

UJALA scheme launched in Melaka, Malaysia

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Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) , under Ministry of Power, Government of India has launched UJALA (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable Lighting for All) Scheme in the State of Melaka, Malaysia today . The Scheme was launched by Chief Minister of Melaka Datuk Seri Utama Ir. Hj. Idris Bin Hj. Haron. In due course of time, the successful Indian model of UJALA scheme has become a sought-after example for the different nations of the world and will now be implemented in Melaka to extend programme benefits to people of the region.

Under this scheme, each household in Melaka will get 10 high quality 9-watt LED bulbs at a cost of only RM 10, which is a special price and is almost half of what is being offered in the market. The distribution of these LED bulb will take place from 28 numbers of Japerun in the region. These Japerun are a unique community welfare and engagement centers, which are situated across the Melakan State. Under the extensive and ever-expanding idea of UJALA, Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) plans to distribute about 1 million 9W LED bulbs, which will replace 18W CFLs. The initiative will have the logistical assistance and facilitation support from Green Growth Asia, which is a not for profit organization. The price of each bulb will be way lesser than global average price of the LED bulbs, which still swings between 3-5 USD. Notably, each bulb that is being provided by EESL under the UJALA scheme in Melaka comes with a 3-year free replacement warranty against any technical defects. These bulbs sent from India will be of leading brands and manufacturers like Osram, Philips along with other companies of repute.

Giving an overview of expectations from the UJALA scheme, Chief Minister of Melaka, Malaysia, Datuk Seri Utama Ir. Hj. Idris Bin Haron, said, "India's zero-subsidy UJALA programme has paved the way for a brighter future and has now travelled to our country. We will do our bit to seize the learnings of this programme and replicate the same in Malaysian State of Melaka. This will not only benefit the environment, but will also foster new avenues of economic growth in the region." A reflection of State Government's aspirations, this inclusive scheme will positively impact the economy of the region. This programme will further improve the quality of life of the people residing in the region. With an aim to reduce the annual household electricity bills by approximately 10.22 million RM every year, households will be able to make significant monetary savings in their

electricity bills.

UJALA's impact in Malaysia will bring about clean energy, contribute to climate change targets and save the already dwindling energy resources. With a fairly large switch to LED bulbs, Melaka will be able to reduce carbon emissions by around 19,000 tonnes per year. An innovative zero-subsidy model, this scheme will help reduce the subsidy burdens of the State Government. The concept of energy efficiency has strongly overcome many bottlenecks and this adoption by a Malaysian State is yet another achievement towards furthering the idea of energy efficiency to conserve the resources, money and environment.

Sh. Rajkumar Rakhra, National Programme Manager of the UJALA scheme at EESL said, "It is a joyous occasion for us all that EESL's UJALA scheme has taken a new stride. Post the United Kingdom, the latest entrant is the Malaysian market. This unique model promises prosperity and Energy Efficiency Services Limited will extend all possible assistance to Melaka for reaping the benefits alike India. We will showcase our best practices from India to take UJALA scheme forward in the region."

The UJALA programme has been one of the prime achievements of Government of India in promoting and executing the concept of energy efficiency. A simple act of change of one light bulb to LED at South Block Prime Minister's office in India heralded a movement in the entire country for considering the same change. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Sh. Narendra Modi on January 5, 2015 had launched the world's largest and most extensive LED distribution programme, UJALA (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable Lighting for All). In this initiative, the nodal organisation, EESL, had undertaken the task of setting up phase-wise LED distribution centers across the nation to provide people with affordable LED bulbs and energy efficient appliances. Due to bulk LED bulb procurement by EESL, a healthy competition rose among the manufacturers and this brought down the prices of LED bulbs in India from a range of about Rs. 300 - Rs.400 to about Rs. 70 per bulb. Through this journey, EESL began to majorly transform the market for energy efficient lighting in India in a mere span of only a year.

Currently, over 25-crore LED bulbs have been distributed under the UJALA scheme in India, which are resulting in 33,828 mn kWh of energy savings per year. While about 13,531 crores are being saved in energy bills of consumers per annum, about 2,74,00,887 tonnes of CO₂ reduction is taking place per year. Social surveying in India had strongly indicated a public contentment with the scheme and people openly

expressed their happiness after witnessing reduction in their electricity bills.

