



पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग
जल शक्ति मंत्रालय
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI



SWACHHATA SAMACHAR

Volume 4 | Issue 28



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From the **Union Minister**

This April, we are reminded of how interconnected our well-being is with our environment, our health, and our everyday choices. Observances like World Health Day, Poshan Pakhwada, and Earth Day together highlight that sanitation, water, and nutrition are not standalone efforts but are shared foundations for a healthy, equitable, and sustainable nation. Simple daily practices such as regular handwashing and the use of safe sanitation facilities serve as quiet yet powerful acts of prevention and protection. At the heart of this transformation are women, whose leadership continues to drive progress in every household and every village.



Sh. C. R. Patil

Union Minister, Ministry of Jal Shakti

From the **Union Minister of State**

As we observe Panchayati Raj Day this April, we are reminded that real progress in sanitation and water must be rooted in local leadership. Our panchayats, sarpanches, frontline workers, and community members especially women are the backbone of every success we celebrate under Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen and Jal Jeevan Mission. Whether it's promoting hand hygiene, ensuring toilet usage, managing assets or sustaining water sources, the solutions lie with those closest to the ground. It is this spirit of collective responsibility that will take us towards a truly Swachh, Sujal and Viksit Bharat.



Sh. V. Somanna

Union Minister of State, Ministry of Jal Shakti



From the **Secretary's Desk**

Community ownership is the true milestone that defines the sustainability of our efforts in water and sanitation. April, with its many significant national observances, reminds us that the journey does not end with building infrastructure. It is about nurturing a people-led Jan Andolan, with panchayats at its core, to drive meaningful and lasting change. Water and sanitation are not just services, they are the foundation of health, dignity, and empowerment. As we move forward, the way ahead needs to focus on operation, maintenance, and the strengthening of State Water and Sanitation Missions (SWSMs). This will be essential for safeguarding the gains we have made and to building a Swachh, Swasth, and Samridh Bharat.



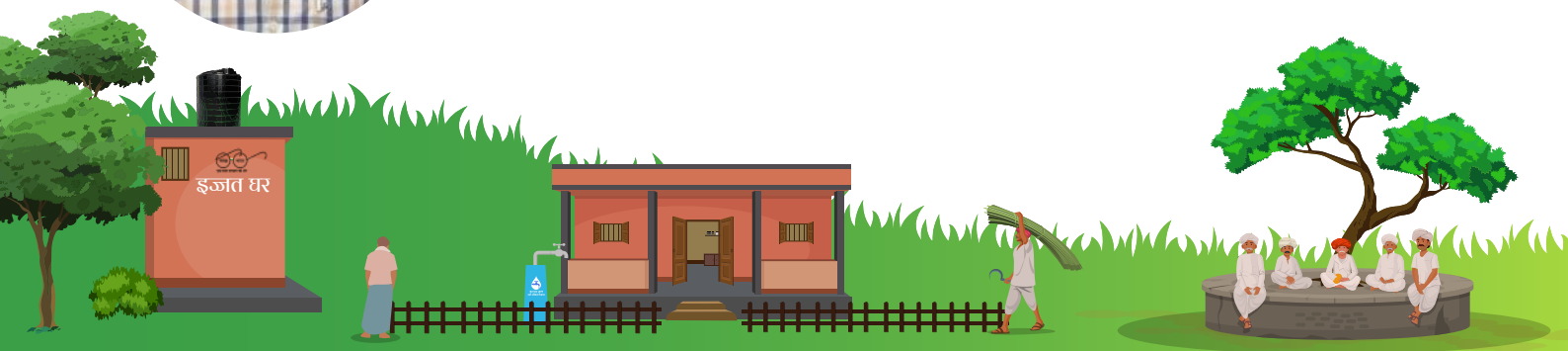
Shri Ashok Kumar Kaluaram Meena
Secretary, DDWS, Ministry of Jal Shakti

From the **Additional Secretary & Mission Director's Desk**

The way ahead must continue to focus on making WASH a core enabler of development outcomes. The work being done under SBMG and JJM is not just about infrastructure, it is about enabling lives, restoring dignity, and expanding opportunity. From homes to fields, safe sanitation and water access change the way people live, learn, and earn. As we move forward, our efforts must remain grounded in field realities, strengthened by convergence, and anchored in the leadership of local institutions. Only then can we make WASH a true Jan Andolan.



