

IITH bags MHRD's Swacchta Award

For uplifting villages under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan



Medak Collector Bharti Hollikeri and IITH professor Sashidhar receiving the award from HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ BY ARRANGEMENT

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In recognition of the role of Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH), in uplifting the villages under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) initiative, the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) presented Swacchta Award to the institute on Thursday. The award, presented by HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar, was received by Medak Collector Bharti Hollikeri and IITH professor Sashidhar.

As part of the UBA, the IITH, under the guidance of Prof. Sashidhar from department of civil engineering adopted five villages belonging to the members of Scheduled Tribe communities. The villages include Bujarampet, Ananthram, Kan-naram, Salabhatpur and Mohamed Nagar in Kowidipally mandal in Medak district. Speaking after receiv-

ing the award, Prof. Sashidhar said, "The Unnat Bharat Abhiyan gives an opportunity to understand challenges at the grass-root level. As a technical institute, we should not only work with mind, but with heart for sustainable village development."

The IITH, with the support of Ms. Hollikeri, conducted an extensive socio-economic survey of villages to identify the grass-root issues. Spatial and non-spatial information were mapped with the help of Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) survey.

During field visits, it was noted that despite heavy rains in 2016 that recharged the lakes and other water bodies in and around Kowdipally, there was negligible control over the usage and preservation of water among farmers and villagers. As a result, the ground-

water level in these villages had gone down by the end of February and most borewells had become dry. The people in these villages faced acute drinking water scarcity.

To overcome these challenges, the IITH initiated a hydrogeological study to identify and demarcate groundwater bearing and recharge zones. Two-dimensional Electrical Resistivity Tomography (ERT) survey was conducted in the adopted villages.

Also, groundwater quality analysis was carried out for the samples collected from various borewells in the adopted villages. It was observed that most of the groundwater samples showed fluoride level between 6-1.8 ppm, which was above the permissible levels. Soil samples from agriculture fields were collected and analysed.