

ACS Shaleen Pushes for Data-Driven Groundwater Management in J&K

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 16

Underscoring the importance of scientific assessment and coordinated action for safeguarding Jammu & Kashmir's groundwater resources, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra, today chaired a Union Territory-level Coordination Committee (UTLCC) meeting to review the assessment of groundwater resources across J&K under the Groundwater Resource Assessment (GWRA-2026).

The meeting focused on strengthening inter-departmental coordination, streamlining data sharing and leveraging scientific expertise to ensure reliable assessment, informed planning and sustainable management of this vital natural resource.

Emphasising the need to translate scientific knowledge into actionable interventions, the Additional Chief Secretary, JSD, Shaleen Kabra directed CGWB to share its technical reports, scientific publications and relevant resource documents with the concerned UT departments.

This, he termed, will facilitate informed planning and decision-making, strengthen groundwater conservation measures and enable departments to formulate interventions based on reliable scientific evidence.

The ACS while highlight-



ing the significance of the exercise also called for close collaboration among all stakeholder departments and agencies to ensure the long-term sustainability of groundwater resources and strengthen water security across Jammu & Kashmir.

He underscored the need for a well coordinated, data-driven and science-based approach to groundwater management, with due emphasis on conservation, efficient utilisation and the long-term protection of available resources.

Earlier, Dr. M. Sivakumar, Regional Director, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) outlined the agenda, highlighting the importance of scientific groundwater assessment, coordinated data sharing and institutional collaboration for effective groundwater resource management.

On this occasion Dr. Owais Ahmad, Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, emphasised the need for harmonisation of data between CGWB and the concerned UT departments

to ensure consistency, reliability and accuracy in the assessment process.

During the meeting, Pir Rayees Ahmad, Senior Scientist, CGWB, made a detailed presentation on the Board's ongoing activities in Jammu & Kashmir, covering groundwater resource assessment, aquifer mapping, groundwater management studies and other related technical interventions.

The presentation highlighted CGWB's role in providing scientific inputs, technical guidance and expert recommendations to support the UT Government in assessing groundwater resources, characterising aquifers and formulating sustainable groundwater management strategies for the times to come. Various issues concerning groundwater management were discussed during the meeting, with CGWB officers offering technical recommendations and suitable management measures for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of groundwater.

Detailed deliberations were held on the methodol-

ogy and analytical framework for GWRA-2026, inter-departmental data sharing and the implementation of the National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme (NAQUIM).

The committee reviewed the proposed assessment of dynamic groundwater resources across 149 assessment units in Jammu & Kashmir, emphasising the need for timely, accurate and reliable data on groundwater recharge, extraction and associated water conservation structures.

The members stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all concerned departments, backed by CGWB's scientific expertise, to ensure a robust and credible assessment of groundwater availability and utilisation across the Union Territory.

The exercise is expected to provide an important scientific basis for identifying groundwater management priorities and supporting evidence-based interventions for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of this precious resource.

Prabhat Pheri taken out with religious Jaikaras

KATRA 17 OCTOBER:

A grand and spiritually vibrant Prabhat Pheri was taken out today as part of the ongoing Navratra celebrations in Katra featuring beautifully decorated jhankis of Maa Kaalratri and different manifestations of Maa Kaali. The Prabhat Pheri, organised by the J&K Association of Prabhat Pheri in association with the J&K Tourism Department, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra and the District Administration Reasi, witnessed enthusiastic participation from local residents, pilgrims, school-children, and devotees from different parts of the country who came together to celebrate the divine glory of Maa Vaishno Devi.

Earlier, the Prabhat Pheri was flagged off by the chief guest Sh. Navdeep Arora AEE, JPDCL and guests of honour Sh. Ravi AE, JPDCL Katra and Sh. Durga Parkash manager CBC in the presence of Sh. Gopal Dutt, medical superintendent and Sh. Shiv Sharma, president senior citizen welfare forum Katra and MS Manhas retired headmaster. The dignitaries formally inaugurated the procession by cutting the red ribbon and breaking a green coconut amid devotional fervour and the chanting of religious slogans.

The procession commenced from Bus Stand Katra proceeded along Banganga Road towards Darshani Deodi and subsequently returned through the main bazaar before culminating at Bus Stand Katra. En route devotees from Delhi, Gurugram, Banaras, and Patna joined the procession adding to its growing popularity as a significant spiritual attraction during the Navratra celebrations. Groups from the Central Bureau of Communication representing Jammu and Kashmir along with NCC cadets also participated in the procession lending it an added sense of discipline, enthusiasm and patriotic spirit.