Shri Kamal Kishore Soan
ASMD, JJM, DDWS, Ministry of Jal Shakti

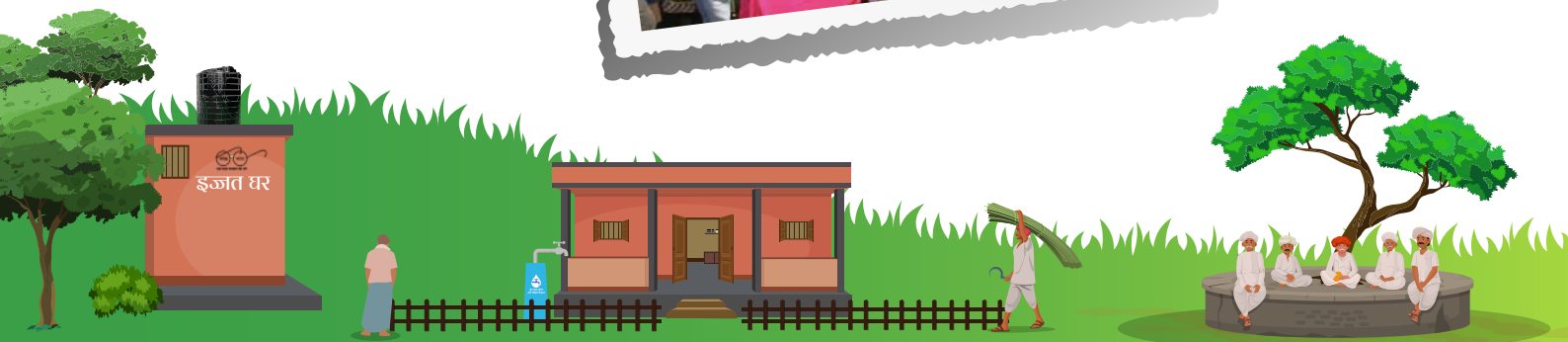


Programme Highlights

As on 30th April, 2025

ODF
PLUS

- Over **45.6 lakh** (Over **77%**) of India's inhabited villages have declared themselves ODF Plus Model
- Over **5.10 lakh** villages have arrangements for solid waste management
- Over **5.26 lakh** Villages have arrangements for liquid waste management
- Over **1200** Biogas plants registered.
- Over **890** Functional Biogas plants
- **83** Completed Biogas plants
- Over **1925** Rural Plastic Waste Management Units set up, covering more than 4850 blocks
- More than **6.18 lakh** vehicles for door-to door waste collection & transportation

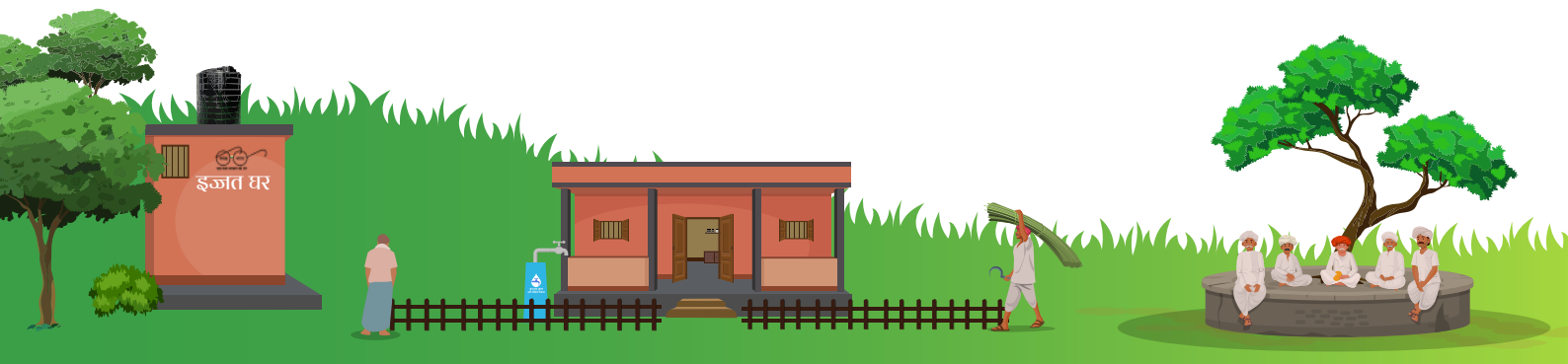


Pakhwada Activities: April, 2025



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- Certificate/ Prize distribution to Safai Karamchari at the Office of Additional Director for Poster and Best Waste to Wealth Competition. Followed by demonstrations on vermi composting and organic composting
- Cleaning of V.I.P. Guest House Area, Central Research Institute, Kasauli (Himachal Pradesh)
- Session on Biomedical Waste Management followed by Quiz programme and prize distribution was conducted at APHO Kolkata on 15 April 2025
- AIIMS Patna led a major cleanliness & beautification drive on 13th April with support from Phulwari Sharif Municipal Corporation & local NGOs
- Awareness program regarding cleanliness conducted at PHO Mumbai for hawkers and shopkeepers near the office premises
- A sensitization talk on Environment and Wellbeing was conducted at CIP OPD with 40 patients and caregivers
- Hospital Infection Control Committee in association with Department of Microbiology conducted a Continuing Medical Education programme on 12.05.2025 during Swachhata Pakhwada
- Cleanliness drive was conducted in and around the Rural Health Training Centre (RHTC) premises with active participation from the RHTC team and support from the PHC Ela staff



- Display of banner and logo on the wall of CGHS HQ was done as a part of swachhata Pakhwada. Selfie was taken by all the staff and officers of CGHS HQ
- Swachhata Rally around NSCBI Airport premises was organised by APHO Kolkata for creating community awareness



Closing ceremony 3



VPCI: Visit by Sh. Madhukar Kumar Bhagat, JS-5



Sh. Nikhil Gajraj, JSs Visit to VPCI-3



Sh. Nikhil Gajraj, JSs Visit to VPCI-1





Ministry of Culture

- Swachhata Pledge was undertaken and Shramdaan was done in and around the office premises



