.

He stressed that the Mis-

structure will also encourage collaboration with research institutions, startups and technology partners to foster innovation.

It was proposed that JK-AIM will function as a mission-mode initiative under the Information Technology Department, supported by a structured governance mechanism including a Mission Steering Committee for strategic oversight and a Technical Wing for implementation and coordination with departments.

He stressed that the Mis-