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Social revolution in a JAM

Safe metal box money secure concept symbol vector

In a post on Facebook made on the third anniversary of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) last week, the Finance Minister reportedly said: “Just as GST (goods and services tax) created one tax, one market, one India, the PMJDY and the JAM revolution can link all Indians into one common financial, economic, and digital space. No Indian will be outside the mainstream.” The suggestion of equality as a criterion of governance that is conveyed by this is to be welcomed. JAM, deriving from Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile, combines bank accounts for the poor, who barely had the money to deposit in them, direct transfer of benefits into these accounts and the facility of making financial payments through mobile phones. Aadhaar is the pivot here, allowing the government to ensure that benefits reach the poor and enabling them to make payments through ordinary mobile phones. For furthering the latter the government has devised the Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) app. The Minister spoke of these developments as a “social revolution”, perhaps alluding to the feature that the poor are the most direct beneficiaries.

There is no doubt that eliminating leakage in the transfer of welfare payments and enabling the poor to have bank accounts are worthy objectives, and when achieved should be considered significant. Indeed, it is damning that a largely nationalised banking sector had done very little to extend banking services to the poor till recently, and credit goes to this government that it made this a priority. But claims of having achieved inclusion by operationalising the JAM trinity appear somewhat exaggerated. A financial inclusion, in the sense of everyone having a bank account and access to reliable and free electronic payments system, is not the same as economic inclusion. At its most basic level, inclusion from the economic point of view would entail equal access to opportunities for earning a livelihood. This in turn implies employment opportunities. As the demand for labour is a derived demand, in the sense that it exists only when there is demand for goods and services, a significant element in ensuring inclusion is to maintain, directly or indirectly, the level of demand in the economy. Next, even when the demand for labour exists, potential workers must be endowed with the capabilities to take advantage of the opportunity offered. The potential of the JAM trinity for bringing about either of these conditions for economic inclusion is limited. This is so because JAM functions in the digital space while much of our life is lived in the brick and mortar world. In the latter space we have seen very little improvement, not just recently but since economic reforms were launched over 25 years ago.

The economic reforms of 1991 were largely in the nature of liberalisation of the policy regime, meant to make it easier for firms to produce while at the same time exposing them to international competition with a view to increasing efficiency in the economy. What a strategy based exclusively on liberalisation overlooks is that an ecosystem of production is constituted not only by the laws and regulations determining the ease of doing business, but also the access that firms have to producer services ranging from water supply to waste management. These producer services require large capital outlay, often deterring private firms. When private entities do provide these producers services they tend to be expensive, deterring their off-take. It is for this reason that globally they are generally provided by governments. In India the case for public provision of producer services, and there is no reason to provide them free of charge, is particularly high as the overwhelming part of employment is in the form of self-employment. These units are scraping the barrel as it is. Even when producer units employ workers they are poorly capitalised, making it almost impossible for them to generate producer services themselves. Thus the public provision of producer services should be an essential part of public policy. Empowerment in the brick and mortar space would require public infrastructure on a gigantic scale compared to what we have now.

Moving from production to being, JAM cannot even claim equalisation, leave alone empowerment. Amartya Sen effectively settled a longstanding debate on the question of the metric to be used to gauge equality when he proposed that it should be human capabilities. These are the endowments that allow individuals to undertake functionings they value. We would have achieved a social revolution when we have equipped all individuals with the essential capabilities. This happens when a society has, at a minimum, universal health and education infrastructure accessible to all.

We have in recent weeks witnessed governance failure on a major scale in many parts of the country. In U.P.'s Gorakhpur district children have died due to systemic failure that meant that a district's only hospital is not able to maintain a steady supply of oxygen. Later a heavy downpour in Mumbai led to a complete shutdown, widespread loss of livelihood and some of life. And most recently, in Delhi's suburb of Ghazipur a garbage mountain came crashing down, again causing death and disruption. But we would need to turn to Bengaluru to recognise the limits to information technology in solving problems of living. Lakes that are toxic when they haven't been gobbled up by the real estate mafia, traffic snarls and inadequate sewerage make life less than easy in this IT hub aspiring to play first cousin to Silicon Valley.

Given the extraordinary challenges faced by India in the provision of public infrastructure ranging from health and education to drainage and sewerage, the claim made for JAM is breathtaking in its simplicity. JAM ensures seamless transfer of welfare payments and facilitates the making payments in real time. Once again, these are worthy objectives, but fall well short of the social revolution the honourable minister claims for them. Our social revolution will arrive when all Indians are empowered through an equality of capabilities. This would require committing resources to building the requisite social and physical infrastructure and investing time to govern its functioning. JAM may have achieved equality in the digital space but is far from having empowered Indians in spheres in which they are severely deprived at present, an empowerment that they clearly value. The government has leveraged IT smartly in operationalising JAM but the possibility of replicating this to transform the ecosystem of production for firms and the ecosystem of living for individuals is limited. The widespread disempowerment faced by the people of this country predates the arrival of Narendra Modi, but his government appears to give false comfort through its claims.