Swachhta Pledge



Shramdaan



Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs

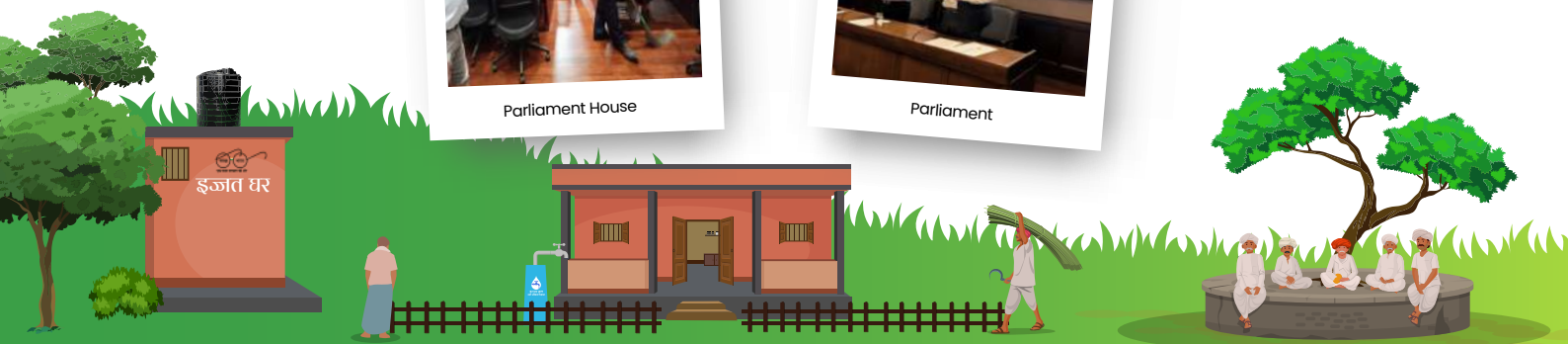
- Cleanliness drive was carried out by employees in their concerned sections/rooms
- Review/weeding out of physical files was done by sections
- Swachhata Pledge was administered by the Secretary to all employees of Ministry



Parliament House



Parliament



Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee – National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS)

SPM-NIWAS, Kolkata has been established as a Centre of Excellence for imparting training and strengthening capacity building related to WASH activities.

The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) has approved the training calendar for the first quarter, which includes 14 in-person and 10 online training sessions across various components of SBM-G.

In the month of April, three online and two in-person trainings were conducted, with a total participation of 192 individuals.

For the month of May, six in-person and five online training sessions are scheduled.

To register for the training- click here



For more information, reach out to:

Chaitali Mondal – chaitali2377@gmail.com

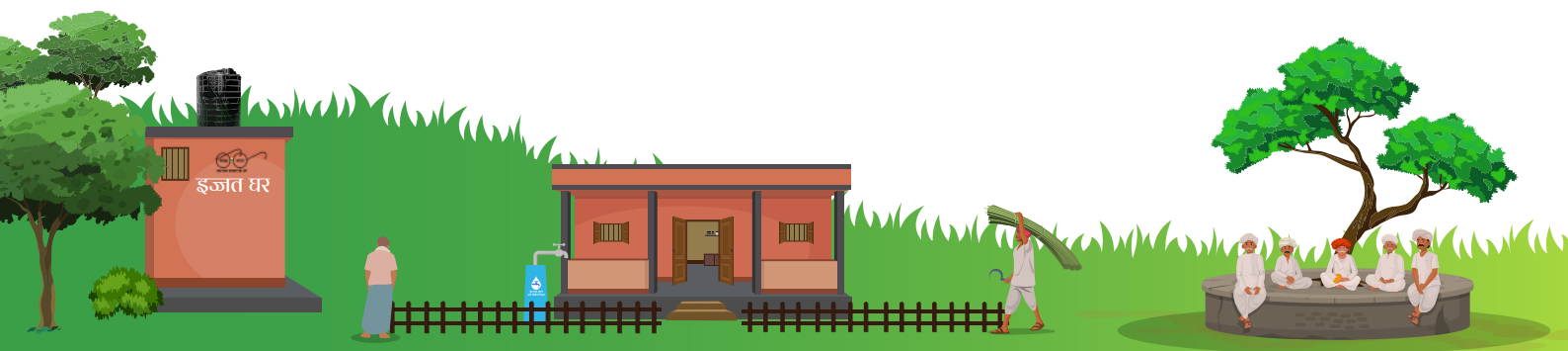
+91 9378351386

SBM Academy

The Swachh Bharat Academy (SBM Academy) is an online learning platform focused on ODF Plus activities. It is designed primarily for grassroots workers, including PRIs, BDOs, and Swachhagrahis. Initially accessible via a toll-free number (1800 1800 404), where users could listen to audio lessons, the platform has now been upgraded. To enhance user engagement and accessibility, a WhatsApp version of SBM Academy was launched on January 30, 2025.

Two online orientation sessions for state and district teams were conducted on April 4 and April 24 to encourage states with lower enrollment.

In April, 11,261 participants enrolled in the updated WhatsApp version of SBM Academy, of whom 7,635 successfully completed the courses.





THE HINDU

Health and sanitation as the pillars of a healthy India

On this World Health Day (April 7), as nations reflect on the foundations of human well-being, India stands tall with a transformative lesson: health and sanitation are not separate pursuits, but are two sides of a coin. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has undertaken a sanitation and water revolution that has not only changed the way we live but also how we thrive.

Rural missions that made a difference

The story of modern India cannot be told without acknowledging the contribution of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Grameen and the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). These programmes are not just about toilets and tap water alone. They represent a shift in the soul of the nation. These rural missions symbolise dignity, equity, and, above all, health.

When the Prime Minister launched the SBM from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2014, he ignited a movement that has touched every Indian household, making it a people's movement – a Jan Andolan that was anchored in behavioural change and inter-generational equity. By 2019, India had declared itself Open Defecation Free (ODF) and taken significant steps towards achieving SDG 6.2 (it focuses on achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030) and also ending open defecation, 11 years ahead of time.

The SBM has been a powerful public health intervention. A World Health Organization (WHO) report estimated from 2014 to 2019, through the sanitation mission, over three lakh diarrhoeal deaths were averted. The Gates Foundation reported in 2017 that there were 58% higher cases of wasting among children in non ODF areas. A UNICEF study (2017) found that 93% of women felt safer after getting a toilet at home and ODF families saved ₹50,000 annually in health-care costs, ensuring higher savings. The SBM has improved environmental outcomes. Groundwater contamination in ODF villages is 12.7 times less likely, ensuring long-term health resilience in rural communities. A (2024) Nature study estimated that 60,000 to 70,000 child deaths are prevented every year due to improved sanitation access. These outcomes are not incidental, they



Swati Meena Naik

is Joint Secretary,
National Jal Jeevan
Mission (NJJM)

The story of modern India is connected to every link in the sanitation chain that results in a healthier and safer society

are the result of sustained political commitment, inter-ministerial coordination, and community ownership.

In 2019, the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched to ensure every rural household receives clean drinking water through a tap connection. This is more than infrastructure. It is an investment in human potential with far-reaching socio-economic impact. Research by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer has shown that nearly 30% infant deaths can be reduced if safe water is made available to families for drinking and 1.36 lakh child deaths (under five years) can be prevented with universal tap coverage. WHO estimates suggest that the JJM could avert four lakh diarrhoeal deaths with safe drinking water supply at home. And, 5.5 crore hours are saved every day, mostly by women, who had earlier spent time fetching water. State Bank of India research finds that the availability of water within premises led to increased participation by women in agriculture and allied activities.

The Sujal and Swachh Gaon campaign, launched to integrate water, sanitation, and hygiene at the village level, has further galvanised communities. Thousands of villages have already been declared Swachh Sujal, which is an important marker of holistic public health transformation. Improved water and sanitation systems are also leading to reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for rural households, reinforcing the preventive health-care model.

On the ground

Sanitation and water are the first line of defence in public health. They are the invisible shield that protects communities from disease, women from indignity, and children from lost opportunity. A healthy nation is a productive nation. A clean nation is a resilient one.

Today, more than 80% of India's rural households have tap water connections. Over 96% villages have been declared as ODF Plus, more than 5.07 lakh villages have solid waste management systems, and 5.23 lakh villages have liquid waste management systems in place.

Women are not just beneficiaries, they are also water testers, sanitation entrepreneurs, and local leaders. Over 2.48 million women have been trained to test water quality, and women-led Self-Help Groups are managing sanitation assets, recycling centres, and even sanitary napkin production. This is the vision of a Viksit Bharat where no child misses school because of a lack of water, no woman walks miles with a pot on her head, and no family loses a loved one to preventable illness.

The journey to health is the journey to dignity. A toilet brings privacy. Clean water brings opportunity. Waste management protects the environment. Each link in the sanitation chain connects directly to a healthier, safer society. The lessons we have learnt highlight the importance of inter-ministerial collaboration which is non-negotiable.

It is about convergence

Since, health is not the concern of one Ministry alone, it is the outcome of converged action across water, sanitation, nutrition, education, and rural development. We must recognise that India's model is not insular, it is global. Our innovations, community-led models, and use of technology whether through real-time dashboards, Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (or GOBARdhan) biogas plants, or plastic waste management units are blueprints for the world, especially the Global South. Lastly, we must continue to work through a mutual understanding that every rupee invested in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) yields manifold returns in health, productivity, gender equity, and environmental sustainability.

India is committed towards progressing forward on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and this World Health Day, we need to acknowledge and remember that good health begins not in hospitals, but in homes with access to clean water, safe sanitation, and a shared resolve. As we move forward, India remains committed to sharing its journey, collaborating globally, and co-creating a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient world.



**WORLD
HEALTH DAY**



DDWS Joins Hands for Poshan Pakhwada 2025



From April 8 to 23, 2025, the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) actively participated in Poshan Pakhwada, a nationwide initiative led by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).

This year's, WCD's Poshan Pakhwada emphasized four key themes: Focus on the First 1000 Days of Life, Popularization of the Beneficiary/Citizen Module of Poshan Tracker, Management of Malnutrition through CMAM, and Healthy Lifestyle to Address Obesity in Children.

