

DK dist admin inks MoU with NITK to form civic think tank

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Mangaluru: In a move that signals a new era of participative governance and institutionally anchored innovation, the Dakshina Kannada (DK) district administration formally entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK) Surathkal, on Tuesday.

This collaboration aims to integrate the intellectual and technical capacities of academic institutions into the district's development strategy, setting the foundation for a long-term, structured partnership between governance and knowledge ecosystems. The MoU marks the first formal step towards establishing a consortium of local institutions as a civic think tank, supporting the district administration through research, design, and youth-led interventions, said deputy commissioner Mullai Muhilan.

The MoU aligns with the broader vision of the district administration to ideate and pilot innovative initiatives to effectively involve talented citizens in developing solutions with a positive societal impact. It stands as a symbolic representation of the administration's continued efforts to partner with universities, an approach already initiated through its flagship



Ravi Posavanike

COLLABORATION: Prof B Ravi, director of NITK Surathkal (right), and Mullai Muhilan MP, DC, Dakshina Kannada, after inking an MoU in Mangaluru on Tuesday

programme Solve4DK, which engaged students from five regional institutions. These students developed practical solutions addressing waste management, traffic systems and other civic challenges by working closely with the Mangaluru City Corporation (MCC) and the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) developed by the Mangaluru Smart City Limited (MSCL), he said.

"A dedicated platform will soon be launched to invite all regional institutions to contribute innovative solutions and products for challenges sourced from various departments. These initiatives will be supported and mentored, with a focus on nurturing them into pilot-ready implementations, and eventually, socially driven startups. Institutions benefit through impactful, applied research, while students gain the op-

portunity to work on real-world challenges, helping them acquire key competencies for a meaningful career," the DC said.

The partnership will operate a biannual engagement model, aligning academic calendars with the district's development priorities, said Prof B Ravi, director, NITK. "This collaboration leverages research and innovation to benefit Mangaluru. We look forward to working with MCC to create impactful solutions," he said.

He said that students will come out with solutions to various problems in solid waste management, traffic management, infrastructure, healthcare, and other civic issues by engaging themselves through the platform.

DK ZP CEO Anandh K, MCC commissioner Ravichandra Naik and MSCL MD Raju K were present.