

J&K eyes AI to transform governance and citizen services

CS engages key stakeholders to chart future roadmap

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today held detailed deliberations with stakeholders on the adoption and expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in governance and delivery of public services across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting besides the concerned Administrative Secretaries was attended by the Director, Indian Institute of Technology Jammu, CEO, India AI Mission; Special Director General, Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N), and other concerned officers of the Union Territory.

The meeting held detailed discussions on the potential of AI-based interventions in a range of citizen-centric governance sectors and explored ways to establish a robust institutional and technological framework for accelerating such initiatives in the UT. Participants deliberated on how advanced technologies could improve administrative efficiency, decision-making and accessibility of government services for citizens.

Speaking during the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized that Artificial Intelligence offers enormous potential to transform governance and enhance the quality and reach of public services across Jammu and Kashmir. He urged all departments to proactively identify areas where AI-driven solutions could improve efficiency, transparency and outcomes in their respective sectors.

He stressed the importance of strong coordination between the UT administration, the Union Ministry concerned, IIT Jammu, BISAG-N and other technical institutions to ensure timely and effective implementation of all these AI-enabled initiatives.

To provide strategic direction and oversight, the Chief Secretary proposed the constitution of a high-level Steering Committee to be chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works Department. The committee would include representatives from IIT Jammu, BISAG-N with Secretary Information Technology and Inspector General of Police Jammu being the members of this committee and would guide the implementation of AI projects while addressing operational bot-



tenlecks.

The Chief Secretary also directed the Information Technology Department to establish a dedicated anchoring mechanism within the department to coordinate AI-related initiatives with different departments. He stressed the need for identifying and deploying specialized human resources to support this institutional framework and ensure effective on-ground implementation.

Highlighting the importance of capacity building, he underscored the need for earlier establishment of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Emerging Technologies in Jammu and Kashmir and setting up Data Innovation Labs in skill development institutions. He maintained that such facilities would play a key role in preparing the region for future technological challenges and creating a skilled workforce in data science and AI-related domains.

The Chief Secretary further called upon the School Education Department to explore the possibility of introducing basic introductory courses on Artificial Intelligence at the secondary school level. He also suggested that AI-related skill programmes could be incorporated under Mission YUVA to enable youth to acquire emerging technology skills and improve their employment prospects.

During the meeting, Administrative Secretaries from various departments shared their perspectives on the use of AI-enabled tools to improve efficiency, data analysis, service delivery and decision-making within their sectors.

CEO of the IndiaAI Mission, Abhishek Singh, suggested the creation of a core AI team within the Union Territory to guide the mission's implementation locally.

He noted that the national mission has been mandated to catalyse AI-driven initiatives across the country and assured full support to Jammu and Kashmir for its AI-related programmes.

He further recommended that the Union

Territory may initially identify five priority sectors for pilot-based AI implementation. Once these projects demonstrate success, additional initiatives could be gradually scaled up based on the expertise developed. He also emphasized the importance of establishing the proposed Centre of Excellence and Data Labs to develop a strong pool of local talent capable of driving AI innovation in the region.

Director, Indian Institute of Technology Jammu, Prof Manoj Gaur, described the proposed initiatives as timely and significant. He stated that the institute possesses strong research capabilities in the area of disaster mitigation, risk reduction which could be leveraged to support AI-driven governance solutions in Jammu and Kashmir. He also highlighted the institute's work on developing data pipelines in local languages, which could further strengthen AI applications in the region.

Special Director General, BISAG-N, Vinay Thakur, assured full support from the organisation in rolling out AI-based solutions for governance in Jammu and Kashmir. He also stressed the importance of establishing a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) to facilitate smooth implementation and monitoring of these initiatives across departments.

Inspector General of Police Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti, informed the meeting that the police department as per the earlier directions had developed an AI-based tool aimed at improving investigation and litigation processes. He said that the project is currently at an advanced stage and would significantly enhance operational efficiency. Notably, the tool is being designed to function entirely in-house without the need for internet connectivity, he apprised the meeting.

Earlier, Secretary Information Technology, Dr Piyush Singla, briefed the meeting about the progress made by the Union Territory in leveraging AI for governance. He informed that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) worth ₹20 Cr

for establishing a Centre of Excellence in Emerging Technologies has been jointly prepared by the IT Department and Indian IIT, Jammu and submitted to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for approval. The proposed centre is expected to be set up under a Centre-UT funding pattern of 90:10.

