

Success Story- DM Latur

The Water Journey of Latur- From Water Train to a Self-sufficient and Self-sustaining District

Latur rose to global headlines when it received water through Railways in 2016. The DM of Latur, Shri G Sreekanth rose to the challenge of repaying the debt of water which had been taken from Sangli District during drought times. The water scenario of the entire district has improved gradually, and in 2018 Latur received **National Water Award** under Best District (West) for revival of river.

The work started by taking stock of the situation and existing schemes of the Government. Various important schemes of the state Government were listed to be implemented on priority basis. The State Government's scheme "**Jalyukt Shivar**" which is a watershed development programme covering every watershed from ridge to valley approach. Implementation of two schemes was undertaken "**Gal Mukh Dharan**" and "**Gal Mukh Shivar**", where gal means silt. It was aimed to remove silt (gal) from major and minor dams, ponds, watersheds. Free transportation was provided to farmers for transporting the silt to their fields which improved the crop productivity as well as quality of the produce.

People participation was as anticipated, people had come together to form a group **Jal Yukt Latur** and contributed voluntarily to the efforts of District Administration.

"**Nadi Parikrama Muhim**" was another major effort in which every Tehsildar along with villagers was doing Parikrama of the small rivers, they traversed through the river channel, from its origin to mouth to understand the terrain of the river and check encroachment during lean season.

Huge Road Network had been sanctioned in Latur by the Ministry of Road Transportation and Highways. In collaboration with NHAI, ponds/Moorums were identified and excavated, where the Moorums could be given to the Highways and simultaneously the water in the ponds could be increased.

NGO's also contributed to the District Administration's efforts especially **Paani Foundation**. The NGO organises a **Water Cup** during IPL times,

incentivising people to reuse, recycle and reutilise water and offering huge prize money. **Akka foundation's** Inderprastha Jal BHumi Abhiyan converging the Government schemes MNREGA

Magic pits were constructed with double benefits of creating mosquito free villages and construction and rejuvenation of percolation pits, increasing percolation of water.

Roof top Rain Water harvesting has been undertaken on mission mode in all Government Offices. In the Collectors office miyawaki plantation has been planted to catch the rain, naming the dense plantation as "**Atal Anand Van**". This high density plantation was then replicated in government spaces wherever large open space was available.

The most famous and religious festival of Maharashtra, Ganpati festival was utilised for mass public awareness requesting people not to submerge the Ganpati idols in drinking water sources and disposing them scientifically.

Another initiative was started by the name of **Seven Star Latur Kar**, under which stars are awarded for seven different efforts, giving properties the status of one star or seven star as per their actions and efforts like paying taxes or rain water harvesting, etc.

Sewage treatment was focus upon. Today, an International Cricket Stadium is being managed solely by treating and reusing water from sewage treatment plants.

Taking forward the idea of decentralisation of water management, a Water Policy is being developed at city level to solve water issues. All stakeholders were involved through a two day seminar/workshop.

The combined efforts of District Administration, Central Government, State Government, NGO's and most importantly the citizens and general public have transformed Latur from a water deficient district to self sufficient and self sustainable one. The way forward now is implementing the water policy of the city along with using technological innovations to manage water use efficiency and water management and integration of technology, Government schemes and people contribution.
