



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare



Yet another village in Ahmednagar district becomes Covid free following Covid appropriate behaviour



Gram Panchayat plays a key role in effecting behavioural change

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While the whole country is battling the second wave of Covid-19, a small village in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra - Bhojare Khurd has used the tools of widespread public awareness, following Covid-appropriate behaviour, regular health check-ups and isolation of infected people to control the spread of the virus and eventually become COVID-free.

Following the footsteps of Hivare Bazaar, whose success story is already well documented, this small village with a population of 1,500 people has demonstrated that collective efforts of people has the power of reducing COVID-19 to zero and make an entire village corona-free.

At a distance of about 20 km away from Ahmednagar city, Bhojare Khurd is situated in a hilly belt. The area being drought-stricken, many villagers have migrated to Mumbai and other big cities in search of employment. However, after the State Government imposed lockdown, most of the -workers have come back to their native village.

In the initial phase, when 3 to 4 COVID-19 cases were detected in the village, the Gram Panchayat and the Health Department started conducting antigen tests for families with infected patients. The suspects and symptomatic persons were immediately isolated.



Following this, the villagers took upon themselves some initiatives to keep their village corona-free. All families in the village were checked from time to time with the help of ASHA and Anganwadi workers, as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare from time to time.



“If symptoms like fever, cough or fatigue were observed, such people were immediately subjected to Antigen test and kept in isolation”, informs Dr Savita Kute who was involved in these works.

Simultaneously, a widespread awareness campaign was launched in the village temples where loudspeakers were used to convey messages about Covid Appropriate Behaviours every morning and evening. The villagers were informed about the disease and how to take care of themselves and their families under the prevailing pandemic situation.

Covid appropriate behaviour messages like wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands frequently, regular health check-ups and isolation of people, as stressed upon by the Centre and State’s Covid Communication Campaigns, were reiterated time and again.



After state-wide lockdown was announced, Bhojare Khurd Gram Panchayat implemented “Gaon Band” initiative to check the spread of Covid.

Sarpanch Rajendra Ambekar said, suspected persons were persuaded to stay in an isolation centre set up in the village which helped to break the chain and this led to become the village corona-free by the month of May. “If other villages follow the example of our village, it will not take long for them to become free from Covid-19”, added Ambekar.

Speaking about the challenges faced by them, Gram Sevak Nand Kishore Devkar said “initially it was very difficult to convince village people to stay away from their families. But gradually, they understood the threat and it became easy for us to quarantine the infected persons.

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