

DC Kathua reviews preparedness for effective disaster response; emphasises SDRF readiness

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 16

Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting to review disaster preparedness, SDRF readiness and emergency response arrangements to ensure prompt and coordinated action during emergencies.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to keep manpower, machinery and emergency resources in readiness and called for coordination among SDRF, Police, Civil Defence, Fire & Emergency Services and line departments to ensure swift response and timely restoration of essential services.

He directed all departments to establish 24x7 control rooms, nominate nodal officers and maintain updated inventories of manpower, equipment and emergency resources and called for designating a single point of contact in each department for coordination during emergencies.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed the Revenue Department and other agencies concerned to identify vulnerable locations based on the past five years' disaster experience, prepare location-specific evacuation plans, identify safe shelter locations and arrange essential supplies in advance for vulnerable areas.

To strengthen preparedness, the Deputy Commissioner asked SDRF and line departments to conduct regular mock drills with proper evaluation and stressed wider public sensitisation through awareness campaigns in disaster-prone areas.

The Deputy Commissioner directed



the departments concerned to ensure uninterrupted road connectivity, telecom services and communication networks during emergencies. The Power Development Department and Jal Shakti Department were directed to keep restoration teams ready for immediate restoration of services, the Health Department to maintain adequate stocks of medicines and keep emergency medical teams ready and the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer

Affairs Department and Animal Husbandry Department to ensure adequate stocks of essential commodities, including food grains and LPG and preparedness for protection of livestock during emergencies.

The meeting was attended by ADC Mahima Madan; Additional SP Sunil Kesar; officers from SDRF; Executive Engineers of PWD, Irrigation, Jal Shakti and PDD; EOs; DIO and other officers concerned.

DC Srinagar reviews progress of works under District Capex Budget 2026-27

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To review the progress of works taken up under the District Capex Budget 2026-27, a meeting of all executing agencies and line departments was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here today.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats, Bashir Ahmad, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, PDD, SMC, UEED, Block Development Officers and all other District & Sectoral Officers.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a department wise detailed review of the progress achieved in the submission of estimates, tenders floated and works allotted



for works approved under the District Capex Budget for 2026-27.

The DC was informed that 463 development works have been approved under the District Capex Budget 2026-27. Of these, estimates for 433 works have been submitted by the

executing agencies, while 377 works have already been tendered, reflecting significant progress in the implementation process. Emphasizing the importance of timely execution, the Deputy Commissioner directed all executing agencies to expedite the tender-

ing of the remaining approved works to ensure that projects commence without delay. He stressed that the ongoing working season should be utilized optimally to accelerate the pace of development and deliver tangible benefits to the public.

The DC further instructed all departments to ensure that the sanctioned works are executed in a time-bound, transparent and quality-oriented manner, in accordance with prescribed technical standards to achieve the intended objectives and strengthen service delivery across sectors.

Highlighting the need for coordinated efforts, the Deputy Commissioner called upon all line departments and executing agencies to maintain close inter-departmental coordination, undertake proactive planning and ensure optimum utilization of available resources for the effective implementation of developmental projects across the district.

JMC Commissioner reviews fire safety compliance, assures support to commercial establishments for Fire NOCs

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 16

As part of Jammu Municipal Corporation's efforts to strengthen fire safety and ensure compliance with statutory norms, Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr Devansh Yadav today visited Jewel Chowk, Bakshi Nagar, Subhash Nagar, Vivekananda Chowk and adjoining areas. During the visit, he interacted with the management of private hospitals, hotels, restaurants, clothing shopping malls and other commercial establishments to review the status of Fire No Objection Certificate (Fire NOC) compliance and encourage timely adherence to fire safety regulations.

The Commissioner said the exercise aims to en-



hance public safety and build a fire safety culture across the city. He assured the business community that JMC would facilitate compliance in a transparent and citizen-friendly manner. Establishments have been given 30 to 45

days to obtain the mandatory Fire NOC. Dr Devansh Yadav said no coercive action would be taken against establishments that apply for a Fire NOC and undertake the prescribed compliance measures within the timeframe.

The Commissioner said JMC would work closely with the Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Associations and other trade bodies to ensure 100 per cent compliance with fire safety norms, to protect lives and property.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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An SDRF team from Battalion Headquarters today conducted a water search and body recovery operation at Ranbir Canal, Jammu. The SDRF Control Room received information from Police Post Talab Tillo, Jammu that a ten-year-old boy, Neel Kumar, son of Raju, resident of Suraj Nagar, Jammu, had drowned in the Ranbir Canal near Rajpura. An SDRF team was immediately mobilised with water rescue equipment to carry out the search.

The team, led by DySP Lalit Kumar under the overall supervision of Commandant SDRF Jammu Mohd Aslam, recovered the boy's body after an intensive search operation. The body was handed over to the local police for further legal formalities.

The SDRF team also participated in a joint mock drill conducted by the Government Railway Police (GRP) Sub-Division



Jammu at Railway Station Jammu, Bajalta, Sangar and Manwal, to strengthen emergency preparedness and inter-agency coordination in the event of an untoward incident or terror attack. The exercise involved the SDRF, GRP,

Special Operations Group (SOG) and other stakeholder agencies.

The SDRF team took part in mock drills for two consecutive days. Since the launch of SANJY-2026, SDRF has been conducting mock drills at various rail-

way stations, railway tracks and other designated locations to strengthen coordination and operational readiness among participating agencies, as part of the role assigned to SDRF 2nd Battalion Jammu in such exercises.

