

Priority is being given on water quality surveillance through active participation of the local community

By : Editor Published On : 31 Aug, 2020 06:40 PM IST



INVC NEWS

New Delhi,

Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat held discussion with Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Pema Khandure regarding implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in the State through video conferencing today. Shri Shekhawat joined the video conference from the hospital as he is being treated for COVID. MoS for Jal Shakti Shri Ratan Lal Kataria also attended the virtual meeting. Addl. Secretary & Mission Director and other officials of the Ministry also attended the meeting. From Arunachal Pradesh, Minister of PHED, Chief Secretary and other senior officers took part in the meeting.

Government of India is committed to provide assured basic services to the people living in rural areas of the country with focus on improving their lives. Drinking water supply is a service delivery, wherein the quantity, quality of water supplied and periodicity of water supply has to be ensured for which the flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is under implementation in partnership with States. The objective of the Mission is universal coverage i.e. every family in the village gets tap water connection in their households.

Arunachal Pradesh is planning 100% coverage by 2023 to accomplish the ambitious target of providing tap connection to every rural household of the State. In this context, the central Minister had a detailed discussion on the progress of the mission in the State with the CM. Emphasizing the importance of the life-changing mission to improve the lives of rural people, central Minister stressed on retrofitting and augmentation of existing water supply schemes. Out of 5,457 villages in the State, 3,823 have piped water supply schemes, but out of 2.17 lakh households only 43,244 (20%) have tap connections. The Union Minister urged to take up the work in a campaign mode so that remaining households belonging to poor & marginalized sections of the society could be provided with tap connections at earliest.

Shri Shekhawat reiterated the commitment of Union Government to provide all assistance to the State to achieve this goal. For Jal Jeevan Mission, funds are provided by Government of India based on the output in terms of tap connections provided and the utilization of available central and matching state share. Minister of Jal Shakti assured Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister of all support to make the State a '100%

FHTCs' State.

Out of 2.17 lakh rural households in the State of Arunachal Pradesh, only 43,244 (20%) are provided with tap connections. Arunachal Pradesh plans to provide tap connections in 76,912 households during 2020-21. In 2020-21, ₹254.85 Crore have been allocated and including State share and unspent amount of previous year, there is assured availability of ₹347.10 Crore. State is eligible for additional fund based on physical and financial performance.

Arunachal Pradesh has been allocated 231 Crore under 15th Finance Commission Grants to rural local bodies and 50% of it is to be used for water supply and sanitation. Central minister requested the Chief Minister to plan for utilizing this fund for rural water supply, grey-water treatment and re-use and most importantly for ensuring long-term operation and maintenance of water supply schemes.

Union Minister further emphasized on preparation of village action plans as well as constitution of Village Water & Sanitation Committee/ Paani Samiti as a sub-committee of Gram Panchayat with minimum 50% of women members, responsible for planning, designing, implementing and operating & maintaining of in-village water supply infrastructure. All villages have to prepare Village Action Plan (VAP) which essentially will comprise of development/ augmentation of drinking water sources, water supply, grey-water management and operation and maintenance component. It was also suggested to take up IEC campaign along with community mobilization to make Jal Jeevan Mission, truly a people's movement.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission, priority is being given on water quality surveillance through active participation of 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.

Citing about various challenges in the State like difficult terrain, thin population, poor connectivity and the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic, the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh mentioned that he will review the progress of the Jal Jeevan Mission regularly. He assured of expeditious implementation of the mission in the State so as to achieve the target of providing household tap connections in rural areas in time-bound manner.

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