

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. – 120
ANSWERED ON 29/01/2026

OPERATIONAL STATUS OF SPM-NIWAS, JOKA

120. SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPMNIWAS), set up at Joka, Kolkata with an investment of nearly Rs. 100 crore, has so far commenced the promised Master's and Post-Doctoral programmes and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the institute's R&D laboratory has received NABL accreditation as originally envisaged and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Technology and Solutions Bank and the Digital Academy have been fully operationalised for public access and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons for delay in achieving these core objectives along with the specific timelines fixed by the Government for their completion?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI V. SOMANNA)

- (a) to (d) An Expert Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India to finalise the roadmap and vision of the then National Centre for Drinking Water, Sanitation & Quality (NCDWSQ) [now renamed as Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS)], an autonomous institute under the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti. Keeping in view the intended objectives and outcomes, the committee had suggested a vision and roadmap of the institute which *inter-alia* envisaged Masters, Doctorate and Post Doctorate level programmes. The institute was inaugurated in December 2022 as an apex institute aims to bridge the knowledge and capacity building gap in the field of public health engineering, sanitation & hygiene, through short, medium & long-term courses which are not just related to engineering but also cover aspects of management, health, accounting, law and public policies.

NEERI, Nagpur was engaged for planning, designing, and development of a national-level, state-of-the-art R&D water quality laboratory at NCDWSQ, Joka, Kolkata, along with its allied works, for which the letter of award for the preparation of the Detailed Project Report

(DPR) was issued in January 2021. Subsequent to the operationalization of the Institute in December 2022, the proposal of setting up of R&D laboratory has been revisited with an initial focus on an operational laboratory with high-end equipment, followed by a research laboratory at a later stage.

The Institute is using a commercial Virtual Conferencing (VC) platform named as “SPM NIWAS Digital Academy” to deliver its webinars and online courses. The purpose is to utilize this platform for continuous capacity building of human resource including government officials, engineers, representatives of panchayati raj institutions, consultants and frontline workers of WASH sectors and adoption of good practices for improving the state of safe drinking water supply and sanitation in rural India. In financial year 2025-26, 16 webinars and 78 online courses have been conducted till 20.01.2026 on this platform. It is fully operational.

SPM-NIWAS has also developed a concept of an innovative database “Technology and Solution Bank” to capture various innovations developed by private and government bodies in WASH sector. The proposal was received in Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation for comments and it has been suggested that any initiative in this regard may be taken up in convergence with this Department, so as to avoid overlap or duplication at the departmental level. The existing DDWS portal shall continue to function as the central repository for approved and recommended innovative technologies in the WASH sector.