In a market economy one of the markers of what the public think of the government's policies is the response of private investors. Private investment in India has declined steadily over the past few years. Overall growth had however been maintained, partly through the demand generating impact of public investment. But now even growth appears to be stalling. The latest GDP figures from the Central Statistics Office show growth in the first quarter of the current financial year to be lower than the average for 2016-17. Data actually point to a steadily slowing economy with growth having been successively lower in the past five quarters. There appears to be a mismatch between the government's own assessment of its policies and the private sector's valuation of their worth. The jubilation over JAM is an instance of this.

Pulapre Balakrishnan is Professor of Economics at Ashoka University, Sonapat and Senior Fellow, IIM Kozhikode. Views are personal

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Vishwajeet scheme a non-starter

Prakash Javadekar

V. Ramgopal Rao, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, on Tuesday expressed disappointment that the ambitious Vishwajeet scheme of the Union government had become a non-starter.

The scheme, which entailed the provision of Rs. 1,250 crore to each of the top seven IITs over a period of five years to upgrade infrastructure, hire foreign faculty, and collaborate with foreign institutions to break into the top league in global rankings, has reportedly been shot down by the Finance Ministry.

Director's complaint

Mr. Rao expressed his disappointment over the scheme's failure in the presence of Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar at a function in IIT Delhi.

"Since the Minister is here, I must also tell him that we are a little disappointed that the Vishwajeet proposal did not go through..." Mr. Rao said in his address.

"The Vishwajeet scheme was something we were desperately looking for — at least the older, top five or seven IITs were banking on it. We are already in the top 500. With a little bit of push from the government, we could make it to the top 100. The structures are there, the processes are there. All we need is an intervention in terms of financial resources."

He said he was confident that IIT Delhi would break into the top 100 in three or four years with schemes such as Vishwajeet. "I hope that we will want [this] to happen ... We would like to see the initiative taken up, and we are sure that it will happen under the current dispensation," he added.

None of the IITs are currently ranked in the world's top 350, as per the 14th edition of the Times Higher Education's World University Rankings.

More on the anvil

Responding to Mr. Rao's comment in his speech, Mr. Javadekar said the Higher Education Finance Agency (HEFA), the Uchchar Avishkar Yojana, and the Prime Minister's proposed scholarships of Rs. 75,000 a month were schemes to be benefited from.

"You talked about Vishwajeet but we have already started three major things like Vishwajeet through other agencies. Higher Education Finance Agency is already operational. We are leveraging Rs. 2,000 crore of budgetary support in the debt market and creating Rs. 20,000 crore of funding. We are doing this to create the best research infrastructure in the higher education sector. Therefore you should be the first to demand money from HEFA. Yes, it has to be repaid but you repay it without interest. That's a great thing," Mr. Javadekar said.

The Minister added, "There is also the Uchchar Avishkar Yojana. You must go to various industries and bring them to your campus. They will invest at least Rs. 2-3 crores annually in research excellence centres. Then there are the Prime Minister's proposed scholarships too."

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Swachhta Hi Seva

Swachhta Hi Seva

Unprecedented nationwide campaign on Swachhta: India responds to Prime Minister's Call

Starting tomorrow, the whole country will take up sanitation initiatives, for over 15 days, in an unprecedented campaign to highlight, once again, the *jan* andolan that is the Swachh Bharat Mission. This follows an impassioned call by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, ahead of the 3rd anniversary of Swachh Bharat Mission that falls on 2nd October. The Prime Minister has named the nation-wide sanitation campaign from 15th September to 2nd October 2017 as "Swachhta Hi Seva". This is being coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, the convening Ministry for the Swachh Bharat Mission.

The objective of the campaign is to mobilise people and reinforce the "Jan Aandolan" for sanitation to contribute to Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a Clean India. Swachhta Hi Seva campaign will see large scale mobilisation of people from all walks of life to undertake shramdaan for cleanliness and construction of toilets and to make their environments free from open defecation. There will be targeted cleaning of public and tourist places. The participation will range from the President of India to the common citizen and would involve Union Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, legislators celebrities and top officials. Celebrities, faith leaders, corporate honchos etc. are being mobilised to spearhead the campaign in their respective areas of influence.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has made elaborate plans along with the State Governments to involve people from various walks of life and make this an unprecedented people's campaign. Reaching out to the poor and marginalised and providing them with sustainable sanitation services would be the hallmark of this campaign.