He further stated that eight additional Data Innovation Labs are proposed to be established with central funding in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) across the Union Territory. These labs are expected to play a pivotal role in strengthening the AI and data ecosystem and building grassroots-level capacity in data science.

The Secretary also highlighted the need for establishing a dedicated Jammu and Kashmir AI Mission (JK AIM) to coordinate AI-related initiatives across departments in a structured manner.

During the meeting, several potential AI applications across governance sectors were identified, including AI-based disaster risk and early warning systems, agriculture and horticulture advisory platforms, health triage and disease surveillance tools, office workflow automation, AI-supported learning systems in education, land asset and infrastructure monitoring, youth employment and skill-matching platforms, and AI-based grievance redressal systems along with a dozen of initiatives across different departments.

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary also launched the inaugural issue of 'Digital Dhara', a bi-monthly magazine of the Information Technology Department. The publication aims to promote digital awareness and transparency while documenting key milestones in IT governance in Jammu and Kashmir. It will also highlight emerging technological trends and innovations to inform and engage readers across the UT on regular basis from today.

DC Budgam visits District Hospital; Inspects Blood Bank, Oxygen Plant

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today conducted an extensive visit to District Hospital (DH) Budgam to inspect its functioning, assess ongoing infrastructure development projects, and review the progress of critical facilities aimed at improving healthcare services in the district.

During the visit, the DC inspected the upgraded Blood Bank, which has been expanded to a second storey. He was apprised that all necessary machinery and equipment for conducting blood tests and storage of blood, including advanced diagnostic tools, have been installed.

The DC emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Blood Bank operates efficiently to meet the critical healthcare needs of the residents.

He also reviewed the functioning of the Oxygen Plant at DH Budgam and interacted with the staff to assess its operational readiness. He directed the concerned authorities to ensure uninterrupted oxygen supply to cater to emergency requirements and patient care.

During his visit, the DC



interacted with hospital staff and enquired about the availability of healthcare services, infrastructure, and maintenance. He also interacted with the patients and attendants. He stressed the need for cleanliness and sanitation in and around the hospital premises and called for maintaining a patient-friendly environment.

Later, the DC visited the under-construction 125-Bedded new District Hospital and 100-Bedded Critical Care Unit at Reshipora Budgam.

During the inspection, the DC reviewed various components of the under-construction health infra-

structure and took stock of the pace and quality of the work.

He was informed that the structural skeleton of the building has been completed and the structural steel truss work is about 95 percent complete. Overall, nearly 65 percent of the project has been physically completed so far. The project is expected to be completed by March 2027, while the target for substantial completion is December 2026.

The DC directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work while ensuring quality standards and compliance with accessibility norms so that the

facility benefits patients and attendants once completed.

During the visit, the DC stated that the District Administration will conduct weekly monitoring of the construction works to ensure that the new hospital is completed within the stipulated timeframe and dedicated to the public at the earliest.

He also remarked that the new District Hospital is a long-standing requirement of the people of Budgam as the existing hospital lacks adequate space to cater to the growing healthcare needs of the district. He said the new facility will significantly strengthen healthcare infrastructure and improve patient care services in the district.

The DC reiterated that the District Administration remains committed to improving healthcare delivery and directed all concerned departments to ensure the timely completion of the ongoing projects.

Senior officials including the Chief Planning Officer Budgam, Chief Medical Officer Budgam, Executive Engineer

R&B Budgam, Tehsildar Budgam and representatives from executing agencies accompanied the DC during the inspection.

Augmentation of seed storage, irrigation facilities underway at SM Farms

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Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta today chaired a meeting to review the progress of projects undertaken to augment irrigation and storage facilities at the Seed Multiplication Farms, Chinore and Chakroi.

The meeting was attended by Joint Director Agriculture (Farms/SLUB) Aman Jyoti Sharma; Deputy Director Agriculture (Central)/Agriculture Chemist Sanjeev Rai Gupta; Regional Level SMS Krishan Kant; Deputy Director Planning Mudassar Yaqoob Zargar; Accounts Officer Vriti Uppal; Farm Manager Chinore Verinder Dogra; Farm Manager Chakroi Parshotam Kumar along with other senior officers and staff of the department.