The entire route reverberated with devotional bhajans and the resounding Jai Karas of Maa Vaishno Devi as local residents and visiting pilgrims danced joyfully to the rhythm of devotional music. Artists Sh. Baldev and his party along with Sh. Ritu Mehra of Chinar Art



Foundation and Vijay kumar party enthralled the gathering with their devotional performances. School students participated enthusiastically singing bhajans, dancing to the devotional tunes and raising Jai Karas of Maa Vaishno Devi throughout the procession creating an atmosphere of collective devotion and spiritual harmony.

A special gesture of hospitality was witnessed at Yog Ashram where CRPF personnel received the procession and served prashad to the participants under the supervision of Sh. Pardeep Goswami, Commandant 6th Battalion CRPF.

Speaking on the occasion Sh. Raj Kumar Padha President J&K Association of Prabhat Pheri said that the Prabhat Pheris had emerged as one of the prominent spiritual attractions of the Navratra cele-

brations in Katra bringing together people from different regions and backgrounds in devotion to Maa Vaishno Devi.

He informed that two more grand Prabhat Pheris would be organised over the next two days and appealed to the residents of Katra as well as visiting pilgrims to participate in large numbers and seek the blessings of Maa Vaishno Devi.

Those present on the occasion included Ajay Sharma, Ramnik Sharma, Manoj Sadhotra, Neelam Singh, Ashwini Katoch, Atul Sharma, Tilak Raj, Sanjay Kesar, Madan Lal, Shamsher Singh, Sohan Thakur, Vishal Pandit, Rakesh Sharma, Rattan Chand, Babu Ram, Rajesh Gupta, Subash Chand, Vimal Kumar, Babu Ram Dubey, Sh. Renueji Dhar, P. N. Kaul, Suman Manhas, Sanjay Tickoo, and P. C. Rana, among others.

Billawaria flagged off Maa Vankhandi Chhari Yatra

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Upholding the rich spiritual heritage and age-old religious traditions of the Dogra region, the Maa Vankhandi Chhari Yatra was organised with great devotion and religious fervour by the Maa Vankhandi Chhari Yatra Committee in collaboration with the Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust (Regd.). Continuing its sacred tradition for the past 12 years, the yatra commenced from Gangyal, Jammu, and culminated at the revered shrine of Maa Vankhandi (Mata Sita) at ShantiVan, Mahanpur, Baisohli.

The religious procession was led by BJP Jammu & Kashmir General Secretary and former Deputy Mayor of Jammu Baldev Singh Billawaria.

A large number of devotees participated in the yatra, transforming the entire route into a vibrant expression of faith, devotion and spiritual fervour, with chants of "Jai Mata Di" resonating throughout.

Upon reaching Mahan-



pur, the yatra received a warm and traditional welcome from former Sarpanch Sohan Singh, social worker Sarita Devi, local social activists and residents.

At the sacred Maa Vankhandi Temple in ShantiVan, Mahant Bhagwan Das Ji welcomed the members of the yatra committee and the organisers and honoured them by presenting traditional chunris. Appreciating the uninterrupted continuation of this religious tradition for 12

years, Mahant Bhagwan Das Ji observed that the growing participation of devotees reflected their deep-rooted and unwavering faith in Maa Vankhandi. He also enlightened the devotees about the temple's religious significance and historical background.

Addressing the devotees, Baldev Singh Billawaria said that the Maa Vankhandi Chhari Yatra is far more than a religious procession; it is a powerful symbol of collective faith,

cultural identity and the enduring spiritual heritage of the Dogra community. He emphasised that the continuous organisation of the yatra for over a decade demonstrated the unwavering devotion of the devotees, the dedication of the organisers and society's determination to preserve its rich religious traditions. Such initiatives, he said, play a vital role in strengthening cultural bonds and passing the legacy of Sanatan Dharma to future generations.

DC Ganderbal inspects District Hospital

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Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal, today visited District Hospital Ganderbal to inspect the available healthcare facilities, assess patient care arrangements and review the functioning of various hospital services.

During the visit, the DC inspected patient care wards, available medical equipment and hospital infrastructure. She also took stock of the availability of medical supplies, roster of doctors and other staff, and the response of patients regarding the healthcare services being provided at the hospital.

Emphasising the importance of efficient healthcare delivery, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned authorities to ensure proper duty rosters, regular attendance of doctors and medical staff, and timely attention to patients. She stressed that patients must be attended to promptly, with priority accorded to those requiring urgent medical attention.

