

Forest management system to be digitized in JK

MoU Signed With Madhya Pradesh: Mian Altaf

MANZOOR-UL-HASSAN

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Srinagar, Sep 22: Minister for Environment and Forests, Mian Altaf Ahmad, Thursday said the State Forest Department has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Madhya Pradesh Government for digitization of forest management system in Jammu and Kashmir.

“The Madhya Pradesh Forest Department is successfully using the latest technologies in forestry. It will assist us to use technologies like web server, Global Positioning System (GPS), management information system (MIS), geographic information system (GIS) and Domain Control System under this MoU,” he said addressing a day-long workshop on ‘Concurrent Monitoring of CAMPA and Digitization of Forest Boundaries’ at Banquet Hall here.

“We can create our own database surveys through the use of technology,” he said.

The minister said the implementation of this technology in J&K would become reality in next six months.

“This will enable us to demarcate our forest land easily. We can assess the growing stock, density of crop, types and availability of non-timber forest produce and medicinal plants in the compartments. It can also provide us the details of boundary pillars and other details like configuration and topography of the area,” he said. Expressing his concern over the growing loss of forest cover due to forests fires, he said the technology would also help protecting forests. “We will be able to get quick information regarding forests fires and offences committed against forest and wildlife”, he said. Stressing the need of information and technology-based management system, the minister said the old system of information and communication had to be replaced by latest one to ensure realistic planning, better forest management, protection, development administration and human resource development.

The Minister directed Commissioner/Secretary, Forests to set up a cell in PCCF office for identification of critical compartments in the first phase craving for urgent attention, where ICT could be made use of to check forest fires, encroachments and smuggling of timber. He said remote sensing department is already doing good job in this pursuit.

The minister thanked the Principle Chief Conservator of Forests (IT) in Madhya Pradesh, Anil Oberoi, for attending the workshop.

Addressing the participants of the workshop, the Chief Secretary Madhav Lal stated the use of computers, telephones and internet facilities were important. "It'll bring professional competence in the department", he believed.

Besides others, the workshop was attended by the departmental officers, Chief Conservator of Forest (C), Suresh Chugh, IFS, CF (Chenab) Roshan Jaggi, IFS, CF (West) Asif Mehmood, Manzoor Ahmed Tak, and Zameer A Thakur, who gave presentations on various dimensions of Information Technology (IT).

Nazir Benazir President, National Society for Protection of Water Resources, Wetlands and Forests, Srinagar and Dr. Gurmit Singh, President SAWERA, Jammu (NGOs) also spoke on the occasion. IFS, CCF (CAMPA) Lalit Kumar Sharma gave resume of the workshop proceedings in the valedictory session, whereas vote of thanks was given by Asif Mehmood.