

Sakeena visits SKIMS Soura, reviews treatment of injured Amarnath pilgrims

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 28

On the directions of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today visited the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, to enquire about the health condition of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra pilgrims who sustained injuries in a road accident in Ganiwan, Ganderbal.

During the visit, the Minister met the injured pilgrims undergoing treatment and interacted with them individually to enquire about their well-being and recovery.

She also spoke to their attendants and assured them of the Government's full support.

The Minister reviewed the treatment being provided to the injured pilgrims and held a detailed interaction with the doc-



tors and senior officers of the hospital regarding their medical condition and progress.

Emphasising that the health and well-being of the pilgrims is the Government's foremost priority, Sakeena Itoo directed the hospital administration to ensure that all the injured receive the best possible medical care, specialised treatment and every re-

quired facility for their speedy recovery.

"The Government is committed to providing the highest standard of healthcare to every injured pilgrim. There should be no compromise in treatment, and all necessary medical assistance and support must be extended to them," the Minister said.

She also instructed the hospital authorities to

closely monitor the condition of each patient and ensure round-the-clock availability of specialist doctors, medicines and other essential healthcare services.

Director SKIMS, Dr. Ashraf Ganie informed the Minister that all injured pilgrims are under constant medical supervision and are being provided

comprehensive treatment by teams of specialists.

Bhat chairs Ethics Committee meeting

SRINAGAR, JULY 28: A meeting of the Ethics Committee of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was held today at Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Secretariat, here, under the Chairmanship of its Chairman MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat,.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Committee including MLA, Gh. Mohi-ud-Din Mir; MLA, Salman Sagar; MLA, Hilal Akbar Lone; MLA, Zafar Ali Khatana; MLA, Peerzada Feroz Ahmad; MLA, Satish Kumar Sharma; MLA, Surinder Kumar; MLA, Randhir Singh and MLA Arvind Gupta.

The Chairman briefly highlighted the role and importance of the Ethics Committee. He said that the Committee has been constituted to uphold the dignity, decorum and prestige of the House by ensuring that the highest standards of parliamentary ethics, conduct and discipline are maintained by the Members.

The Chairman emphasized that the Committee bears a significant respon-



sibility in promoting accountability, transparency, integrity and ethical values in public life, thereby strengthening the public confidence in democratic institutions. He further impressed upon the Members that it is the collective responsibility of the Committee to preserve the sanctity of the Legislature by fostering exemplary standards of conduct among public representatives.

The Chairman further proposed that, with a view to create greater awareness about parliamentary ethics and democratic values, the Committee should undertake interaction programmes with the students

and faculty members of the Departments of Law and Political Science of the University of Kashmir and the University of Jammu. He observed that such interactions would provide an opportunity to obtain valuable feedback and perspectives from the academic community regarding the role, conduct and responsibilities of legislators in a democratic system.

The Chairman also suggested that the Committee should pay a visit to the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to interact with the Chief Justice and other Judges for an exchange of views on ethical standards in public life. He said that such in-

teractions would be beneficial in enriching the Committee's understanding of ethical governance and in strengthening ethical values, not only within the Legislature but also in the conduct of public representatives and public servants.

After detailed deliberations, the Committee unanimously endorsed the proposals of the Chairman. The Committee further resolved to undertake a study visit to the Kerala Legislative Assembly for interaction with its Ethics Committee, which has been widely acknowledged for its effective functioning and best practices. It was decided that the study visit to the Kerala Legislative Assembly shall be undertaken during the third week of the ensuing month, subject to the approval of the competent authority and completion of the requisite administrative formalities.

The meeting was also attended by Shabir Ahmad Wani, Under Secretary LA, Nageeb Jeelani, Incharge Committees and other officials of the Legislative Assembly.

Chief Secretary reviews the implementation of next generation business reforms

SRINAGAR, JULY 28: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting of the concerned Administrative Secretaries to review the progress achieved under the next phase of the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) programme and assess the implementation status of the identified deregulation and compliance reduction reforms across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was convened to evaluate the progress of priority reforms being coordinated by the Department of Industries & Commerce under Phase-II of the Compliance Reduction and Deregulation initiative.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary undertook a department-wise review of the identified reform measures and impressed upon all Administrative Secretaries to ensure their timely implementation in a coordinated manner.

He emphasized that reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens, simplifying procedures and improving the overall business ecosystem are essential for fostering investment, entrepreneurship and economic growth in the Union Territory.

pending reforms, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to address outstanding issues expeditiously, particularly those requiring reconsideration or acceptance on the central portal, so that all identified reforms are completed within the stipulated timelines.

The Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh took this occasion to reveal that out of the 28 identified Priority Areas (PAs) under the reform programme, nine reforms have already been accepted by the Government of India as fully implemented, while sixteen reforms are presently under implementation by the concerned departments. One reform is awaiting acceptance on the national portal by the Deregulation Cell, whereas two reforms have been returned for reconsideration.

