

## **Simhastha: DRDO's bio-toilets technique to be used**

Bio toilets technique conceptualized by DRDO will be utilized in the Ujjain Simhastha for a month. WaterAid India with its month long campaign "Swachh Simhastha, Swasth Hum" along with Ujjain Municipal Corporation (UMC) aim to create awareness at the mela sites about the importance of using toilets, avoiding open defecation, importance of safe drinking water, good hygiene and menstrual hygiene management and preventing water pollution.

Dozens of volunteers of WaterAid with the help of UMC are working in the mela area to ensure that millions of pilgrims have adequate toilet facilities and use them.

"A series of other awareness activities like nukkad natak, informative videos etc have also been planned in the larger effort to make mela gatherings open-defecation free in the next few days," Ankita Bhalla, who works with WaterAid India, told Hindustan Times.

A model Sulabh toilet complex at Dani Gate has also been developed to support the UMC in providing access to safe sanitation facilities to the Kumbh pilgrims.

A sanitary napkin vending machine and incinerator for disposal of these pads has also been installed in the toilets for women. To save water used for flushing, two waterless urinals have been installed in this complex.

Thirteen balloons, which will be lit up in the night, have also been set up near the toilet complexes to guide people to the nearest toilets. WaterAid India has also set up a stall, canopies and display walls at 13 entry points to the mela areas to disseminate information on various aspects of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and the work done by the organization. A street theatre group will also perform short interactive skits at different mela sites to engage and inform the visiting pilgrims on issues of sanitation, hygiene and the link between WASH and health.

### **How are bio-toilets different**

Till now community toilets was using septic tank technology and could overflow due to high usage. Since the toilet complex is very close to the river Kshipra, bio-digester toilet technology was felt to be the ideal option as the effluent is much cleaner. The technology will take care of all faecal sludge and keep the area clean and odour free. The only waste created are methane gas and effluents.

### **Loo with a View**

Such toilets hve a one way mirror door through which the person inside using the toilet can see outside – while to those outside, the door appears as a mirror and they're unable to see in.