

Indore First Water Plus City in India

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Indore India's First 'Water Plus City'



Madam Pratibha Pal, IAS, Municipal Commissioner at Indore Municipal Corporation

Indore has made tremendous efforts in up-scaling its hygienic conditions making the city cleanest in whole of India. Waste Management Model has been demonstrated very successfully with no garbage bins spilling garbage on roads or stray animals feeding on waste either. Instead, waste

is managed and segregated at source separating bio-degradable waste and composting it. The waste dumping land has been cleaned and turned into a green area with no stink and no dirt around.



Map of Indore.



Similarly, waste water needed management too.

About 80% of sewage waste generated in India goes down the drain into the rivers and other water bodies without being treated. Research suggests that dysfunctional Sewage Treatment Plants (STP) and their outdated infrastructure have become one of the main reasons for such a high proportion of wastewater entering natural water bodies without treatment.

However, Indore, known as the cleanest city in India, has achieved yet another feat to solve sewage issues and become the first Water Plus city in the country.

A city is considered Water Plus under Swachh Survekshan, an initiative by the Central government to maintain cleanliness in rivers and drainage systems under the local administration.

Civic Chief of Indore Municipal Corporation Madam Pratibha Pal tells **The Better India**, “As per the guidelines from the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, a city can earn the Water Plus title by treating all wastewater emitted from households and commercial entities. The treatment of sewage should be satisfactory as per government norms before being released into water bodies.”

She says, “The criteria demands that no sewage water sans treatment should enter rivers or drains directly. Moreover, public and community toilets should connect with the sewage lines, and 30% of the wastewater generated by the city should be recycled for reuse.”

She adds, “There are two rivers, Kahn and Saraswati, that flow along Indore. Our survey to identify and plug sewage emissions showed that a whopping 7,000 outfalls and 17 nallahs were draining into the rivers.”

Pratibhaji says that like many other cities in the country, Indore did not have a robust sewage treatment system and treating wastewater was limited. “Moreover, the chambers were unclean and choked during the monsoons,” she adds.

The Municipal Commissioner says another challenge was to stop sewage flowing from unorganised areas like the slums and community toilets. “There were many civic body establishments where the wastewater was entering the drains directly. We decided to live by example by rectifying the system of all these establishments,” he says.

Pratibhaji says that once that was achieved, they reached out to residents of the slum areas and other water users to rectify their connections and become a part of the mainstream drainage system.

“It was difficult to explain the problem to the residents and convince them to come onboard. Some families were hesitant to bear the cost of connecting the water pipelines to the main drainage. But they were informed about how streamlining the sewage system would benefit their health and hygiene and contribute to the bigger cause. Eventually, they were ready to help,” she says.

She adds that small gutters and outfalls were plugged and connected to drainage lines. “At any given time, there were 150 contractors and 250

engineers and hundreds of officials working across the city, connecting with the residents and implementing the needful,” she says.

Pratibhaji explains that as per the norms, drainage lines should run dry during the non-monsoon season and only carry rainwater during the rains. “However, we continued to observe water flowing through the drains over months, and traced the sources until each of those connections and spill-outs became a part of the main drainage system,” she says..

Indore has demonstrated an example of Waste Management including turning waste water into recycled water for further use. It is a green effort and it highly commendable. It needed a very high degree of commitment with a vision and meticulous planning in execution.

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