DDWS supported this campaign under the theme of, "Shudh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan" (Healthy Childhood Through Clean Water and Sanitation), and focussed on the critical role of clean water and hygiene in improving child nutrition and health.

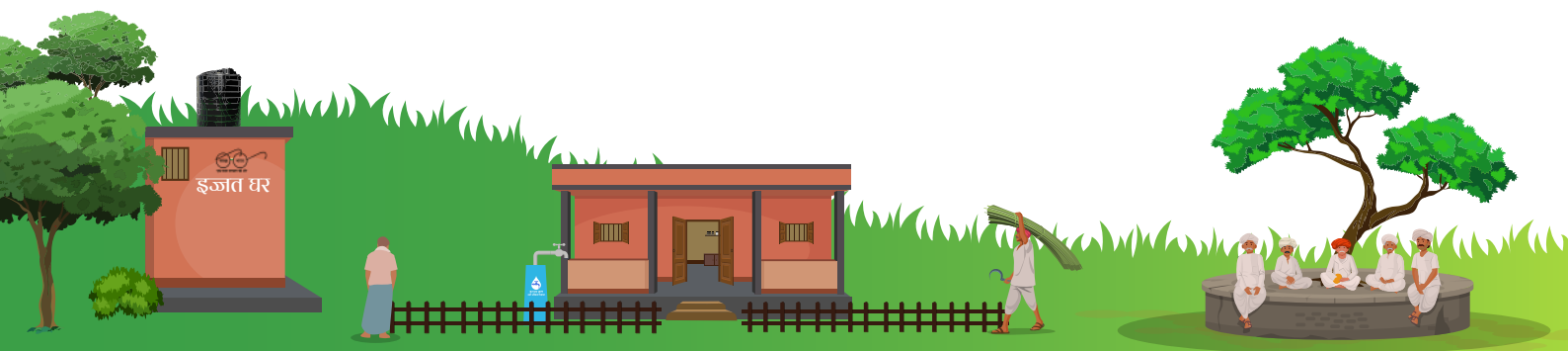
During these two weeks, States/UTs collaborated with State ICDS departments to raise awareness about the importance of sanitation, safe drinking water, and proper hygiene practices under the fortnightly campaign. With a strong focus on the first 1000 days of a child's life, the campaign educated communities on how safe water and sanitation directly impact nutrition, growth, and overall well-being.

DDWS Proposed Activities:

1. Ensure Shudhata and Swachhta Drives
2. Session for Anganwadi Workers
3. Lactating Mothers Awareness Campaign
4. Smart Poshan Anganwadi Certification
5. Community clean-ups and beautification of Anganwadi centers
6. Awareness Rallies & Clean-Up Programs

By combining nutrition, hygiene, and safe water practices, DDWS's Poshan Pakhwada campaign aims to not only empower Anganwadi Centres but also create lasting change in the communities.

To read more, click here



Uttarakhand's Sirasu Village leverages tourism for Swachhata

Nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas, along the sacred banks of the Ganga in Yamkeshwar block of Uttarakhand's Pauri Garhwal district, Sirasu village has transformed itself into a model for cleanliness and sustainability through an innovative revenue system. Before 2014, the village faced significant sanitation challenges, with many families lacking toilets and waste management systems being inadequate. However,



the Kota Gram Panchayat slowly turned things around with the help of the SBMG, while also capitalizing on the village's growing popularity as a photography and tourism destination owing to its scenic beauty that is enhanced by its stunning location along the Ganga and surrounded by lush green forests. As a result, Sirasu is now a ODF Plus Model verified village.



As Sirasu village started gaining popularity among tourists both from and outside the state, the Gram Panchayat implemented a unique revenue model in 2018 by charging Rs 1,000 for pre-wedding photo shoots. It also generated additional income by procuring and renting out tents, lights, sound equipment, and other essentials required for these shoots. This simple yet effective strategy has allowed the village to maintain its cleanliness and sanitation infrastructure without relying solely on government resources. Since its implementation, the initiative, along with other revenue sources, has generated around Rs 50 lakh. During peak wedding seasons, the village sees 15–20 pre-wedding photo shoots daily. Sirasu village's appeal as a favoured photography destination grew as it successfully achieved a remarkable transformation thanks to effort of the community.

Aligning with the objectives of the rural sanitation mission to address waste disposal, the village has also set up four plastic waste collection centers where discarded plastic is regularly collected and sent for recycling, preventing pollution in and around the Ganga. Beyond sanitation, the revenue has also been used to improve tourist amenities, including benches, designated trekking routes, procurement of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV), and a park, further enhancing Sirasu's appeal.

[To read more, click here](#)



The Everyday Cleanliness Champions of Nagaland's Ghokito Village

Tucked away just a kilometre from Kuhuboto town in Nagaland's Niuland district, Ghokito village is easy to miss on a map, but what's happening there is anything but ordinary. With just 86 households and a population a little over 500, this small village has quietly transformed itself into a ODF Plus Model Village, led not by outside experts, but by the people themselves who decided to make things better, together.

