

Swachh Bharat Central Team assist in building twin pits in Champaran to mark World Toilet Day

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In the run up to World Toilet Day tomorrow, behaviour change and toilet construction activities are being undertaken by the States and districts around the country. Leading this initiative, a senior central level team from the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation performed shramdaan by assisting villagers in building twin-pit toilets in Turkauliya village in East Champaran district of Bihar.

The senior officers, led by Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, had arrived in the village on November 17, 2017, as part of a village immersion exercise. One of the aims of the exercise was to give the officials an opportunity to stay in the village for an extended period of time, interact with villagers directly, join in trigger behavior change and discuss their challenges and aspirations over the course of three days, in one of the lowest sanitation coverage districts in the country.

The team chose Champaran as the district to visit for this exercise as part of the Champaran centenary year, "Satyagrah se Swachhagrah tak" celebrations. The team encouraged villagers to build and use twin pit toilets in their homes. A screening of the movie, Toilet Ek Prem Katha, was also organized for the villagers at a ratri chaupal after the first day of shramdaan.

The joint team of the Ministry and the State of Bihar, joined the villagers to dig twin pits for the toilets in the village including brick laying inside the pits and building of toilet. The village will be declared ODF tomorrow on World Toilet Day. The team also paid homage at various memorials to Gandhiji at Champaran. The team also participated in a Master Sanitation Trainers' Workshop organised by the State Government.

Early this morning, the team led by Secretary Shri Parameswaran Iyer began morning vigil exercise in the villages together with local Nigrani Samities to assess the extent of open defecation. An intense interpersonal communication exercise was undertaken with the people who had come out to defecate in open. The team also visited households to motivate people to build their own toilets. Village women and children enthusiastically participated in the interaction.

A special session with girl students of the area was organised at Turkauliya school.

The World Toilet Day initiative in Champaran is expected to give an impetus to the Swachh Bharat programme in Bihar which is making special efforts to accelerate its sanitation programme. In their interaction with the villagers, Secretary Iyer and his team emphasized the need to community's behaviour change and usage of toilet. The call was enthusiastically supported by the villagers who promised to make their villages ODF soon.



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