The campaign is scheduled to be launched by President of India on the 15th of September 2017 from village *Ishwarigunj* in Kanpur that has attained the status of open free defecation status. The President would administer nation-wide "Swachhta Hi Seva" pledge thereby initiating parallel action in all the 250,000 plus Gram Panchayats and cities in India. The launch campaign will be joined by Sushri Uma Bharti, Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation; Shri Ram Naik, Governor of Uttar Pradesh; Shri Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and 7 persons representing various sectors of society, who are involved in supporting Swachh Bharat Mission.

Arrangements have been made to ensure formal launch of "Swachhta Hi Seva" campaign in all States and Districts involving Governors, Chief Ministers, State Ministers, MPs, MLAs and District Collectors. Pledged will be taken and Shramdaans done in Panchayats and other places simultaneously.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has identified special dates during the campaign period. It includes three Sundays, 17th, 24th September and 1st October when people are being mobilised to do large scale shramdaan for toilet construction, cleaning of public places, bus stands, school and colleges, statues, hospitals and ponds in rural and urban areas. A special cleanliness drive is planned in 15 identified tourist places on 1st October 2017.

Vice President, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, is scheduled to visit a village in Karnataka on 17th September 2017, which is being celebrated as "Seva Diwas" and offer shramdaan for toilet construction and general cleanliness. A large number of Union Ministers, MPs and MLAs are also scheduled to offer shramdaan across the length and breadth of the country on this day.

On Seva Diwas, 17th September, Doordarshan has organised a World TV Premiere of "Toilet: Ek Prem Katha", a film that has an overwhelming message about access and usage of toilets on

Doordarshan, at 11am. Community viewing of the telecast is being mobilised to effect positive behaviour change. Several media houses have voluntarily come out to mount special campaigns for Swachhta during the fortnight.

At the culminating event of the fortnight on October 2 Gandhi Jayanti, which is also the Swachh Bharat Diwas, national awards for essays, films and paintings, and other Swachh Bharat awards will be presented to Swachhta champions from across the country and all walks of life. The fortnight was preceded by a countrywide essay, short films and paintings competition, especially focused on schools, youth organisations, central police forces, besides general citizens.

The Ministry has created a special portal and web page on MyGov.in facilitating people to upload pre and post intervention photos of their shramdaan and other interventions.

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President launches nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva jan aandolan from Kanpur**President launches nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva jan aandolan from Kanpur**

The President Shri Ram Nath Kovind today launched the nationwide jan aandolan, Swachhta Hi Seva, from Iswarigunj, a village in Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh. With this the whole country swings in to mass Shramdaan for toilet making and cleaning of public places for next two weeks.

“Swachhta Hi Seva” Campaign is an unprecedented campaign to highlight, once again, the jan aandolan that is the Swachh Bharat Mission. This follows an impassioned call by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, ahead of the 3rd anniversary of Swachh Bharat Mission that falls on 2nd October, 2017. The objective of the campaign is to mobilise people between 15th September and 2nd October, reigniting the “jan aandolan” for sanitation. Union Ministers, MLAs, MPs, iconic celebrities of India, sports stars, inter-faith leaders, corporates, etc. have been appealed to join in this campaign towards swachhta.

The President administered the nation-wide “Swachhta Hi Seva” pledge in Kanpur, which simultaneously initiated parallel action in all Gram Panchayats and cities of the country. He honoured village level champions from Uttar Pradesh who have contributed to making various villages, including Iswarigunj, open defecation free. The President also launched the Solid and Liquid Waste Management activities in the village which is the next major step in Swachhta after getting the villages Open Defecation Free.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that every citizen who works for Swachhta is a rashtr-nirmata (nation builder). He called upon all citizens to join the Swachhta Hi Seva movement and become a rashtra-nirmata. He congratulated all award winning Swachhta champions present and said that they were the real heroes of this jan aandolan. He quoted a World Bank study that says that lack of Sanitation costs the country 6% of GDP annually, adding that the weakest sections of society are the ones most affected by this problem. He spoke about diseases transmitted by open defecation, concerns around dignity and safety of women, and economic loss to the family.