Ghokito village stands out because it brings together tradition, innovation, and community spirit to manage waste, grow food, and keep the village clean all through systems that are practical, low-cost, and built on local wisdom. The heart of Ghokito's waste management lies in a simple yet powerful practice: backyard farming.



Waste does not go to waste here

It starts in the kitchen with vegetable peels, leftovers, and food scraps that are set aside. However, instead of being thrown out, this “waste” becomes a resource. It's cooked together with wheat bran and green leafy vegetables to make feed for pigs, which almost every household in the village raises. And just like that, kitchen scraps turn into nutrition and food security.

The Plastic Pickers of Sunday School

At Ghokito village, the children of the village's Sunday School play a vital role in maintaining environmental sustainability. Every week, children attending Sunday School from the village churches go around collecting plastic waste from homes, by-lanes, and anyone who wants to get rid of it responsibly. They segregate it and sell it at the end of each month to the recycling network. The money they earn. It goes right back into their ministry activities.

Culture of Cleanliness

Cleanliness in Ghokito is not left to chance and is not a onetime thing or activity. It is a culture that is spearheaded by a Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) Committee that ensures that monthly inspections happen. The team checks every household to make sure toilets are clean and functional. Special attention is given to the hygiene of migrant workers, too to ensure no one is left behind.

[To read more, click here](#)



Driving Dignity in Sanitation: DDWS Campaign Against Manual Scavenging



DDWS has amplified its efforts to safeguard the rights, safety, and dignity of sanitation workers under SBM-G Phase II. The objective of the online campaign was to promote safe sanitation technologies and reiterate the SBM-G guidelines that emphasize the

- Promote the construction of Twin Pit Toilets in new households.
- Retrofit the existing Single Pit Toilets to Twin Pit systems.
- Retrofit the existing Septic Tanks with Soak Pits.
- Raise awareness about safe faecal sludge disposal.
- Encourage Gram Panchayats to adopt mechanized faecal sludge management.

From March 20 to 31, 2025, DDWS conducted a focused digital campaign to raise awareness about the prohibition of manual scavenging and the importance of mechanized desludging. The campaign highlighted key provisions of the 2013 Act, advocated for safe sanitation technologies, and encouraged citizens to report violations. The objective was to reinforce a zero-tolerance approach towards manual scavenging and promote systemic adoption of safer, mechanized solutions.

Posts on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) emphasized the importance of legal safeguards, safer technologies, and citizen responsibility. The campaign, aligned with SBM-G's core principle of leaving no one behind, and it sent out a strong message: dignity in sanitation work is non-negotiable.

Follow the conversation with [#ZeroManualScavenging](#) and view the full series of posts on Facebook and Twitter.

[To read more, click here](#)



Celebrating International Women's Day 2025



International Women's Day (IWD) 2025 was celebrated across India with a powerful focus on recognizing and empowering women in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector. The activities this year went beyond symbolic gestures, they created platforms for women's leadership, participation, and long-term impact in rural sanitation. From mobilizing communities to recognizing changemakers, the celebrations put women at the center of the WASH story.

One of the most impactful initiatives was the WASH Run, where over 1.1 lakh participants led by women sanitation champions took to the streets to raise awareness about hygiene and sanitation. Mahila Sabhas, or women-only Gram Sabhas, provided a safe space for women to discuss sanitation challenges, exchange ideas and best practises, and take part in decision-making processes. Across states, felicitation ceremonies honored over 53,000 women leaders for their outstanding contributions to rural sanitation.



Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) played a key role in ensuring that planning and implementation were rooted in community needs. From menstrual hygiene management (MHM) training to Field Test Kit (FTK) water testing sessions, the focus was on giving women and girls the tools to protect their health and lead change.

Going Digital: Stories That Travel To take these stories beyond the villages, a focused social media campaign ran from March

5–8. The hashtags #WomenLedWASH, #SheroesOfWASH, and #IWD2025 garnered over 79 million impressions and reached over 4 million users.

[To read more, click here](#)



Turning Plastic into Plates: Haryana's Suman Dangi Story of Change



Suman Dangi from Bhushli village in Haryana's Karnal district made a small but significant change in her canteen, offering meals in exchange for plastic waste to address hunger. This April, as the world celebrates Earth Day, the story rising from Bhushli showcases the true power of grassroots leadership.

Suman works at the Atal Kisan Mazdoor Canteen, operated by the Ekta Women's Self-Help Group (SHG). She has become a source of livelihood for 5–6 other women in the group. She started an initiative that transformed the problem of plastic waste into a solution, one that promotes cleanliness as well as community welfare.

At the canteen, if someone brings 500 grams of recyclable plastic, they receive a hot and nutritious meal in return. What seems like a simple exchange is a symbol of deep thought and significant social change. However, the story behind this initiative was not as easy as it sounds. A few years ago, Suman herself was struggling financially, with no stable source of income.