Giving out the details the Director, I&C Jammu, Arun Manhas divulged that the reforms already accepted include liberalisation of regulations governing shops and commercial establishments, enhancement of the frequency of SEAC/SEIAA meetings along with creation of a land bank for degraded forests, elimination of min-

imum land requirements for private universities, rationalisation of infrastructure norms for non-government higher educational institutions, appointment of a single nodal agency for healthcare-related licences, monitoring and reduction of turnaround time on the Single Window System.

Additionally it was brought out that the establishment of an auto-appeal mechanism under the Right to Services framework, adoption of the amended Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 2024, and compilation of testing facilities in government institutions for facilitating MSMEs had also been accepted by the Deregulation Cell of the GoI.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the reforms proposed to be operationalised through bringing of a legislation. These include elimination of change in land use requirements for landowners, demand-driven zoning, optimisation of industrial land use, removal of dual licences for businesses, strengthening of MSME self-certification mechanisms.

In addition to that the simplification of medical practitioners' registration procedures, introduction of

an affidavit-based clearance system also comes under the proposed Right to Business framework, and the Omnibus Bill aimed at harmonising various regulatory provisions.

The meeting further reviewed the status of other important reforms relating to streamlining of building permission processes, simplification of licensing under the Weights and Measures framework, promotion of quality and affordable tourist accommodation and removal of regulatory requirements relating to private schools.

Concerned departments apprised the Chair regarding the present status and timelines for completion of these reforms.

Reiterating the Government's commitment to create a transparent, predictable and investor-friendly regulatory framework, the Chief Secretary observed that effective implementation of these reforms would significantly enhance the ease of doing business in Jammu and Kashmir, reduce compliance burdens on businesses and strengthen the our competitiveness as an attractive investment destination.

CS reviews implementation of JKCIP across J&K

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Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the implementation of the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) being implemented by the Agriculture Production Department across the districts of the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department; VC, SKUAST-Kashmir/SKUAST-Jammu; Secretary (Technical), APD; Mission Director, JKCIP; MD, Horticulture Planning & Marketing; Directors of Agriculture, Horticulture, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry; Convenor, UTLBC besides senior officers of the Agriculture Production Department.

Emphasising that agriculture continues to be one of the most critical sectors of Jammu & Kashmir's economy, the Chief Secretary said that JKCIP has been conceived as a transformational initiative aimed at enhancing farmers' incomes through climate-smart agriculture, promotion of niche crops, value addition, entrepreneurship development, market integration and sustainable livelihood generation.

He observed that the project has created a strong institutional framework for modernising the agriculture and allied sectors and stressed that every implementing agency must now shift its focus from approvals to tangible outcomes on the ground by ensuring timely establishment of beneficiary units and measurable improvement in rural livelihoods.

Regarding enhancing the participation of women and youth as envisaged under the programme, the Chief Secretary directed the Agriculture Production Department to reach out to the women registered under the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of the Rural Development Department (RDD) and utilise the database of Mission YUVA to effectively engage the as-



piring young entrepreneurs across Jammu & Kashmir. He emphasised that convergence with these flagship initiatives would significantly broaden the programme's outreach and ensure greater inclusion of eligible beneficiaries.

The Chief Secretary further directed the Deputy Commissioners to institute a roster-based mechanism for regular field inspections by designated officers to assess the quality of implementation, verify the functionality of beneficiary units established under JKCIP, and obtain first-hand feedback from applicants. He instructed that the field visits should also focus on identifying implementation bottlenecks and addressing the challenges faced by beneficiaries in a timely manner to ensure effective execution of the programme.

The Chief Secretary further observed that the implementation of the programme must concentrate on improving the pace of establishment of sanctioned units, strengthening field-level supervision and ensuring that approved beneficiaries are provided all necessary support for timely completion of their enterprises.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma, observed that farmer participation under JKCIP has witnessed remarkable growth since the last review, reflecting the increasing confidence of the farming community in the programme.

While expressing satisfaction over this incremental progress, he maintained that considerable scope still exists for further improvement. He called upon all implementing agencies to

intensify awareness campaigns, strengthen grassroots outreach, and ensure that every eligible farmer, youth and aspiring agri-entrepreneur is able to avail the benefits of the project through proactive facilitation and effective last-mile delivery.

While providing the details the MD, JKCIP, Dr. Sagar Doifode Dattatray stated that the number of registered farmers has increased to 60,283, reflecting an increase of nearly 189 per cent over the past. Similarly, he gave out that the number of applications received under various project interventions has risen to 67,579, while 43,168 applications have been approved with 7,501 beneficiary units already been established across Jammu & Kashmir.

