

DDWS holds Samvad with ZP Presidents

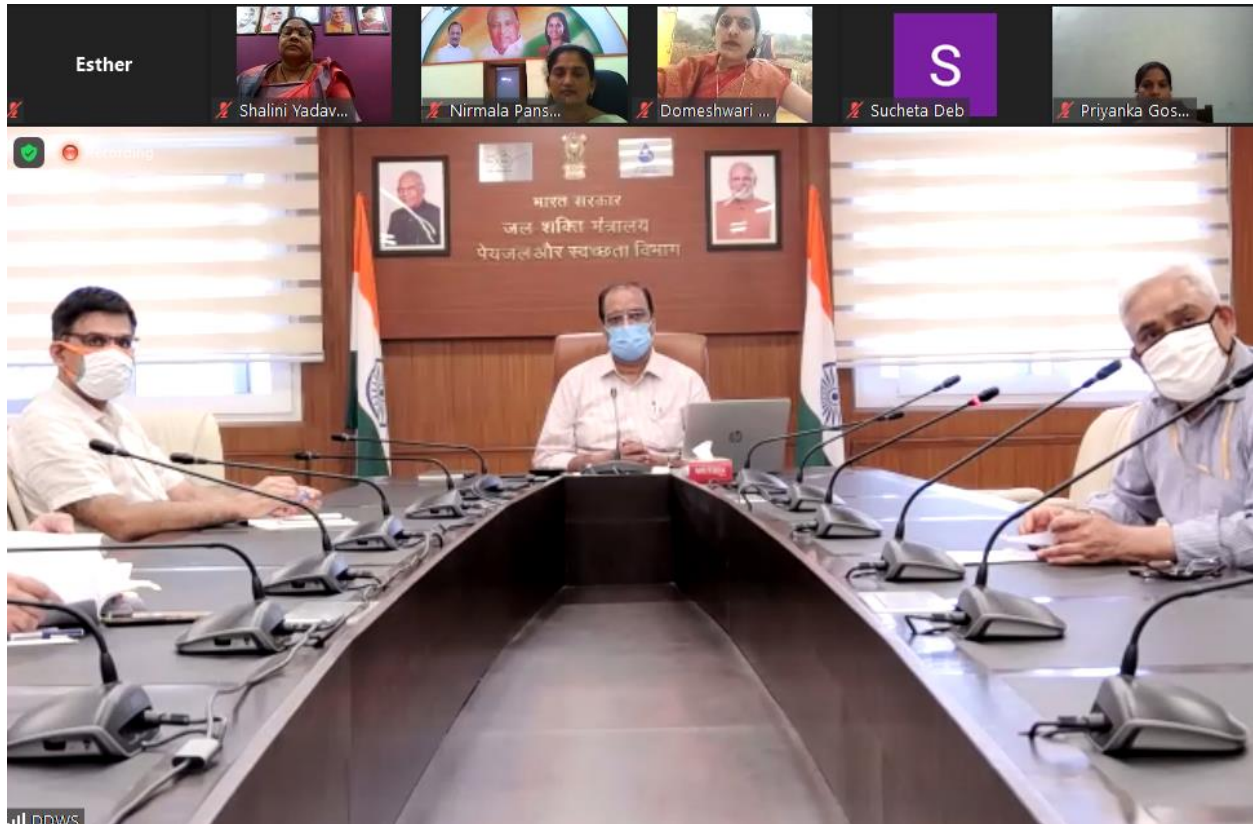


This week's Samvad featured Zila Parishad Adhyakshs or ZP Presidents who spoke of their ODF Plus activities to bring about visual cleanliness of their villages and the COVID-19 safety protocols observed by them to protect their communities.

The meeting organized on June 25, 2021, under the Chairmanship of Shri Arun Baroka, Additional Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti was intended to engage leaders of Gram Panchayats in a discussion to hasten the implementation of the second phase of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen.

Speaking on the occasion, the AS recalled rural India's ODF journey that resulted in all the villages being declared ODF by October 2019. "To achieve Sampurna Swachhata, we need to work towards managing solid and liquid waste management that would lead to visual cleanliness," he said at the virtual meeting.

He pointed out that the second phase of SBM-G was more complicated and technical, requiring the involvement of all leaders – from District to the ZP level.



We would like to understand the steps being taken to ensure hygiene and sanitation which are vital to contain the spread of COVID-19, Mr. Baroka said. Calling for the promotion of solid and liquid waste management that will lead to ODF Plus status, he assured them that funds were available for the various activities under the 15th Finance Commission.

Zila Parishad Adhyakshs that participated in this edition of the virtual meeting, came from the States of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

They included:

- Ms. Dhaneshwari Verma, ZP Pramukh, Raipur, Chhattisgarh
- Ms. Shalini Yadav, ZA Pramukh, Durg
- Shri Manmohan Nagar, ZP Pramukh, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Ms. Kavita Patidar, ZP Pramukh, Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- Ms. Priyanka Goswami, ZP Pramukh, Mandsor, Madhya Pradesh
- Ms. Asmita Tai Kamble, ZP Pramukh, Usmanabad, Maharashtra
- Ms. Nirmala Pansare, ZP Pramukh, Pune, Maharashtra

All the ZP Presidents spoke at length about their ODF journeys and the current focus on ensuring toilet usage through the engagement of Nigrani Samitis and construction of community sanitary complexes where the need was felt.

As far solid and liquid waste management was concerned, having distributed 2 bins to each household, they have systems in place for source segregation, collection, composting of wet waste and disposal of dry waste to junk dealers. In addition, they have constructed individual and community level soak pits that treat grey water and enhance groundwater table. Compost generated at their sheds is used in kitchen gardens and in their agricultural fields. Some of the villages have covered drains that are channeled into community soak pits.

What the ZP presidents said:

"We are constantly focusing on the maintenance and regular use of toilets and Community Sanitary Complexes," said **Nirmala Pansare, Zilla Parishad President, Maharashtra.**

"After we gained freedom from open defecation, health has improved in our communities. Realizing the impact of sanitation on health, people are using their toilets. We are building soak pits to prevent stagnation and overflow of liquid waste onto the village paths," **Priyanka Goswami, Zilla Parishad President, Madhya Pradesh** said.

"Earlier, cow dung would be dumped on the roadsides and would spill over onto the path, particularly during the rainy season. Owing to community efforts, cow dung is collected and converted into vermi compost," **Shalini Yadav, Zilla Parishad President, Chhattisgarh** said.

Kavita Patidar, Zilla Parishad President of Indore, Madhya Pradesh, said that plastic waste is collected, segregated, and properly disposed. While toilets are being used, we are also working to identify and repair faulty toilets and convert single pit toilets into twin pit toilets.

Even as we are ensuring that people use their toilets regularly, we are also trying to contribute to making our country ODF Plus. We observe events such as Handwashing Day every year, said **Ashmita Tai Kamble, Zilla Parishad President, Maharashtra.**

"A huge change has come in the lives of women after achieving open defecation free status through the Swachh Bharat Mission. Many thanks to our Prime Minister for this," said **Domeshwari Verma, Zilla Parishad President, Chhattisgarh.** She is now working towards organizing awareness programmes and waste management to make people aware of cleanliness at the village level.

In conclusion, the AS congratulated the village heads for their good work in hygiene and sanitation, assuring them that their thoughts and suggestions would be addressed.