He called upon people from all sectors - elected representatives, corporates, NGOs, women, children, senior citizens, Panchayati Raj institutions, media and the youth - to come forward and contribute to the Swachh Bharat movement with vigour and enthusiasm.

In his address, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, welcomed the President back to his native village and said that Swachh Bharat, when it was first launched by the Prime Minister, had seemed like an impossible goal. He said, that Swachh Bharat is a critical component of the development of the country, and reaffirmed his government's commitment to achieve an Open Defecation Free (ODF) Uttar Pradesh by October 2018. He said that such an ambitious goal cannot be achieved without people's participation and partnership. For this, he mentioned that he is reaching out to grassroots leaders and elected representatives personally to involve all sections of society in this movement. He announced that Shamli, Bijnor, Hapur and Ghaziabad have

already been declared ODF, and that 30 districts will be declared ODF in the State by December 2017.

Sushri Uma Bharti, Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, in her address, said that she felt great pride that the President's first public appearance after taking office was for the launch of the Swachhta Hi Seva campaign. She spoke about the crucial role of public participation in making Swachh Bharat a reality. She said that Swachhta was both, a right and responsibility, of each and every citizen of the country, and that this was fundamental to the realization of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Swachh Bharat.

The occasion was also marked by experience sharing by 7 persons representing various sectors of society, who have been involved in supporting the Swachh Bharat Mission. These were Ms Anuradha Joshi Sarpanch, Kodariya, Indore; Ms Lavanya, school student, Karnataka; Mr Banzop Kharrymbal, Sarpanch, Mawlynong (cleanest village in Asia), Meghalaya; Mr Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder, Sulabh International; Ms Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairperson, India Sanitation Coalition; Mr Sanjay Gupta, Executive Editor, Dainik Jagran, Kanpur and Cadet Mansi Dwivedi, 17 UP Girls Battalion, NCC. They each represented different sections of society and took the Swachhta pledge symbolically on behalf of their respective sectors. They also made short addresses at the occasion, highlighting the work done by them in the past, and their Swachhta commitments for the upcoming fortnight and beyond.

In his welcome address at the inauguration, Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Parameswaran Iyer spoke about the clarion call made by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, for every section of society and each and every citizen to contribute to the Swachhta Hi Seva campaign. He also gave a progress update of Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin and Urban, saying that Sanitation coverage in the country has gone up from 39% to 68% since the launch of the Mission.

This launch kicked off the nationwide campaign to mobilise people to do large scale shramdaan.

Shri Murli Manohar Joshi, Member of Parliament, Kanpur constituency, Governor, Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ram Naik, and Minister of Panchayati Raj department, Uttar Pradesh, Shri Bhupendra Singh, were also present on the occasion.

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Note on MGNREGA

Note on MGNREGA

Implementation of MGNREGA Scheme has seen major changes in the last two years. Use of ICT tools, space technology, focus on improving livelihood resource base of people, provision of diversified livelihood opportunities through convergent programme implementation are some of the major features of changes brought in programme management. High budget allocation to meet the objectives of the Act and strengthening of monitoring system have been ensured. Measure like electronic fund management system (eFMS), Aadhaar seeding, Geo tagging of assets and strengthening of Social Audit System are some steps towards bringing in more transparency and accountability in the programme implementation. Emphasis on proper work file maintenance, setting up of Citizen Information Boards as part of Janta Information Systems are some of the other measures.

The current Financial Year is marked by the highest ever budget allocation of Rs. 48000 Cr. The table below gives a glimpse of the revised estimate at the Centre's level and the expenditure in the States/UTs over the last 7 years.

Year	Revised (Cr)	Expenditure (Cr)
2011-12	31,000.00	37,072.82
2012-13	30,287.00	39,778.29
2013-14	33,000.00	38,511.10
2014-15	33,000.00	36,025.04
2015-16	37,345.95	44,006.56
2016-17	48,220.26	57,946.72
2017-18*	48,000.00	35,436.92

* Figures as on 12.09.2017

Availability of funds is not a constraint for the implementation of the program. The Government is committed to provide funds for implementation of MGNREGA.

