

## JSA Minister awards innovators of Divyangjan-accessible toilets



The Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 awarded the finalists of the San-Sadhan Hackathon who came out with thought-provoking ideas to make toilets accessible for Divyangjans or persons with disabilities.

The award ceremony held at Dr Ambedkar International Center was the culmination of a two-day competition held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2019, organised by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) in association with Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog.

The event which is the latest initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), aiming to set up accessible toilets for Divyangjan is an indication that the Government of India is working towards a Divyangjan-friendly nation.

The participants competed in four categories which included Rural Individual Use Toilet, Rural Community Use Toilet, Urban Individual Use Toilet and Urban Community Use Toilet. The winners were given cash awards and piloting opportunities in the field across the country under SBM.

Three innovators emerged as winners and one as a runner up out of 21 applications which were shortlisted from a total of over 130 teams who had applied for the hackathon.

### Winners:

- Rural individual use toilet – Divyang Innovation
- Urban individual use toilet – Arcatron Mobility  
Runner-up – Dr. Sandeep Sankat and team
- Urban community use toilet: Majins

Speaking at the award ceremony, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said that the ministry is working day in and out towards providing better toilet facilities to divyangjans.



“An important aspect of complete Swachhata is inclusion. Our department envisages equitable and inclusive access to sanitation facilities for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), as an integral aspect of their empowerment to lead a life with dignity,” he said.

Expressing his views, Mission Director - Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog, Mr. Ramanan Ramanathan said that leveraging emerging technology for the benefit of the society is the way forward. He said that India, through its young innovators can create an unparalleled ecosystem of solutions to world problems.

Secretary to Government, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Ms. Shakuntala D. Gamlin said “Rural toilets must be accessible for Divyangjan. A prototype of such a model that would be affordable, accessible and scalable is the need of the hour.”

Similarly, Secretary to Government, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation Shri Parameswaran Iyer said "We have seen some excellent innovations today, and these may be very effective in making our sanitation facilities even more Divyang friendly. I congratulate all the teams for addressing this very important challenge and I am confident that many of these innovations will go to scale."

In his vote of thanks, Shri Arun Baroka, Additional Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation congratulated all participants and winners.



Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and 91springboard, Udyog Vihar- an AIM supported incubator were the organizing partners for the hackathon.

Pranay Gupta, Co-founder, 91springboard said, “We received an overwhelming response from the Sansadhaan hackathon. This gives us immense hope for an inclusive society that will enable an ecosystem that does not allow for any sort of discrimination.”