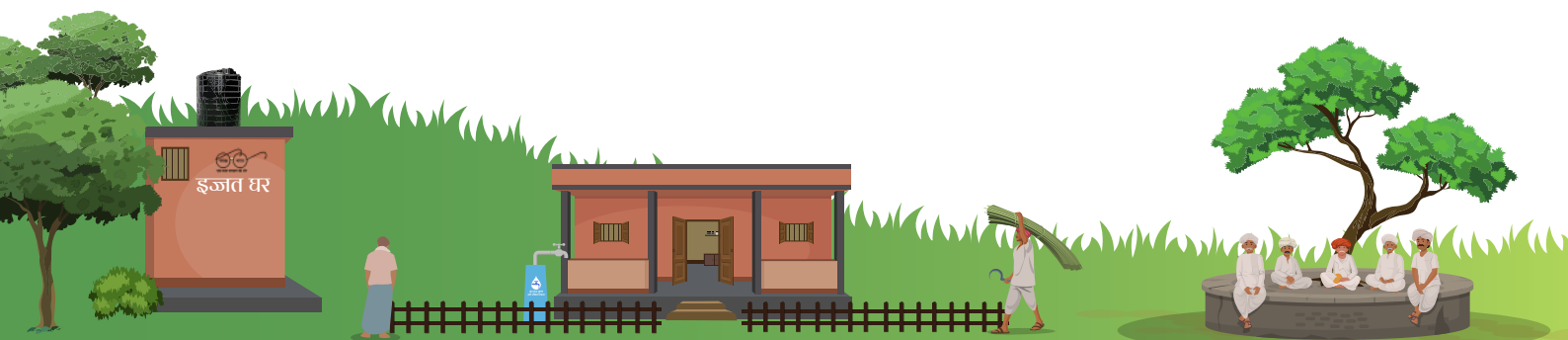
From this concern, an idea was born, could something be done to manage this recyclable plastic waste. She shared this thought with her canteen colleagues and staff from the Haryana State Rural Livelihoods Mission. After discussion and brainstorming, they decided to provide meals in exchange for recyclable plastic.

Turning her idea into reality, Suman took a loan of Rs 50,000 from the Jannat Mahila Cluster Level Federation and launched the model: providing a nutritious meal in return for 500 grams of clean, sorted recyclable plastic.

So far, Suman has collected over 1,500 kilograms of recyclable plastic and, as a result, has served over 3,000 hot, nutritious meals. These are not just statistics; they tell a story of transformation.



To read more, click here



Statewide Celebrations for Bihar Diwas & World Water Day 2025



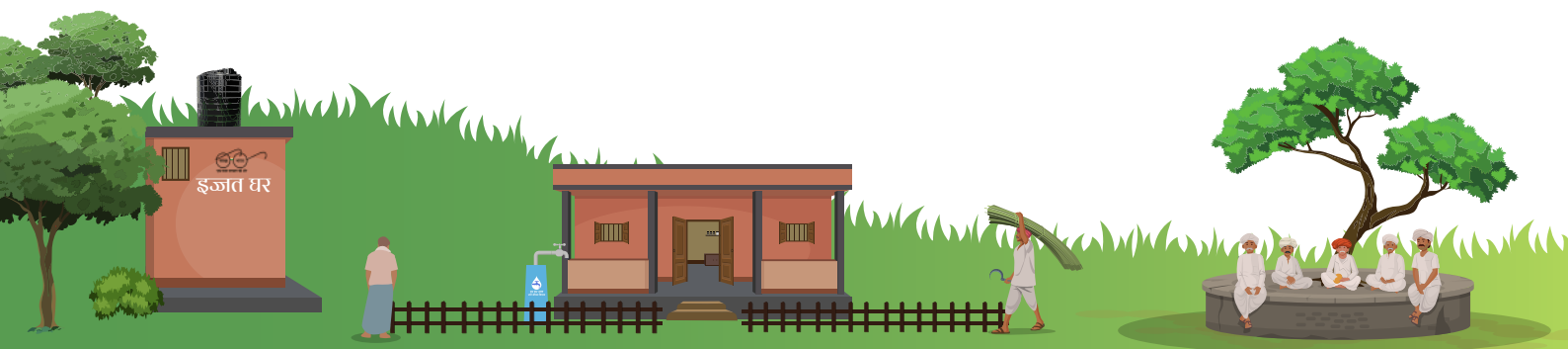
On Bihar Diwas 2025 (22 March), a five-day exhibition was organized at Gandhi Maidan, Patna, showcasing various departmental initiatives, including a dedicated stall of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). The SBMG stall highlighted efforts being done in the state towards achieving ODF Plus Model status, key achievements, and innovative initiatives.

This included SHG-operated 'Toilet Clinic' and 'KabadMandi.' Additionally, on the inaugural day March 22 similar exhibitions were held across various districts to raise awareness about sanitation, greywater, and black water management among communities.

On the 113th Bihar Diwas, Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar visited the SBM-G stall, accompanied by Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Shri Samrat Choudhary, Shri Vijay Kumar Sinha, Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh, and other dignitaries. In addition, the event was graced by the presence of Secretary of the Rural Development Department, Bihar, Shri Lokesh Kumar Singh, Mission Director Shri Himanshu Sharma, State Coordinator Shri Rajesh Kumar, other state officials, and representatives from development partners.



[To read more, click here](#)



From Plastic to Progress: How Districts and GP of Uttar Pradesh are leading change



The campaign "Mera Plastic, Meri Jimmedari" has taken on a life of its own in Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh, with gram panchayats stepping up with simple, community led models to tackle plastic waste and drive behavior change.