CS stresses on accelerating simplification of govt processes for 'Ease of Living' in J&K

SRINAGAR, JULY 16: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting attended by the former IAS Officer, P.W.C. Davidar, to deliberate over the roadmap for simplifying government processes across departments with the objective of ensuring greater 'Ease of Living' for citizens and creating a more efficient, transparent and technology-driven governance framework in the Union Territory.

The session focused on transforming service delivery by eliminating procedural complexities, reducing unnecessary compliances and re-engineering government processes to make public services faster, simpler and more accessible for citizens, businesses and government institutions alike. P.W.C. Davidar, who is also the Advisor to the Government of Tamil Nadu on the 'SimpleGov' initiative, made a detailed presentation on the successful Tamil Nadu model of governance simplification and shared the methodology adopted by the State in streamlining administrative procedures through comprehensive process reforms and digital transformation.

During his presentation, Davidar highlighted that the simplification exercise should encompass all three categories of public services including the Government-to-Citizen (G2C), Government-to-Business (G2B) and Government-to-Government (G2G) with the primary objective of reducing compliance burdens while improving efficiency, transparency and service delivery.

He stressed the need to eliminate avoidable procedural requirements

such as physical submission of certificates and documents, obtaining multiple No Objection Certificates (NOCs), licences, permissions and other repetitive compliances that often result in delays and inconvenience to citizens and businesses.

Davidar identified several systemic challenges that require immediate attention, including mandatory physical verification of applicants, lack of clearly defined eligibility criteria, excessive documentation requirements, acceptance of payments through physical modes, repetitive verification at multiple hierarchical levels, reluctance to adopt digital verification mechanisms, inadequate integration of government databases and difficulties in retrieving legacy records from departmental repositories.

Outlining the roadmap for reforms, he emphasized the need for a comprehensive review and re-engineering of existing administrative processes by replacing procedural complexities with citizen-centric governance practices. The roadmap envisages shifting from office-centric procedures to outcome-based governance while ensuring complete end-to-end digitisation of public services.

The meeting was informed that a robust, multi-tier monitoring framework is being established to oversee implementation of the SimpleGov initiative in the Union Territory. The proposed mechanism envisages a Screening Committee to examine reform proposals at the initial stage, while an Empowered Committee headed by the Chief Secretary will provide overall policy direction, monitor progress and facilitate timely im-



plementation across departments.

With regard to the approach for simplification, it was proposed that identification of applicants should be based on a single standardized authentication mechanism, while eligibility criteria should be clearly defined with emphasis on essential requirements and measurable outcomes. It was further suggested that all approvals and government orders be issued online in a standardised format incorporating QR Codes to enable instant verification of authenticity.

The meeting also discussed the le-

gal framework necessary for institutionalising the reforms. It was emphasized that all simplified procedures should be duly backed by relevant Acts, Rules, Government Orders and notified guidelines to ensure legal sanctity, uniformity and ease of implementation.

As an alternative to conventional physical verification, the meeting advocated greater adoption of digital authentication tools such as e-KYC, Digital Signatures, Electronic Verification Codes (EVC), e-Sign, DigiLocker and other nationally recognised digital verification platforms for secure

and seamless delivery of services.

It was further proposed that the Government issue a comprehensive Omnibus Order applicable across all departments, clearly laying down the objectives, implementation framework, timelines and responsibilities for simplification of government processes in a uniform and coordinated manner.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo observed that Jammu & Kashmir possesses the necessary administrative capability, institutional framework and political commitment to successfully implement large-scale governance reforms. He noted that substantial groundwork has already been accomplished through the digitisation of nearly 1,500 government services, providing a strong foundation for the next phase of administrative transformation.

The Chief Secretary stated that constitution of a multidisciplinary core implementation team, issuance of a comprehensive omnibus order and suitable amendments to existing rules and procedures would form the cornerstone of the reform initiative.

He further remarked that the proposed multi-layered monitoring mechanism would ensure effective coordination, accountability and timely execution of the reforms across departments.

Emphasising the importance of learning from successful models, Dulloo suggested that a team of officers from Jammu & Kashmir undertake an exposure visit to Chennai to study the implementation of the Tamil Nadu SimpleGov initiative firsthand. Such an interaction, he observed,

would provide valuable insights into best practices and strengthen the Union Territory's strategy for achieving simpler, more transparent and citizen-friendly governance.

The Chief Secretary also emphasized that the SimpleGov implementation team should be multidisciplinary in nature by including professionals from the fields of Information Technology and Law to adequately address technological as well as legal aspects of governance reforms. He observed that such an integrated approach would help ensure that simplified procedures remain legally robust, technologically sound and user-friendly.

The Chief Secretary reiterated the Government's commitment to building a governance ecosystem that is efficient, transparent, technology-enabled and centred around the needs of citizens. He called upon all departments to work in close coordination and complete the identified reforms in a time-bound manner so that the benefits of simplified governance reach every citizen of the Union Territory. During the meeting, Administrative Secretaries and senior officers from the Departments of Information Technology, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Health & Medical Education, Planning, Development & Monitoring, and Housing & Urban Development presented the progress achieved so far in simplifying departmental services. They highlighted the reforms already undertaken, the challenges encountered during implementation and identified several additional services proposed to be simplified on priority.