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PM Modi talks to water warrior from Bidar

STAFF REPORTER
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Srinivas Jonnakeri, president of Dhupadamahagaon Gram Panchayat in Aurad taluk of Bidar district, was one among five persons who interacted with Prime Minister Narendra Modi through video-conferencing on World Water Day. Five Gram Panchayats from across India, who have made significant contribution for water conservation, were picked for the interaction.

Mr. Jonnakeri's initiative and efforts in mobilising his villagers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and dredging a village lake - Goggavvana Kere - during the COVID-19 lockdown had caught the attention of the Jal Shakti Ministry.

Dedicated volunteers

He has been a part of Team Yuva, a group of dedicated volunteers that has been working for water conservation in Bidar district, ever

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SRINIVAS JONNAKERI,
president, Dhupadamahagaon Gram
Panchayat

since its formation in 2013. The group has dredged over 350 wells and kalyanis, and 30 lakes so far, and gave them a new lease of life.

"The Prime Minister enquired whether I was supported by the villagers. I told him that all the water conservation activities were taken up with the consent and the active support of the people as it was their requirement," he told *The Hindu*. A large screen was put up in the village to enable the villagers to watch the interaction.