

Leaders of Ganga Grams talk about environmental initiatives during SARPANCH SAMVAD



Village leaders from Gram Panchayats (GPs) situated along the River Ganga shared their initiatives to build an ODF Plus, green and healthy environment during the Sarpanch Samvad of June 4, 2021, to mark World Environment Day that falls on June 5th.

They discussed work done in afforestation; management of water bodies in the vicinity of the River Ganga; sanitation and waste to wealth generation activities undertaken to protect the environment; composting and GOBAR-Dhan efforts.

Amid the covid situation, many of them have also extended support to the community. Other than sanitization of village public spaces and maintaining strict covid safety protocols, they have formed WhatsApp groups to provide key information to families, distributed masks and sanitizers, ensured physical distancing and provided rations and medical assistance.

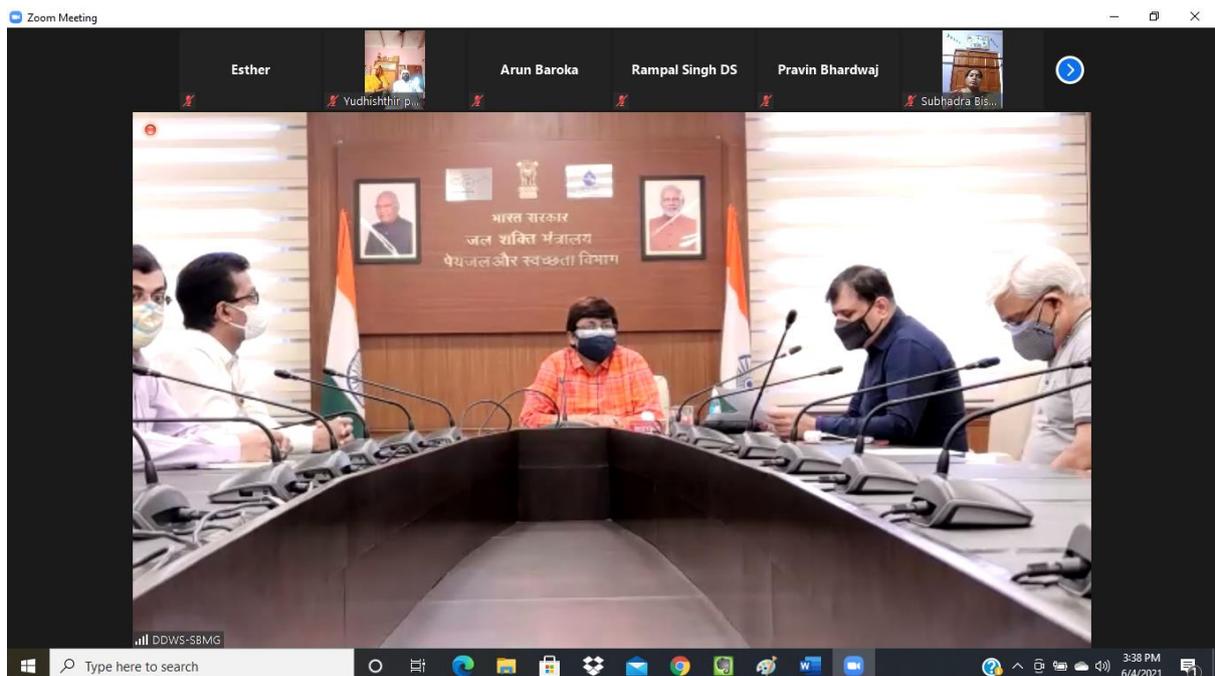
Welcoming the gathering to the virtual meeting, **Mr. Arun Baroka, Additional Secretary, Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)**, said that it was important for take forward the swachhata campaign and make the villages ODF Plus, while putting in efforts similar to those that were made to make their Gram



Panchayats ODF. The AS was appreciative of their efforts to ensure hygiene and sanitation to curb the coronavirus pandemic. Of their activities to make their villages Ganga Grams in the real sense, he said he was eager to learn from their valuable experiences as would village leaders in other parts of the country. Thanks to technology, the experience

sharing was possible, he added.

Dr. Anupama, Director-SBM, encouraged the participants to go ahead with their activities to ensure effective management of solid and liquid waste that would contribute to visual cleanliness of the villages and make Ganga Grams sanitation and riverbank conservation efforts visible for others to emulate. She advised the village leaders to connect with the forest department to get medicinal plants and involve SHGs as much as possible in their endeavours.



