



Back to Village

Governance at the Doorstep

June 20-27, 2019



Government of Jammu & Kashmir



RAJ BHAVAN
SRINAGAR-190001

GOVERNOR
JAMMU & KASHMIR

No:GS/GAO(Adm)69/2019-IV
Dated: June 13, 2019

Dear Deputy Commissioner,

The true spirit of democracy lies in the active involvement of people in decision making processes to fulfill their area specific needs. During the last one year, the Government has taken umpteen steps in this direction. After the successful conduct of elections to Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies, we have gone a step further by devolving funds, functions and functionaries to Panchayats, mandating implementation of important schemes through them and empowering them in every possible way.

2. Continuing with our endeavours in this direction, the government is initiating an ambitious Back to the Village programme whereby every gazetted officer of the state will be allocated one of the 4483 Panchayats of the state where he/she would visit and spend two days-including a night halt- and interact closely with the people. This would be the first initiative of its kind in our state.

3. We are hopeful that this interaction between officers and people will not only strengthen the bonds between the Government and the citizens but also make participatory planning a reality. The wealth of first hand information which an officer will be able to collect from these interactions will help us appreciate local problems better and come up with appropriate interventions.

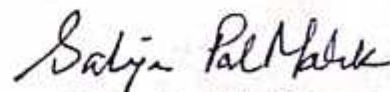
4. The smooth conduct of this ambitious programme, hinges on the Deputy Commissioner who is the most vital link. Therefore, the success of the programme will squarely bank upon your commitment and coordination with various stake holders.

5. I am therefore, writing to draw your attention to ensure the success of this programme. I urge you to dedicate your time and resources and carry out all such activities as may be necessary to realize the objectives that we have envisaged while conceiving this programme.

6. I am sure that working together, through this programme, we will be able to bring about a discernible and positive change in the rural landscape of the state and leave an indelible impression on the lives of the people residing in our villages.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Satya Pal Malik)

Mission Statement

In a first of its kind, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has embarked on an ambitious and extensive programme of reaching out to the people at the grassroots level to create in the rural masses an earnest desire for decent standard of living.

The 'Back to Village' programme is aimed to involve the people of the state and government officials in a joint effort to deliver the mission of equitable development. The programme is aimed at energizing Panchayats and directing development efforts in rural areas through community participation.

As part of this programme, civil servants will have to reach out to each Panchayat of the State, where they will stay for a specific period to interact and obtain feedback from the grassroots so as to tailor government efforts in improving delivery of village-specific services.

The 'Back to Village' programme has been conceived with the objective of ensuring that developmental initiatives are built on the feedback and cooperation of the people, thus being more result oriented with greater probability of success than those which are top down.

The programme revolves around the concept that while the official machinery has to guide and assist, the primary responsibility to improve local conditions rests with the people themselves. Therefore, they must be encouraged to own a programme so that benefits are maximized.

The life of a person living in a rural area is not cut into segments in the way the Government activities are prone to be. The approach at the village level, therefore, has to be a coordinated, touching all aspects of village life. Such an approach has to be made, not through a multiplicity of departmental officials, but through Panchayats.

The essence of the 'Back to Village' programme is to emphasize the importance of ensuring, right from the beginning, people's participation, not merely as an agent in the execution of the development works but as owners of the entire programme.

We hope this initiative will go a long way in achieving long term objective of grassroots democracy.

B V R Subrahmanyam, IAS
Chief Secretary

General Instructions for the Visiting Officer

- i. A suggested Activity Schedule has been prepared for the visiting officer. It shall be incumbent on the officer to ensure that all activities and elements mentioned in the schedule are carried out/ covered fully.
- ii. The officer shall participate in the Gram Sabha, discuss the concept of Gram Panchayat Development Plan and also ask the Gram Panchayat to constitute Social Audit Committee in case the same has not been constituted earlier.
- iii. He/She shall also hold interactions with prominent citizens, frontline government functionaries, NGOs/ social organization, respectable citizens of the area and the general public.
- iv. He/She shall also visit schools, health institutions besides important village assets/ amenities related to various sectors.
- v. The visiting officer shall visit major languishing projects, inaugurate playgrounds (if any), participate in exhibition melas, distribution of certificates, etc.
- vi. The officer shall during all his interactions emphasize on education, nutrition and health of children, empowerment of women, general cleanliness, solid waste management, organic farming, vermi-composting, rain water harvesting and water conservation.
- vii. The visiting officer shall assess the ground situation of allotted Panchayat vis-à-vis perception of local public, data provided by different Departments, inputs shared by the PRI/ prominent citizens and his own observations.
- viii. Any conclusions drawn shall include a holistic view point of the general public. Efforts shall be made to bring out general highlights of the area based on consensus.
- ix. The visiting officer shall restrain himself/ herself from giving or offering any commitment on behalf of the government.
- x. The visiting officer shall adopt an unbiased attitude in reporting issues.
- xi. The report of the visiting officer shall be submitted both physically and electronically in the pre-circulated format. The officer shall exercise all care and objectivity while filling up the relevant form.

Suggested Activity Schedule for the Visiting Officer

Day-01:

- Arrival in the Gram Panchayat (by 10:00 a.m.)
- Capture picture at 10:00 a.m.
- Interaction with:
 - PRI members (for an hour atleast).
 - Frontline government functionaries (Doctor/ Teacher/ Patwari/ Anganwadi Workers/ ASHAs/ ANMs/ ... PDS storekeeper/ representatives of PHE, PDD, PWD, Agriculture, Animal Sheep, Horticulture, etc.)
 - Social activists/ NGOs.
 - Prominent citizens/ retired teachers/ govt. employees/ ex-servicemen, etc.
- Visit to local schools, health institutions, AWCs, government assets, banks, water bodies, tubewell, electric station, important private enterprises.
- Visit to important ongoing and languishing projects/ works.
- Inauguration of playfield/ any other building/ work.
- Visit other villages in the Panchayat.
- Evening informal interaction with PRI representatives, frontline government functionaries and prominent citizens to discuss and deliberate upon the core problems/ issues being faced by the locals of the Gram Panchayat
- Capture evening interaction picture by 8:00 p.m.

Day-02:

- Capture picture at 7:00 a.m.
- Participation in the Gram Sabha meeting.
- Participation in Women Gram Sabha meeting.
- Constitution of Social Audit Committee by the Gram Panchayat, if not constituted already.
- Reading out the letter by Hon'ble PM to all Sarpanchs and discussion on water conservation issues.
- Visit to and participation in Exhibition/ Mela.
- Distribution of certificates/ benefits/ opening of accounts, insurance policies, filling of application forms for various schemes.
- Enrolment of beneficiaries under PM-KISAN and PM Shram Yogi Mandhan schemes.
- Shramdan/ cleanliness drive within the Gram Panchayat.
- Visit other villages in the Panchayat.
- Capture picture at 6:00 p.m.
- Departure.