In Unchadeeh Gram Panchayat of Robertsganj block, an innovative model is gaining attention: Bring 2 kg of plastic waste and get a pack of sanitary pads in return. Spearheaded by Gram Pradhan Archana Tripathi, this initiative aims to not only manage plastic waste but also raise awareness around menstrual hygiene and women's health.

Women and adolescent girls are being encouraged to hang a sack at home and collect used plastic that includes everything from wrappers to water bottles. Once they've gathered 2 kg, they can bring it to the Panchayat Bhawan or the local RRC (Resource Recovery Centre) and receive sanitary pads as a reward.

The initiative is also helping reduce pollution that threatens groundwater, harms animals, and clutters surroundings while making menstrual hygiene products more accessible in rural households. The drive has drawn active participation from ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, teachers, and women from across the village.



Meanwhile, in Raghunathpur Gram Panchayat of Ghorawal block, another remarkable example is emerging. Gram Pradhan Parmeshwar Pal has taken it upon himself to lead by example. Every morning, between 7 and 8 am, he sets out in an e-rickshaw, collecting plastic waste door-to-door, while educating residents about the risks of plastic pollution.

[To read more, click here](#)

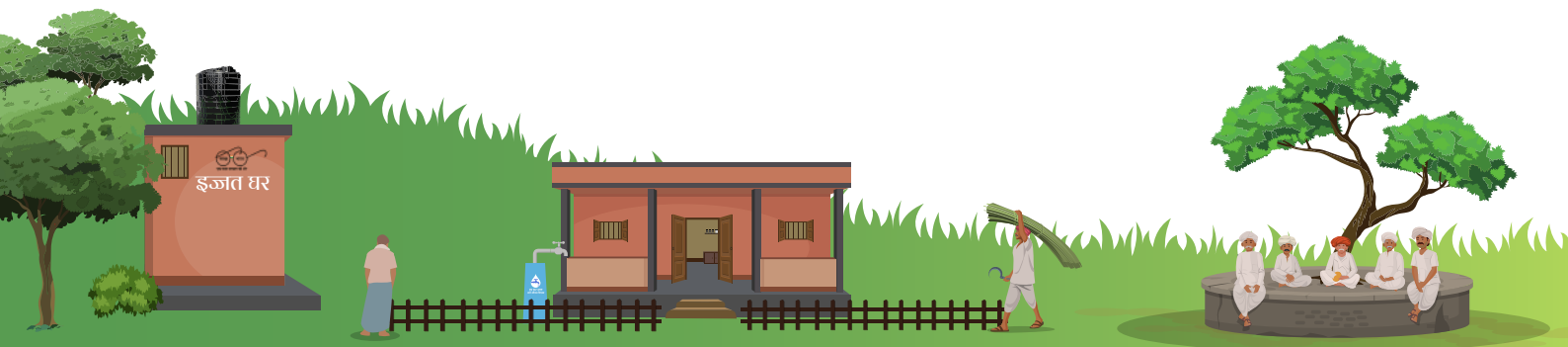


Swachhata Cipher Challenge

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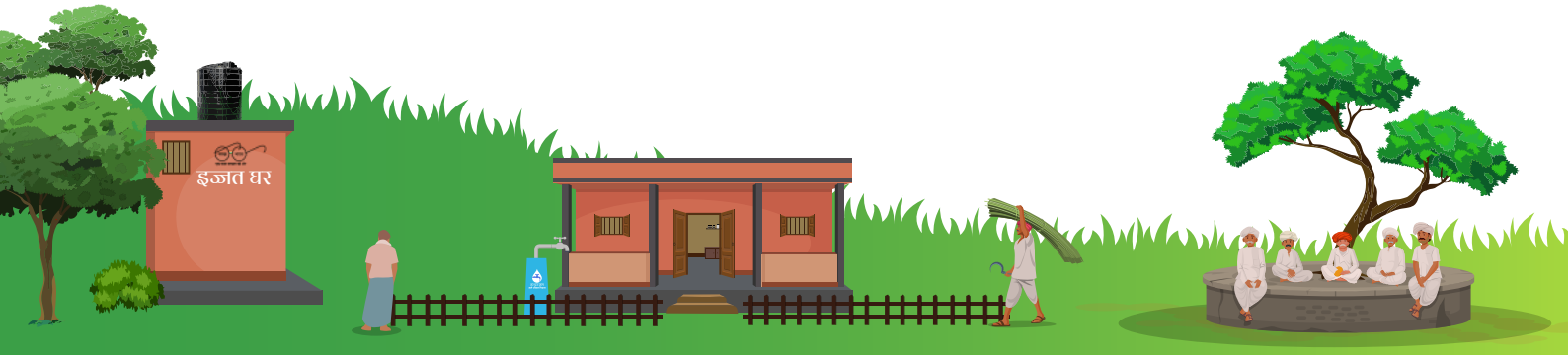
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जल शक्ति मंत्रालय
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI



To contribute to the next issue of the **Swachhata Samachar**, share your submission before the 15th of every month to sbmec.ddws@gmail.com



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