Sarpanches that participated in the Sarpanch Samvad were:

Deep Chand, Kinsur GP, Dwarikhal Block, Pauri District in Uttarakhand: Kinsur Gram Panchayat comprises of four revenue villages namely Kinsur, Bagi, Pokhta and Kyari. As many as 2000 forest and horticulture species of plants have been planted across the banks of River Ganga. Work related to greywater management has commenced and it has been completed in Bagi village with a common underground drain that channels greywater into two community soak pits, covering 30 households. On the other hand, construction of a

common drain and a community soak pit is ongoing in Pokhta village. To manage plastic waste, a common collection centre is under construction and as per their proposal, final disposal will be done at the Block level.

Nutan Kumar, Katarpur GP, Bhadrabad Block, Haridwar District, Uttarakhand: All households have been covered under the Greywater management project in village Katarpur. There is a common drain that channels wastewater into a nearby village pond through a treatment unit. The work has been completed under SBM (G) with the CSR support of Ambuja Cements.

Ashish Singh, Raulakot GP, Pratapnagar Block, Tehri District, Uttarakhand: The GP with about 200 households has a 500-meter drainage system that can be closed and opened when required with silt chambers and roughening filter for filtration of greyware. The system covers 115 households, and the treated water is used for irrigation. Further, as many as 84 households have individual soak pits that the GP has constructed.

Smt. Subhadra Biswas, East Narayanpur GP, Rajamahar Block, Sahibganj District, Jharkhand: The GP comprises of 7 habitations in which 404 individual household latrines were constructed under Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G). In addition, as a part of solid waste management, 24 structures have been completed while an additional 74 are ongoing. Under Grey Water management, a total of 130 Structures have been completed and 95 structures are ongoing, while in a few pockets a common drain and community soak pit are under construction. Moreover, 16 families will be covered under the biogas plant being established in cooperation with the largest cow dung producer in the village. Along the banks of the Ganga, around 200 saplings have been planted. Common collection centres are under construction for plastic waste management and the plan is for final disposal to be centralised in convergence with an Urban Local Body (ULB). Considerable focus is being given to awareness generation for which a monitoring committee with members of Self-Help groups has been formed at the tola level to look into matters pertaining to hygiene and sanitation.

Joshna Mandal, Sridhar GP, Udhwa Block, Sahibganj District, Jharkhand: As many as 749 IHHLs were constructed under SBM-G in the 10 habitations that form the Revenue village of Sridhar. The Sarpanch ensures that awareness programmes carried out by the village water and sanitation committee at the Tola level are a regular feature. A total of 130 structures under greywater management; 40 structures for kitchen gardens and 332 structures for solid waste management have been completed. As far as Gobar-gas is concerned, eight families have been covered and cow dung is collected from the largest producer in the village. In a few pockets of the village, a common drain and community soak pit are under construction; and 3500 saplings of different forest and horticulture species have been planted along the Ganga. For Plastic Waste Management, a common collection centre is under construction, and final disposal will be done at Block level.

Parwati Devi, W/o Yudhishtir Nishad, Chandrawati GP, Cholapur Block, Varanasi District,

UP: The GP comprises of 2 revenue villages namely Araj chandrawati and Chandrawati where greywater management works have been completed while the pond rejuvenation work is ongoing. In Chandrawati village a common underground drain (HDPE Pipe) has been set up, and grey water is collected in 2 ponds, the activity covering 200 families. On the other hand, a common drain has been constructed in Araj Chandrawati village. While 600 saplings have been planted along the Ganga, for Plastic Waste Management a common collection centre has been constructed, and it has been proposed that final disposal will be done at block level.

Ganga Gram Project

The Ganga Gram Project launched under the Namami Gange Programme in December 2017 is aimed at the holistic sanitation development in villages on the banks of River Ganga. In August 2017, with active cooperation with the five Ganga States (Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal), all 4,470 Ganga Grams were declared Open Defecation Free (ODF).

Ganga Gram vision is an integrated approach for holistic development of villages situated on the banks of River Ganga with active participation of the villagers. The objectives of Ganga Gram Project include effective management of solid and liquid waste, renovation of ponds and water resources, water conservation, organic farming, horticulture, and promotion of the cultivation of medicinal plants.