

C.NO. 6526/R1/2022

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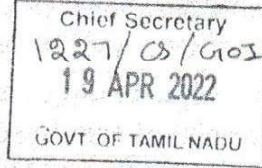
ACSCWRD) / ACSC MA-2WS
for necessary action

PANKAJ KUMAR
SECRETARY,
Ministry of Water Resources, River
Development & Ganga
Rejuvenation



NAGENDRA NATH SINHA
SECRETARY,
Department of Rural Development

SUNIL KUMAR
SECRETARY,
Ministry of Panchayati Raj



AJAY TIRKEY
SECRETARY,
Department of Land Resources

VINI MAHAJAN
SECRETARY,
Department of Drinking Water &
Sanitation

LEENA NANDAN
SECRETARY,
Ministry for Environment, Forests &
Climate Change

DO # L-11012/1/Amrit Sarovar/RE-VII-2022 (e.379839)

April 18, 2022

Dear Chief Secretary,

India is celebrating the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, marking 75 years of Independence from British rule this year. In order to commemorate this momentous occasion, it has been decided that at least 75 water bodies may be created or rejuvenated in every district. These may be called Amrit Sarovars. (1)

2. You are already implementing the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain Campaign. The creation/rejuvenation of the Amrit Sarovars will be a special effort under this programme. The Central Nodal Officers under Jal Shakti Abhiyaan-Catch the Rain campaign will also monitor the progress of Amrit Sarovar works during their field visits. (2) (3)

3. The size of Amrit Sarovars should be befitting the occasion that they commemorate. Following discussion with various stakeholders and field officials, it is suggested that a minimum pondage area of 1 Acre may be planned for. If the district is unable to create as many new Amrit Sarovars, they may take up rejuvenation/desilting of the existing structures for restoring their ecological and productive utility. (4)

- (i) In order to optimise the benefit of the Amrit Sarovars and to ensure that the implementation is done in the most credible manner, technology including remote sensing/geospatial will be used extensively from site selection stage till its completion. AMRIT SAROVAR portal developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application and Geomatics-National (BISAG-N) will be used to generate list of potential sites, monitor progress and upload media.

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- (ii) Such development proposal may include removal of encroachments both within the body as well as in the catchment and drainage, treatment of greywater flowing to it, plantation of tree such as नीम (Azadirachta indica), पीपल (Ficus religiosa), बरगद (Ficus benghalensis) etc. Special care be taken to ensure treatment of bund around the structure by ensuring layerwise compaction, including through use of machinery, turfing and appropriate slope thereof. However, public funds should not be used for beautification works. Citizens and non-government bodies may contribute, if they want such work to be taken up.
- (iii) ✓ A district wise plan of action regarding the Amrit Sarovars may be prepared and shared with the Department of Rural Development as well as with the National Water Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti. The action plan should include GPS coordinates of the selected sites, as well as the time required to complete the activity. While finalising the sites, District may provide focus on water stressed blocks, especially with reference to Drinking Water.
- (iv) Peoples' participation is key to entire initiative as it is meant to evoke collective spirit of the community. Equally important for the Campaign is to remember and recognize the families of freedom fighters and martyrs (of post-Independence era). They and those elder citizens who have watched the nation grow would lead their communities in foundation laying, inauguration and flag-hoisting on the eve of Amrit anniversary of Independence along with women, youth, school children and others. The sites of the Sarovars located in the villages of freedom fighters and martyrs would also be prioritised over others.
- (v) It will be necessary to also plan for use of the Amrit Sarovars a priori and users association be accordingly created largely drawn from members of the SHGs. They should be

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encouraged to participate in its development through their labour and also observe vigil on scrupulous implementation.

- (vi) If feasible Amrit Sarovars sites are located such that they lie partly or fully in the forest areas, the same may be taken up by the forest agencies or consent may be provided to other agency who may be entrusted with the work.
- (vii) This exercise may be begun as early as possible so as to complete a substantial number of structures by August 15, 2022. Those States, which may find it difficult to adhere to the above timetable on account of early rains e.g. the states in the North-East, may seek permission for following a different timetable within the financial year 2022-2023. In any case, all such structures must be completed by end of Amrit Varsh i.e. 15th August 2023.
- (viii) Every Amrit Sarovar worksite will have a common signage (Board) of standard size and logo. A template of the board will be shared by Ministry of Rural Development.

4. Resources for this activity available from MGNREGS, XV Finance Commission Grants (both tied and untied), PMKSY-WDC, PMKSY-HKPP-RRR or similar schemes from the State/ Central Govt. either singly or in combination may be accessed for this purpose.

5. Following calendar for development of the Amrit Sarovar is proposed:

- (i) **By 23th April 2022:** Identification of the potential site, site examination and stakeholder consultation
- (ii) 24th April 2022: Start of Amrit Sarovar Work
- (iii) By 15th August 2023: Completion of construction

6. Central/State Nodal Officers ~~may~~ assist the Distt. in following the above timetable and provide feedback to Central/State Govts. in this regard for corrective action, if any.


7. District and States should separately document the entire initiative recording various vignettes of development of Amrit Sarovar, unique features of mobilisation of the community, donations provided by the citizens etc.


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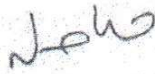
8. We look forward to your whole-hearted support in commemorating the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav by creating "Amrit Sarovars".


Yours sincerely,



(PANKAJ KUMAR)
SECRETARY (WR, RD&GR)


(SUNIL KUMAR)
SECRETARY (PANCHAYATI RAJ)


(VINI MAHAJAN)
SECRETARY (DRINKING WATER
& SANITATION)


(NAGENDRA NATH SINHA)
SECRETARY (RURAL
DEVELOPMENT)


(AJAY TIRKEY)
SECRETARY (LAND
RESOURCES)


(LEENA NANDAN)
SECRETARY (ENVIRONMENT,
FORESTS & CLIMATE CHANGE)

To
Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs