

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
JAMMU & KASHMIR



RAJ BHAVAN  
JAMMU-180001

## Message

In June 2019, Jammu & Kashmir embarked on a unique initiative "Back to Village". The project was both daunting and ambitious - a public outreach of this size and scale had never been attempted before, certainly not in a state like Jammu & Kashmir with its unique problems of geography, climate and law and order.

Undaunted by the skeptics and the naysayers we decided to go ahead with the programme. The response of the programme exceeded our own expectations. Everywhere the visiting officers were welcomed, feted and honoured. The affection and respect with which officers were received across geographies was, for us, a testimony to the innate goodness and hospitality of the common people. The officers spent two days and a night with the people- living with them, eating the same food and learning first hand the challenges and difficulties of their existence. For many it was a unique learning experience -the *sweet lore of nature* brought home to them the *beauteous forms of things* ; for others was a humbling experience as it laid bare to them the dignity which the rural population lives, notwithstanding the myriad challenges of their existence. Such was the enthusiasm generated by the programme that a resident of Shopian District wrote to the Hon'ble Prime Minister about this programme following which the Prime Minister made a mention of it in his *Mann ki Baat* Programme calling it a 'festival of development, public participation and public awareness'.

Encouraged by the success of the first edition of the programme, we have now decided to embark on its second phase. While the first phase of the programme was focussed on collecting feedback and assessing needs, the second phase intends to look more closely at the task of empowering, energising and institutionalizing the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions, invariably they will associate Panches/Sarpanches. The other objective of this edition of the programme will be to look at the various flagship programmes and individual beneficiary oriented schemes and learn more about the impediments, grievances which hampers their full implementation and their disposal also be ascertained. The visiting officers would also study agriculture and allied activities in the Panchayats, particularly with the objective of our national goal of doubling farmers' income by 2022.

I am confident that our entire team will once again rise to the occasion and replicate the success of the first edition of the programme. I am also confident that the Deputy Commissioners and Administrative Secretaries will create the necessary conditions for the visiting officers to discharge their role effectively. I am equally sure that this programme will evolve into an institutionalized, doorstep governance programme which will not only be a genuine, unadulterated ear to the ground but will also cut the infamous red tape and help in delivering development better and faster.

(G. C. Murmu)