

Jharkhand develops festival-specific IEC on COVID behaviour



In view of the current pandemic situation, to help the village communities to effectively safeguard themselves during the Dussehra and Durga Pooja festivals that are normally held in pandals, the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) units of Chatra and Pakur districts in Jharkhand developed various IEC (Information Education Communication) materials.

From the outset, frontline workers such as the Swachhagrahis and Jal Sahiyas along with District and Block teams have been working to curb the spread of the coronavirus. But these new measures were taken to remind the communities of ways to protect themselves and allay their fears while participating in the festive activities.



These IEC activities were carried out in addition to the ongoing ODF (Open Defecation Free) sustainability and waste management programmes.

Among the districts that fared well in Covid-19 prevention activities were Pakur and Chatra. Mr. Rajeev Kumar, Chatra District Coordinator-IEC (Drinking Water and Sanitation Committee); and Mr. Imran Alam, Pakur District Coordinator-IEC, (Drinking Water and Sanitation Committee) had to think

out of the box and come out with creative solutions to address the issue.

They called for meetings of their block level teams and made innovative plans for massive awareness campaigns on Covid-19 prevention/awareness during the festive period.

Given the large numbers that assemble at pooja pandals during the Dussehra-Durga pooja in the rural areas, they designed flex boards with key IEC messages on COVID prevention and put them up at the entrance to the pandals and at various other points. These messages constantly reminded people of the safety protocols to observe – use and wear mask properly, use of sanitizers, handwashing with soap using the proper techniques, social distancing, etc.

In addition, swachhagrahis and Jal Sahiyas were present and alert at those venues to ensure that people observed the protocols and proper care was taken to maintain social distancing. They also distributed IEC leaflets on Covid-19 prevention.

The District Administration of both Chatra and Pakur greatly appreciated the efforts of these teams for planning and implementation of these awareness campaigns.

