

Priority is being given on water quality surveillance through active participation of frontline functionaries

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Jal Shakti Minister Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat held a video conference with the Nagaland Chief Minister Shri Neiphiu Rio to discuss the progress of Jal Jeevan mission in the State. Shri Shekhawat joined the video conference from the hospital as recently he was tested COVID positive. Secretary, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation and Addl. Secretary & Mission Director and other officials of the Ministry also attended the meeting.

Nagaland plans to provide 100% tap connection to every rural household by 2024. The State was allocated a budget of Rs 56.49 Crore for the year 2019-20, but the State could not utilize the full amount. Under the State share, State could spend only ₹ 4.67 Crore against the mandatory matching State share of ₹ 5.65 Crore. The allocation for Nagaland has been increased to Rs. 114.09 Crore in 2020-21 and with opening balance of Rs. 32.95 Crore, Nagaland has an assured availability of Rs. 147.04 Crore of Central funds for JJM. With matching State share, the State will have Rs 163 Crore during 2020-21 for implementation of JJM.

So far this year only 2,950 households have been provided tap connections against a target of 1.47 lakh. Union Minister Shri Shekhawat expressed his concern over the slow progress of work as well as poor fund utilization and urged the State to fast-track the implementation. Then, various aspects of the mission in the State were discussed with the Chief Minister at length. The Chief Minister assured to provide household

tap connections to rural households of the State in an expeditious manner.

Under 15th Finance Commission Grants to rural local bodies, Nagaland has been allocated ₹ 125 Crore; 50% of this amount is mandatorily to be utilized on drinking water supply and sanitation. If any local body has fully saturated the needs of one category, it can utilize the funds for the other. The union minister urged the State for planning to be done at village level and Village Action Plan (VAP) of every village is to be prepared by dovetailing all available resources by convergence of different programmes viz. MGNREGS, SBM, 15th Finance Commission Grants, CAMPA funds, Local Area Development Funds, etc.

In Nagaland, out of 1,502 villages, 1,351 villages have PWS schemes, but out of 3.68 lakh households only 18,826 HH (5.1 %) have tap connection. The Union Minister urged to take up the work a campaign mode so that around 3.5 lakh households belonging to poor & marginalized sections of the society could be provided with tap connections in next 4-6 months. Nagaland has one Aspirational district i.e. Kiphire and the State was asked to expedite the works in the district to ensure tap connections to all households.

Underlining the role of local community, the State was asked to mobilize the Gram Panchayat or its sub-committees i.e. Village Water & Sanitation Committee consisting of minimum 50% of women members to be responsible for planning, designing, implementing and operating of in-village water supply infrastructure.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission, priority is being given on water quality surveillance through active participation of frontline functionaries as well as involving the local community. 5 persons especially women are being trained in every village to use the Field Test Kits to test the quality of water being provided in the rural areas. Every source needs to be tested once every year for physical and chemical parameters and twice for bacteriological contamination. The State was also advised to complete the accreditation of State and district laboratories in next 3-4 months and also to open those for public so that they can test the quality of water supplied at very nominal rate.

Assuring the Nagaland Chief Minister of his full support to make the State a '100% FHTCs State', Union Minister requested him to launch a campaign 'Har Ghar Jal' to make "every village" provided with 100% tap connections and achieve the goal much ahead of 2024.

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