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Functioning of Libraries & Research Deptt reviewed

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Jammu, Feb 6: Principal Secretary, Culture, Suresh Kumar Gupta, today chaired a meeting here at Civil Secretariat to assess the functioning of Libraries and Research Department.

Director, Libraries and Research, Mohammad Rafi, Director Finance, Culture, S Satnam Singh, Special Secretary, Culture, Trishala Kumari, Deputy Director Planning, Dr Mohammad Maqbool, Deputy Director L&R Jammu, Parveen Kumari, Deputy Director L&R Kashmir, Sheikh Zahoor-ul-Haq and other concerned attended the meeting both in person and online mode.

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During the meeting, the Director L&R gave a presentation highlighting department's structure, achievements, human resources including staff position and existing vacancies.

He emphasised the historical significance of libraries such as Shri Ranbir Singh Library, Jammu and Shri Pratap Singh Library, Srinagar, which stand as some of the oldest public libraries in the country.

Regarding library infrastructure, it was informed that out of the total 131 libraries under the department's purview, there are 27 existing buildings, 85 rented facilities, 19 rent-free premises and seven upcoming departmental infrastructures.

In terms of intellectual resources, the department boasts an impressive repository comprising 14 lakh books and 5580 manuscripts spread across various libraries.

The meeting also delved into visitor statistics, with over 5.86 lakh individuals patronising the libraries across Jammu and Kashmir over the past two years. During this period, a total of 84,305 books were issued to the visitors. Furthermore, in January 2024 alone, 35,562 individuals visited different libraries, borrowing 3,515 books, the meeting was informed.

The meeting had detailed discussion on recent initiatives including implementation of **E-Granthalaya 4.0 cloud software in 26 libraries**, identification and establishment of libraries in various locations and ongoing process of upgrading the department's website to enhance user-friendliness, among other measures.

The meeting also addressed future strategies, pertinent issues and funding allocations under the capital expenditure budget.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Secretary remarked that the Libraries & Research Department plays a pivotal role in fostering knowledge dissemination and scholarly pursuits in our region. He said that the department is committed towards enhancing its capabilities and reach to serve the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir in an enhanced manner.

He emphasised that the libraries stand as beacon of enlightenment, preserving our cultural heritage and facilitating lifelong learning. It is imperative that we continue to invest in their development and modernization, he added.