At the outset, the Joint Director Agriculture (Farms/SLUB) briefed the



Director about the ongoing and the projects proposed for the augmentation of irrigation infrastructure and storage facilities at the twin farms.

Detailed discussions were held regarding the availability of irrigation sources, status of functional and non-functional tubewells, land levelling works, installation of micro-irrigation systems, repair of irrigation channels and progress of NABARD-funded projects, including proposals under Phase-II projects for further strengthening the infrastructure.

The Director Agriculture stressed the early comple-

tion of fencing and irrigation infrastructure development works. He further instructed for formulation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for Phase-II and submission of the same to Directorate within 15 days for necessary processing.

The meeting also reviewed proposals aimed at enhancing seed storage capacity by developing new storage facilities. Detailed deliberations were held regarding the installation of Automatic Weighing Machine under CAPEX and other infrastructure required for efficient farm operations.

"The seed processing unit

available at the farms shall be made operational at the earliest so that seed produced at the farms can be processed locally in a systematic manner," the Director Agriculture instructed. He further directed to expedite the repair of non-functional borewells to ensure adequate irrigation facilities for farm activities.

The meeting concluded with an emphasis on strengthening irrigation infrastructure, expanding storage capacity and improving seed processing facilities at the Seed Multiplication Farms to enhance quality seed production in the region.

JKEDI launches 2nd Batch of ESDP under RAMP at Pulwama

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Pulwama, today launched the 2nd batch of the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program (ESDP) under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme at the Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Pulwama.

The program was formally inaugurated by Range Officer (South Kashmir) JKEDI, Nafia Nazir, in presence of District Nodal Officer (DNO), JKEDI Pulwama Raiyees Manzoor, Superintendent, ITI Pulwama, Gh Nabi Shah, and other senior officials from JKEDI.

Speaking on the occasion, Nafia Nazir outlined the key objectives of the RAMP scheme, emphasizing its vital role in nurturing grassroots-level entrepreneurship across Jammu and Kashmir. She highlighted how such targeted program empower aspiring entrepreneurs with essential tools to build sustainable businesses.

Furthermore, the District Nodal Officer, commended the initiative and stressed the critical importance of entrepreneurship in addressing unem-



ployment challenges and fostering a self-reliant economy in the region.

The RAMP-funded ESDP is designed to equip prospective entrepreneurs with comprehensive skills in business development, financial planning, market awareness, and other foundational areas necessary for launching and successfully managing their ventures. The program

forms part of a broader effort by JKEDI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME), Government of India, to promote youth entrepreneurship and strengthen the MSME ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.

The event saw enthusiastic participation of 32 trainees, who expressed keen interest in the training modules.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 09

A Full Court Reference was held today in the Courtroom of the Chief Justice at Jammu Wing of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to condole the demise of Justice V. K. Jhanji, Former Judge/Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, who passed away on 23rd February, 2026.

The Full Court Reference was convened in accordance with the long-standing conventions and institutional traditions of the High Court.

The Reference was attended by all the Judges of the High Court with the Judges from the Jammu Wing joined the Reference physically, while those present in the Srinagar Wing joined through virtual mode.

The proceedings were also attended by family members of Justice V. K. Jhanji, former Chief Jus-



tics and former Judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh; Senior Additional Advocate General; Deputy Solicitors General of India at Jammu and Srinagar; President, Jammu & Kashmir High Court Bar Association, Jammu; Senior Advocates; Principal District and Sessions Judge, Jammu; Judicial Officers and officers of the Registry. Besides, officers and officials and Advocates of the High Court from the

Srinagar Wing joined the proceedings through virtual mode.

On the occasion, the Senior Additional Advocate General and the President, Jammu & Kashmir High Court Bar Association, Jammu, in their condolence addresses, remembered the distinguished judicial career and invaluable contribution of late Justice V. K. Jhanji to the administration of justice. They prayed for eter-

nal peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss.

Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Arun Palli, in his condolence address, recalled the remarkable judicial career of Justice V. K. Jhanji and observed that his profound knowledge of law and commitment to justice has left a lasting impression on the legal fraternity. He recalled the justice jhanji's capacity to decide the complex legal issues.

The Chief Justice, on behalf of all the Judges of the High Court, placed on record collective respect and gratitude for the life and service of Justice Jhanji.

The proceedings concluded with observance of a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the departed soul and the Court work was suspended for the rest of the day.

The proceedings were conducted by M.K Sharma, Registrar General.