

Swachh Bharat Mission a Step Towards Environmental Protection

Dr. Sumangala, J.K

Lt. Ashok Babu, N

Assistant Prof. of commerce, Govt First Grade College, Managuli, Bijapur, Karnataka.
Asst.Prof., Dept. of Physical Education, Govt. First Grade College, Malur, Kolar District,
Karnataka

Abstract

Swachh Bharat Programme launched on 2 October with Mahathma Gandhi as the inspiration, to create a clean India of his dreams by 2019, his 150th birth anniversary. The department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India flagged a leaflet Swachh Bharath and Swachh Vidyalaya campaign detailing number of schools without toilets, the average cost of construction, maintenance and repair of toilet blocks, and inviting donors Individuals, corporates or Institutions. The ministry of drinking water and sanitation, government of India has launched the awareness campaign from 25 September, 2014, to 23 October, 2014. Two of India's biggest companies Tata consultancy service and Bharathi have committed Rs. 100 crore each to build toilets in schools for girls. Coca-Cola has further build on its ongoing sanitation programme to construct toilets in schools.

Keywords: Swachh Bharath, Mission, Clean India, sanitation, drinking water

Introduction

The Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has launched Swachh Bharat Mission on 2 October with an aim to create a clean India By 2019. He stressed the importance of cleanliness to economic activity, contributing to rise in Gross Domestic Product, reduction in health care costs, and a source of employment. Linking Cleanliness to tourism and global interest in India, the Prime Minister has said world class levels of hygiene and cleanliness are required to make India among topmost 50 tourist destinations in the world.

Issues and Concerns

The clarion for 'Clean India' (Swachh Bharat) campaign on 15th August must be acknowledged, appreciated and adopted by every citizen of the country as an actor in the making of the nation. However, it must be noted that the 'Clean India'. However, it must be noted that the 'Clean India' campaign should not be a christened version of the similar such campaigns like total Sanitation Campaign or Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan which aimed at Universalizing safe sanitation. In this context, the present article endeavours to briefly review the significant efforts and initiatives for clean India in the recent past and the lessons that could be taken for making 'Clean India' campaign a reality. This inter alia means that even in 21st century our rural masses are compelled to either open defecation practice or to the unhygienic toilets and even the dry latrines. The practice of open defecation is a shame on the nation and a serious affront on the dignity of women. The dry toilets, apart from the a store house for the vectors of diseases and epidemics, sustain the in human practice of manual scavenging where by our fellow human beings belonging to specific caste groups are compelled to clean the human excreta in the most inhuman conditions.

Consequently, there are positive developments on part of Government Departments and Corporate Sector. The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has flagged a leaflet Swachh Bharat and Swachh Vidyalaya Campaign detailing the number of government schools without toilets the average cost of construction, maintenance and repair of toilet blocks, and inviting donors individuals or corporates or Institutions. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India has launched the National Sanitation awareness Campaign from 25 September 2014 to 23 October 2014. Two of India's biggest companies, Tata Consultancy Service and Bharati have committed Rs. 100 Crore each to build toilets in schools for girls. Coca-Cola has

committed to further build on its ongoing sanitation Programme to construct toilets in schools.

Further to add vigour to its implementation Government of India launched an award based incentive scheme for fully sanitized and open defecation free Grama Panchayats, Blocks, Districts and States called 'Nirmal Grama Puraskar' in October, 2003 (Guidelines Nirmal Grama Puraskar, Nirmal Bharat: Abhiyan December, 2012, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Govt. of India, New Delhi). The objectives of the Nirmal Gram Puraskar are to promote safe sanitation and clean environment as a way of life in rural India; to incentives Panchayati Raj Institutions to make the villages open Defecation free and to adopt Solid and Liquid Waste Management; to sustain the initiative of clean environment; and to encourage organizations to play a catalytic role in social mobilization in the implementation Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan.

Gandhiji's Concept of Sanitation

In the school of freedom struggle, 'Safai' and 'Swachchata' was the test to graduation Vinoba Bhave, Takkar Baba, J.C. Kumarappa and innumerable youngsters with sparkling brilliance, joined the freedom struggle and took to safai and swachchata root to independence. As a researcher of truth, Gandhiji maintained meticulous lifestyle and accorded highest importance to cleanliness. Gandhiji realized the indispensable place of sanitation in nation building. Spearheading freedom struggle, he explained the dimensions of freedom and highlighted the importance of 'clean behaviour'. In this context, he stated 'before we think of self-government, we shall have to do necessary plodding. From the standpoint of health, Gandhiji termed the condition of villages as deplorable. "One of the chief cause's of our poverty is the non-availability or inadequacy of good sanitation facilities and ignorance of hygiene.