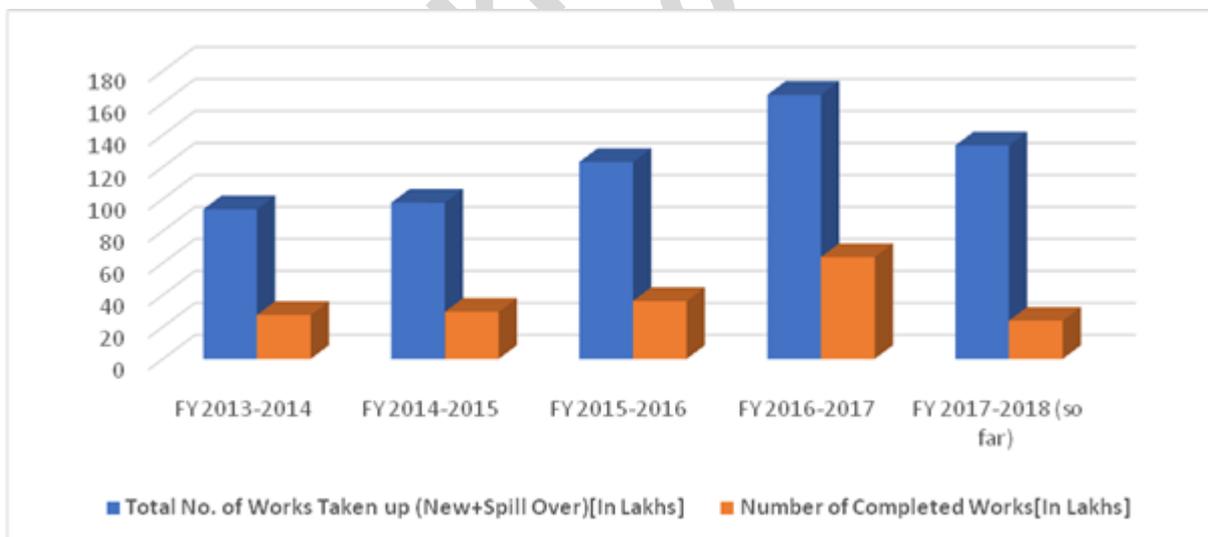
To ensure that MGNREGA workers receive their wages on time, National Electronic Fund Management System (NeFMS) has been put in place. Almost 96% of wages are being paid directly to the beneficiaries' bank accounts. Additionally, intense monitoring and fixing accountability for delays in payments has shown significant result in the current financial year. Around 85% of the wages are being paid to the workers in time. This is almost double the percentage in comparison with last FY as can be seen in the graph below:



All efforts are being taken by the Ministry to further improve the situation. FTOs for Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal are pending for payment for specific reasons. Internal Audits conducted by the Ministry in the recent past in both the States have detected irregularities in implementation for which the States have been asked to take appropriate steps to rectify the situation. Funds will be released to them once complete and sufficient response is received. The Ministry reviews the financial status of all States/UTs on daily basis and the issue of release of further funds to the States/UTs wherever FTOs are shown as pending is under examination. It is pertinent to mention that around Rs. 36500 Cr (76% of total allocation) have already been released in this financial year, leading to timely payment of wages in 85% cases.

Through a bottom-up participatory approach, every year the GPs prepare the shelf of works to be executed in the next financial year. These works are taken up considering the 155 permissible activities under the Scheme, which are revised periodically depending upon State requests. The Centre safeguards the decisions of the local bodies through its emphasis on creation of shelf of projects in the GPs and in no way attempts to undermine their authority. However, in accordance with the NREGA Act, Central Employment Guarantee Council (CEGC) under the aegis of the Ministry is expected to guide, regularly evaluate and monitor the implementation of the program on the ground.

Strengthening the livelihood resource base of the poor is one of the main objectives of MGNREGS. Apart from meeting the demand for wage employment on the ground, the government is laying stress on strengthening the livelihood resource base of the poor and the vulnerable. Close to 1.5 Cr works are taken up every year under MGNREGA. In the last FY, strong push towards work completion led to the highest work completion of 62 Lakhs.



These completed works have been geo tagged and made available in public domain improving and enhancing transparency in programme management. More than 2 Cr assets have been geo tagged so far. Now, the Ministry has made it mandatory to geo tag three stages of an asset creation.

In order to optimize public investments, adequate focus is also being laid on convergence of MGNREGS with other schemes. A good example of convergence is houses being constructed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). While 33 Lakhs houses were constructed in FY

2016-17 with Rs. 18000 from MGNREGS as unskilled wage labour contribution to every house, the current financial year's target is 51 lakh PMAY houses. Besides, MGNREGA provides Rs. 12000 for construction of household latrines in every PMAY house. Through such examples of convergence, the Ministry is trying to ensure gainful and proper utilization of funds along with provision of wage employment seeking work.