A detailed department-wise review revealed substantial progress under Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture Planning & Marketing and SKUASTs. The Agriculture Department as the principal implementing agency has made large-scale interventions in vegetable cultivation, aromatic rice, saffron, protected cultivation, water management systems, medicinal and aromatic plants, honey production, mushroom cultivation and other niche agricultural enterprises.

Similarly, the Horticulture Department has expanded interventions relating to orchard rejuvenation, apple, walnut, kiwi, citrus, mango, guava, litchi, nursery development and water management. Significant progress has also been registered under Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry and other allied sectors through livelihood-oriented interventions

aimed at strengthening income generation among rural households.

Reviewing the progress under Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) development, the meeting was informed that almost the entire project target relating to registration and identification of FPOs has been achieved.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for 2026-27 and directed all implementing agencies to ensure timely execution of approved activities, optimum utilisation of available financial resources and strict adherence to implementation schedules. He emphasised that financial progress must be closely aligned with physical achievements to maximise development outcomes and avoid delays in project execution.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary also reviewed district-wise implementation bottlenecks, scheme-wise progress and project monitoring mechanisms. He directed all implementing agencies to strengthen field verification, maintain complete transparency in beneficiary selection, intensify awareness generation at the grassroots level and regularly review district-wise performance so that implementation gaps are identified and addressed promptly.

The meeting concluded with the Chief Secretary directing all implementing agencies to maintain the present momentum, closely monitor monthly progress against approved targets and ensure that every intervention under the project translates into visible socio-economic benefits for farmers across all districts of the Union Territory.

J&K explores global best practices to modernise horticulture sector, enhance income

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A high-level delegation from Jammu and Kashmir, led by Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, has recently concluded an official visit to Europe aimed at strengthening the Union Territory's horticulture sector through adoption of advanced technologies, modern production systems and strategic international collaborations.

The delegation was comprised of Vikas Anand, Director Horticulture, Kashmir; Nodal Officer, JKCIP/HADP; Professor Haroon Rashid Naik, former Director Research, SKUAST-Kashmir and Dr. A. Raouf Malik, Principal Investigator, HADP and Expert Member.

During the visit, the delegation toured internationally reputed commercial nurseries producing premium-quality planting material and designer plants. Detailed interactions were held with the leading experts on nursery management, modern propagation techniques, certification systems, phytosanitary protocols, quality assurance and integrated management of nursery pests

and diseases.

The visit provided valuable insights into the production of disease-free, true-to-type planting material, which forms the foundation of a productive and globally competitive horticulture sector.

The visit assumes particular significance for Jammu and Kashmir as a substantial proportion of the high-density apple planting material presently introduced in the Union Territory originates from European nurseries. A first-hand understanding of the nursery production system, quality control mechanisms, certification standards and traceability practices adopted in Europe will help the government strengthen the domestic nursery infrastructure, improve the quality of locally produced planting material and progressively reduce dependence on external sources while ensuring the availability of superior planting stock for growers.

The delegation also visited Koppert Biological Systems, where discussions focused on biological crop protection, integrated pest management (IPM), bio-inputs and other sustainable horticultural practices. The exposure is expected

to accelerate the adoption of environmentally sustainable technologies, reduce dependence on chemical pesticides and promote climate-smart horticulture across Jammu and Kashmir.

As part of the technical programme, the delegation also examined the state-of-the-art horticultural machinery designed for nursery operations, precision orchard management, planting, pruning, spraying, harvesting and post-harvest handling. The technologies evaluated have considerable potential to improve productivity, reduce production costs, enhance labour efficiency and promote greater mechanisation of the horticulture sector.

The delegation further visited internationally acclaimed research and breeding institutions engaged in apple and temperate fruit improvement. Discussions centred on developing long-term collaborations between SKUAST-Kashmir, the Department of Horticulture and European institutions in areas such as germplasm exchange, advanced breeding technologies, genomics, climate-resilient fruit production, precision horticulture, nursery development,

researcher exchange, capacity building and joint research initiatives.

Speaking on the occasion, Javid Ahmad Dar said that the study visit marks an important milestone in the government's efforts to position Jammu and Kashmir as a globally competitive horticulture hub. The Minister informed that the expert members of the delegation will prepare a comprehensive post-visit roadmap incorporating the key learnings from the exposure programme. The report will include actionable recommendations and a phased implementation strategy for adoption under HADP, JKCIP and other flagship initiatives to facilitate the introduction of globally proven technologies and best practices across the Union Territory.

The study visit is expected to pave the way for the introduction of internationally benchmarked nursery production systems, robust phytosanitary standards, biological crop protection technologies, precision mechanisation and collaborative research initiatives, providing a strategic foundation for the next phase of sustainable, technology-driven horticulture development in Jammu and Kashmir.