The DC further directed the hospital administration to ensure ad-



equate availability of essential medicines and medical supplies, maintain proper records and strengthen monitoring of staff attendance and hospital operations.

She stressed that all available equipment and infrastructure must be utilised effectively to provide quality healthcare services to the public.

The Deputy Commissioner underscored the need for a patient centric approach in the functioning

of the hospital, directing the concerned officers to address deficiencies, wherever identified, and ensure that patients receive timely and appropriate medical care.

The DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Chief Planning Officer Ganderbal, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Ganderbal, Executive Engineer R&B, Tehsildar Ganderbal and other concerned officers and officials.

Global CEO Conclave concludes at IIM Jammu with Strategic Deliberations on AI

JAMMU. OCT 17: The second day of the Global CEO Conclave 2026, organized by the Indian Institute of Management Jammu in collaboration with the Consortium of Accredited Healthcare Organizations (CAHO), brought together eminent healthcare leaders, industry experts, academicians, and policymakers for discussions on artificial intelligence, strategic leadership, healthcare innovation, human capital management, and organizational transformation. The day concluded with a valedictory ceremony reaffirming the importance of collaborative leadership and innovation in building a resilient, efficient, and future-ready healthcare ecosystem. The valedictory session brought together distinguished leaders from academia, healthcare, and industry, reaffirming the importance of visionary leadership, artificial intelligence, quality-driven governance, and patient-centric innovation in transform-

ing healthcare management. The valedictory ceremony was graced by Dr. Girdhar Gyani, Director General, AHPI, and Patron, CAHO. Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, presided over the valedictory ceremony. Dr. Lallu Joseph, President, CAHO; Associate General Secretary and Quality Manager, CMC Vellore; Prof. (Dr.) Shakti Gupta, Honorary Distinguished Professor, IIM Jammu and Lt Gen (Dr) Sunil Kant (Retd.), SM, VSM, Chairperson, MBA Healthcare, IIM Jammu, graced the valedictory ceremony.

A significant institutional milestone was marked by the signing of a five-year MoU between IIM Jammu and the Erba Global Institute of Medical Technology (EGIMT), supported by the Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) ecosystem, on October 17, 2026. The MoU was exchanged by Dr. Jitendra Kumar Sharma, Trustee, EGIMT, and Managing Director & CEO, AMTZ, and Prof.



B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, in the presence of Prof. (Dr.) Shakti Gupta, Honorary Distinguished Professor, IIM Jammu, and Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Sunil Kant (Retd.), SM, VSM, Chairperson, MBA Healthcare, IIM Jammu, among other officials. The partnership will advance healthcare management edu-

cation, joint research, executive training, faculty and student exchanges, MedTech startup incubation and technology commercialization, and bridging management expertise with medical technology innovation to develop industry-ready talent and strengthen India's healthcare ecosystem. Ad Guru Mr.

Prahlad Kakkar, Founder, Genesis Film Productions, shared insights on the power of authentic storytelling, creativity, and human connection in building enduring brands at the Global CEO Conclave 2026, organized by IIM Jammu in collaboration with CAHO. Showcasing iconic advertising campaigns,

including Cadbury, he emphasized originality, emotional resonance, and trust while cautioning against overdependence on AI and digital tools. Moderated by Dr. Baljeet Singh, Associate Professor, Marketing, IIM Jammu, the session featured an engaging exchange in which Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, responded to a question posed by Mr. Kakkar, sharing his expert insights on branding, leadership, and creativity. The first five plenary sessions of the Global CEO Conclave 2026, organized by IIM Jammu in collaboration with CAHO, brought together industry leaders, healthcare experts, and academicians to explore key priorities in healthcare management. Discussions covered aviation-inspired supply chain excellence, responsible AI adoption, purpose-driven leadership, MedTech innovation, operational transformation, data privacy, automation, talent development, and

constructive conflict resolution. The sessions highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration, technology-enabled solutions, empathetic leadership and people-centric practices in building a more efficient, resilient, innovative, and patient-focused healthcare ecosystem. The conclave's second day concluded with an emphasis on translating strategic insights into practical action. Through its plenary sessions, institutional partnerships, and leadership discussions, the Global CEO Conclave 2026 reinforced the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, responsible technology adoption, effective management, and continuous innovation in healthcare. The conclave reflects the shared commitment of IIM Jammu and CAHO to strengthening healthcare leadership and fostering an ecosystem that promotes quality, operational excellence, sustainability, and patient-centric care.