Independent Social Audit Units have been set up in 24 States and 3100 State Resource Persons have been trained to conduct social audit as per auditing standards. Large scale training of Self-Help Group women as Village Resource Persons for social audit is being undertaken.

All initiatives under MGNREGS have been taken in consultation with the States and UTs. The government is committed to make the implementation of the program as effective as possible so that the objectives of the Act can be met.

Multiple assets to a household for augmentation of livelihood potential is a major thrust under MGNREGS. Besides this, skilling the MGNREGS workers through Barefoot Technician program is another initiative. So far, 5380 Bare Foot Technicians (BFT) have been trained so far in 19 States to provide technical support at field level.

The Ministry had set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary with representatives of relevant Central Ministries and five State Governments to examine the issue of Alignment of MGNREGA Wages with Minimum Agricultural Wages. The MGNREGA Wages were notified under Section 6.1 of the MGNREGA Act on 1st December, 2009. For the States where minimum wages were higher than Rs.100/-, those wages were taken as MGNREGA wages. For States where minimum agricultural wages were less than Rs.100/- MGNREGA wages were notified as Rs.100/-. On 1st December, 2009 only for 4 States, viz. Goa, Haryana, Mizoram and Kerala had minimum wages for agricultural labour was higher than Rs.100/- and these were protected by December, 2009 Notification. Since then, MGNREGA wages have been indexed to Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour. The present divergence between MGNREGA wages and minimum wages for agricultural labour is on account of the fact that the States do not follow a scientific and uniform system of indexation of wage rates while MGNREGA wages are increased based on changes in Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labours.

The Government has provided much higher allocations to the Ministry of Rural Development in the last three years. As is evident from the table below, the allocation to Rural Development programmes for creation of infrastructure, rural housing and employment has gone up from 0.50% of the GDP in 2012-13 to 0.63% of the GDP in 2016-17:

MGNREGA & MoRD EXPENDITURE					
Rs. Crores					
Year	GDP at Current Prices (2011-12 Series)	MGNREGS Exp.	% of GDP	Releases by MoRD for all Programmes	Releases as % of GDP
1	2	3	4	5	6
2012-2013	9944013	39,778.82	0.40	50,161.86	0.50
2013-2014	11233522	38,552.62	0.34	58,623.08	0.52

2014-2015	12445128	36,025.04	0.29	67,263.31	0.54
2015-2016	13682035	44,002.59	0.32	77,321.35	0.57
2016-2017	15183709	58,354.21	0.38	95,096.04	0.63

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Swachhata Hi Seva Hits a Highpoint on Seva Divas – People Driving the Movement**Swachhata Hi Seva Hits a Highpoint on Seva Divas – People Driving the Movement**

A volunteer group in Delhi called We Mean To Clean planted 600 ecologically valuable trees in Delhi. Earlier they transformed a slum in Kirti Nagar, Delhi. Swachhata Hi Seva is fast becoming a movement that the people themselves are running. Many such organisations run by common people is the feature of the overall Swachh Bharat programme – citizens becoming inspiring leaders, owning the movement and run it.

Enthusiastic cleanliness initiatives among the people have become a feature ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Swachh Bharat initiative. Lending further impetus towards a cleaner India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had appealed to the nation during his recent Mann Ki Baat address to dedicate the last few weeks of September towards Swachhata Hi Seva, an initiative to pay a real tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on Gandhi Jayanti.

On the 15th of September, 2017, President Ram Nath Kovind had launched the Swachhata Hi Seva movement in Uttar Pradesh from a village in Kanpur. Ever since, the movement started it had begun to generate action and positivity. However, with the birthday of Prime Minister Modi on September 17th, it has taken off at a higher trajectory.

Cleanliness volunteers, NGOs and many karyakartas have enthusiastically dedicated themselves to Shramdaan towards cleanliness initiatives to celebrate his birthday as a 'Seva Divas'.

It also came to light that the Prime Minister had written touching personal letters inviting people from across the nation and across domains, to participate in the movement and spread the message of cleanliness. Accomplished Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor took to social media to thank PM Modi for honouring him with an invite to participate in the Swachhata Hi Seva movement and assured he would do his best. Reports said the PM had written to Malayalam superstar Mohanlal inviting him to participate in the movement. K T Rama Rao, young politician from Telangana belonging to the TRS party also received a letter from PM Modi, reports said.

