

Jal Arpan Diwas Observed at Bhimbat; Need for Community Ownership and Sustainable Water Management Emphasized.



Drass, September 12: Jal Arpan Diwas was observed today at the Panchayat Ghar/Community Facilitation Centre (FC) of Bhimbat Panchayat. Deputy Commissioner Drass, Imteeaz Kacho was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The event was also attended by LAHDC Councillor, Bhimbat, Abdul Wahid; Executive Engineer, PHE Division, Drass, Mohammad Abdullah; Block Development Officer, Drass, Shahid Sultan Dar; Assistant Executive

Engineer, PHE Division, Drass, Zakir Hussain, other officials of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department and Public Health Engineering, Namberdar Bhimbat Mohammad Ibrahim, VWSC members, laboratory staff, IEC experts, departmental officials and local residents.

During the Jal Arpan Diwas, water supply assets of Bhimbat village were handed over to the community aimed at strengthening local ownership, ensuring proper operation and maintenance of water infrastructure and promoting the long-term sustainability of drinking water facilities created under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

During the programme, Executive Engineer, PHE Division, Mohammad Abdullah highlighted the significance of Jal Arpan Diwas and explained the responsibilities associated with maintaining water supply infrastructure. He said that local communities would be provided necessary training to ensure proper upkeep and sustainable management of the assets.

A significant highlight of the programme was the signing of an MoU between the PHE Department and members of the Village Water & Sanitation Committee (VWSC), Bhimbat, in presence of the Deputy Commissioner. The initiative aims to strengthen cooperation between the Department and the community for effective management and maintenance of drinking water infrastructure.

Councillor Abdul Wahid appreciated the initiative and said that the Jal Jeevan Mission has considerably benefited the people of Bhimbat. He congratulated the residents on the occasion and stressed that active community participation would play a vital role in making the initiative successful and sustainable.

Block Development Officer Shahid Sultan Dar expressed gratitude to the Government of India for implementing the Jal Jeevan Mission and said that drinking water facilities have reached households across the area. He emphasized that Gram Sabhas should be effectively utilised to assess the benefits reaching residents, identify minor issues and incorporate necessary works into local development plans. He further stressed that maintaining the assets is now an important collective responsibility.

Namberdar Bhimbat congratulated the residents on the occasion and thanked the Deputy Commissioner and concerned Departments for their efforts in improving

drinking water facilities. He also raised the issue of water storage during the harsh winter months, particularly after November, and highlighted the need for adequate storage facilities to ensure uninterrupted supply.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner thanked the residents of Bhimbat for their cooperation and urged them to protect water resources and use drinking water judiciously. He appreciated the proactive role played by the Departments of PHE and Rural Development & Panchayati Raj.

The Deputy Commissioner observed that Drass has sufficient natural water sources but efficient distribution and proper management remain essential, particularly considering the region's severe winters and changing weather conditions. He directed the concerned Departments to continue efforts towards providing reliable water facilities to households, with special attention to winter preparedness as well as towards effective management of the assets.

He further emphasized that the infrastructure created for public benefit must be properly maintained through cooperation between Departments and local communities while also urging residents to prevent wastage of water and ensure that available resources are used responsibly.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner also appealed to parents and community members to remain vigilant against drug abuse and pay close attention to the well-being and activities of their children. He reiterated the importance of maintaining cleanliness and discouraged the use of banned plastic items and indiscriminate dumping of waste, urging residents to dispose of garbage only at designated locations. Further, he called upon the people to work collectively towards making Drass a model of cleanliness, responsible resource management and community participation.

As part of the programme, the laboratory team also conducted activities related to water quality testing and awareness, highlighting the importance of ensuring safe and clean drinking water for the community.

The programme concluded with a message of collective responsibility towards the protection, maintenance and sustainable management of drinking water infrastructure created under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