Gandhiji deemed cleaning as an act of purification and drew immense joy. Gandhiji proposed 'every village should have the most inexpensive water closets built at one place'. The whole sanitation is unexplored; the profession, far from being a dirty one, is a purifying, life protecting one. Gandhiji called Satyagraha and Constructive Programme as two wings of the same bird, without one, the other has no sense. The irrevocable connection Gandhiji built between constructive programme such as sanitation and freedom struggle was evident all over the country. Toilet cleaning and "sanitation work became the qualification of asatyagrahi". Every public meeting, whether a call for satyagraha against the British or an initiative of social reform, the meeting had 'village cleaning' as an inalienable beginning.

A section of Indians known as scavengers were engaged for generations in the task of removing night soil from the old-style basket-type (dry) latrines, and who were therefore looked down upon. Gandhiji was very concerned with the suffering of these people because he felt that though they were considered to be at the bottom of society, they executed the most important tasks of organizing community sanitation and health. Innumerable institutes took up on Gandhiji's call and started 'Safai' Campaign; Safai Vidyalaya - Dehu Road, Nirmal Gram Nirman Kendra, Nasik are some of them that took it religiously. Harijan Sevak Sangh established Safai Vidyalaya (Sanitation institute) in 1963 at the Sabarmati Ashram, Gujarat, with purpose of liberating the scavengers from this kind of work.

Challenges

About 590 Million persons in rural areas defecate in the open. The Mindset of a major portion of the population habituated to open defecation needs to be changed. Many of them already have a toilet but prefer to defecate in the open. The biggest challenge therefore is triggering behaviour change in vast section of rural population regarding need to use toilets. Other problems like problems of convergence between MNREGA and Nirmal Bharati Abhiyan, need for availability of water for use of toilets, how to deal with toilets already constructed which have become defunct or dysfunctional, inadequate dedicated staff at the field level for implementation of rural sanitation have also to be dealt with.

The 'Clean India' campaign must capitalize on the momentum generated by the existing sanitation initiatives and networks in India especially the rural India. The agenda now must be for the 'total sanitation' in the country in its villages, slums, towns or cities. It must move from the provision of sanitary toilets to the sustainable safe sanitation and clean environment. Its emphasis must also be placed on systematic budget allocations to make sure that money is spent appropriately and effectively and that implementers should be held accountable for their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, the 'Clean India' campaign must focus on the complete prohibition of dry latrines and total rehabilitation of persons liberated from manual scavenging in terms of skilled trainings and gainful employment.

Conclusion

Changing mindset is very important. Since most of the I.E.S. funds are with states, the State Governments will have to focus on interpersonal communication through students, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, Doctors, Teachers, Block Coordinators etc., including house-to-house visits. In addition, distribution of information through short films, use of T.V., Radio, Digital Cinema, and Pamphlets will be carried out. Local and National sports/Cinema icons are required to be engaged by states to spread the message of safe sanitation practices to change mindsets. Interpersonal Communication through N.G.Os. SHG's, School Children, and Local Women's Groups etc., for dissemination of information and for motivation of the people could be explored.

References

1. "Swachh Bharat campaign should become mass movement: Narendra Modi". The Economic Times. Retrieved 2 October 2014.
2. "PM reviews preparations for launch of Mission Swachh Bharat". Retrieved 7 October 2014.
3. "Swachh Bharat: PM Narendra Modi launches 'Clean India' mission". Zee News. Retrieved 2 October 2014.
4. "Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan: PM Narendra Modi to wield broom to give India a new image". The Times of India. Retrieved 2 October 2014.
5. "As it happened: PM Narendra Modi's 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'". Retrieved 2 October 2014.
6. "Time to clean up your act", Hindustan Times
7. "Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan: PM Modi govt builds 7.1 lakh toilets in January". First post.
8. Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan: Is Modi's scheme a success one year later?, Hindustan Times, 10 October 2015
9. "Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan: Government builds 7.1 lakh toilets in January". Times of India.