

'Khelo Chanda Abhiyaan' - The Innovative Activity in Chandrapur District under MGNREGS

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is a social security measure that aims to guarantee the right to work, ensure livelihood security and promote asset creation in rural areas. The asset creation through MGNREGS aims to bridge rural infrastructure gaps and empower communities both economically and socially. Within this framework, the construction of playgrounds was identified as an initiative to create sports assets, promote physical well-being and intellectual development of rural children and youths.

In rural areas, there is a significant lack of dedicated sports infrastructure, limiting opportunities for communities to engage in year-round physical activities and explore potential careers in sports. This shortage of space contributes to sedentary lifestyles and associated health issues. Additionally, access to sports infrastructure is predominantly concentrated in urban areas which was leaving rural communities with minimal exposure to such opportunities. Recognizing this critical gap, Zilla Parishad Chandrapur launched the '**Khelo Chanda Abhiyaan**' to address the issue by constructing playgrounds in rural areas under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Accordingly, to promote outdoor activities and enhance physical and mental well-being among rural youth and to encourage them to participate in various sports and explore their areas of interest. This innovative campaign was implemented in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra State. Under this initiative it was decided to construct five Playgrounds in one block. Accordingly, 75 playgrounds successfully constructed in the Chandrapur district in a financial year 2023-24 and 2024-25 with the help of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.



These 75 playgrounds have been constructed, catering to students from over 120 villages in the vicinity. This laid the foundation for the development of sports like Cricket, Basketball, Volleyball, etc. in the rural areas of Chandrapur district. For proper implantation of the campaign various departments were involved and their expertise was utilized including MGNREGS, the Works Department and the Sports Department. Several Monitoring Committees were formed at block and Gram Panchayat level under the chairmanship of Block Development Officer and Sarpanch respectively to ensure proper implementation and execution of the works. The gram panchayat played a pivotal role in this initiative, serving as the primary catalyst in mobilizing community members, identifying locations for constructing playgrounds and ensuring ownership after completion. For appropriate execution of the project, complete start-to-end designs and model estimates were prepared by the district team under the supervision of Mr. Vivek Johnson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), ZP Chandrapur.





Playgrounds in Chandrapur	
Block	Count
Ballarpur	4
Bhadrawati	5
Bramhpuri	5
Chandrapur	5
Chimur	11
Gondpimpri	5
Jivati	5
Korpana	3
Mul	4
Nagbhid	5
Pombhurna	6
Rajura	3
Saoli	5
Sindewahi	4
Warora	5
Total	75

This initiative was one of the remarkable works in the state, where sports infrastructure was constructed through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The estimated cost of this work is Rs. 25 lakhs, unskilled portion is 1.78 lakh and skilled is 23.22 lakh which creates 650 mandays. This model is now being adopted by various districts across the state. The impact of this initiative extends beyond the immediate benefits of boosting fitness, nurturing talent and increasing girl's participation. It sets the stage for a brighter future where the youth are not only physically active but also equipped with the skills and mindset to pursue promising careers in various sports-related fields.

These infrastructures provide opportunities for rural youth to play sports year-round, rather than just seasonally. Village-level trophies and tournaments are also being organized in these playgrounds generating a sense of pride and ownership among the villagers. Completion of these playgrounds have brought a noticeable change in the community's lifestyle. Now children have a dedicated space to play, reducing their screen time and encouraging outdoor activities. The playground also serves as a venue for community events and enhancing community spirit. It has also generated large-scale local employment in the villages and provided work to needy labours during peak migration periods under MGNREGS.

The success stories of this work show the positive impact of the playground project and highlight the dedication and efforts of the Gram Panchayat and community members to create a valuable asset for the 75 villages in the Chandrapur district.

"We are thrilled to have this new playground in our villages. It has brought our community closer, and rural children and youth are happier and healthier. This project has truly transformed to the village, and we are grateful to everyone who made it possible."

- Villagers