“Every drop of rain must be conserved to make villages water-secure and self-reliant”- Secretary, DoLR, Shri Dilip Kumar

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DoLR Secretary reviews watershed development works in villages of Khed in Pune District under WDC-PMKSY 2.0

Shri Dilip Kumar, Secretary, Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, reviewed watershed development works under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0 (WDC-PMKSY 2.0) in Varude, Gulani and Wafgaon villages of Pune district, Maharashtra, on 30 October 2026. The key objectives of watershed development under the scheme include soil and water conservation measures, enhancing agricultural productivity, and promoting sustainable rural development.

Interacting with villagers after inspecting the works, Shri Dilip Kumar said, “**Water is the foundation of our future. Every drop of rain must be conserved to make villages water-secure and self-reliant.**”

He urged villagers to take collective responsibility for regular maintenance and repair of the water harvesting structures created under Watershed Development Scheme, so that these assets remain functional for the next 20 years. He also called for sustained efforts to transform villages under the Khed Project into water-secure and self-reliant communities, on the lines of Hiware Bazar.

Shri Nitin Khade, Joint Secretary (WM), DoLR; Dr. Jitendra Papalkar, Secretary, Soil and Water Conservation Department, Government of Maharashtra, and Smt. Ashwini Jagtap, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Vasundhara Watershed Development Agency, participated in the visit.

The Secretary visited watershed structures developed using the ridge-to-valley approach, including Continuous Contour Trenches (CCT), earthen nala bunds, cement nala bunds, Kolhapuri-type weirs and ponds for water storage. He reviewed the effectiveness of these structures in reducing rainwater runoff, enhancing groundwater recharge and improving water availability for agriculture, changes in groundwater levels and benefits received by beneficiaries.

The Secretary also reviewed farm ponds, horticulture plantations and agricultural equipment provided to beneficiaries under the scheme, along with benefits extended to women's self-help groups.

Villagers stated that watershed development works across 11 villages under the Khed Project had improved groundwater levels, enabling farmers to cultivate two to three crops annually thereby increasing agricultural income and rural livelihoods. They added that despite the drought-like conditions this year, water stored in farm ponds and improved water levels in wells associated with cement nala bunds and CCT structures have helped irrigate standing crops.

On 29 October 2026, Secretary DoLR chaired a review meeting at Yashada, Pune with Secretary, Soil and Water Conservation Department, Government of Maharashtra. He also reviewed the status of the WDC-PMKSY scheme, its financial and physical progress.



Shri Dilip Kumar directed officials to prioritise timely completion of water conservation works in drought-prone areas of Maharashtra, with a focus on enhancing water storage capacity and water security. Against the backdrop of El Nino conditions, he emphasised the need to expedite works in the 76 talukas covered under the scheme among the State's 304 drought-affected talukas. Watershed development works are key to effectively reduce the impact of drought. Priority works include percolation tanks, storage ponds, storage bunds and Kolhapuri-type weirs, which are expected to improve rainwater storage, strengthen village water availability, provide protective irrigation to crops and reduce the vulnerability of agriculture to drought-like conditions.

The meeting emphasised completion of projects within stipulated timelines, maintenance of quality standards, strengthening of Central-State coordination and effective utilisation of available funds.





The visit highlighted that watershed development works are key to effectively reducing the impacts of drought, and reinforced the importance of long-term maintenance of water conservation structures and community participation in building water-secure villages for building a Viksit Bharat.

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