Most ministries, government departments and prominent public servants have been carrying out cleanliness activities in every state across the nation. While Vice President Venkaiah Naidu was seen administering Swachhata Hi Seva pledges to citizens, Governor of Rajasthan, Kalyan Singh was seen picking up the broom by himself to clean his office.

While it was natural for government machinery to take up cleanliness activities for Swachhata Hi Seva, well-known citizens too have ardently joined the movement. In Maharashtra, music director Anu Malik was seen cleaning a place along with a number of citizens. Telugu movie superstar couple Nagarjuna and Amala along with citizen volunteers conducted cleanliness activities in Hyderabad. Actor Ravi Kishan led

cleanliness initiatives in Mumbai. Internationally renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik first led a group of citizens in cleaning up the Puri beach in Odisha and then created a sand art wishing PM Modi on his birthday.

From Kargil to Ramanathapuram, Manipur to Maharashtra, a renewed sense of eagerness was seen for cleanliness. While the cleanliness movement was kicked off in Kargil with great energy, the District Collector and municipal officials participated in cleanliness activities. Apart from the sheer geographic spread of the movement in just 2 days, yet again, just like its mothership Swachh Bharat, citizens became engines for the movement. NCC cadets of girls' wings of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district cleaned the offices and several areas of the Poonch district. The cadets also took out an awareness rally with a message of clean India. Volunteers conducted cleaning activities in Indore. In Puducherry, a cleanliness drive to clean the beach was organised by NSS volunteers and Karaikal Municipality.

Citizens were seen cleaning the Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi. Heroes from the Navy cleaned up the South Mumbai mangroves and sea front. On the occasion of International Coastal Cleanup day, citizens groups also removed trash and garbage from Mumbai's beaches. Women from Self Help Groups in Agra took Swachhata Shapath and discussed initiatives towards a clean and green India. In many places across the nation, Shramdaan and sanitation drives were held, besides activities around open defecation-vulnerable spots with participation of community, self-help groups and local NGOs.

On social media too, #SwachhataHiSeva was a top trend on the day it was launched. Subsequently, the hashtag has become a hub of positivity where people have posted their Shramdaan activities towards cleanliness using this hashtag. A heightened sense of awareness and participation has ensued since the launch of the movement on social media.

Finally, two happenings showed positive signs for the future of a clean India.

One, that NTPC has invited national and international players to set up 100 waste-to-energy pollution-free plants across the country under the Swachh Bharat mission. This bodes well for a clean and green India.

Two, the future of clean India seems to be in safe hands. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation had announced a Swachh Bharat painting competition for primary school students from mainly government schools earlier. A total of 2.46 crore children studying in class 1-5 have submitted their entries for the Swachh Sankalp Swachh Siddhi painting competition. The enormous magnitude of participation and the awareness being created in these children towards cleanliness augurs well.

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Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign



V.Srinivas

On September 15, 2017, the President of India launched a nationwide sanitation campaign "Swachhta Hi Seva" at Iswarganj village in Kanpur. The President administered the Swachhta Hi Seva Pledge whereby the Nation resolved to create a clean healthy and new India. Addressing the gathering the President said "India is fighting a decisive battle for cleanliness and hygiene. Cleanliness is not the responsibility of only sanitation personnel and government departments; it is a multi-stakeholder national movement."

Mahatma Gandhi had once famously said "sanitation is more important than political freedom." This statement underscored the criticality of sanitation in society. Inspired by these words, on August 15, 2014, the Prime Minister gave a clarion call to the Nation from the ramparts of Red Fort to fight filth and open defecation, change old habits and achieve a Swachh Bharat by 2019, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He further said that "women's pride is an important issue in our villages today. The practice of open defecation must be stopped. Toilets must be built and used."

The aim of the Swachh Bharat Mission is to achieve a clean and open defecation free India by October 2, 2019. The objectives are generating demand for toilets leading to their construction and sustained use by all household members, promoting better hygiene behavior amongst the population and improving cleanliness by initiating solid and liquid waste management projects. The financial allocations under the Swachh Bharat Mission increased from Rs.2850 crores in 2014-15 to Rs.6525 crores in 2015-16, to Rs.10,500 crores in 2016-17, to Rs. 14000 crores in 2017-18. In the last 3 years, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, 48,264,304 toilets were constructed. Open Defecation Free Villages reached 2,38,966. Individual toilet coverage increased

from 42 percent in 2014 to 64 percent in 2017. 5 States have declared themselves open defecation free. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has said that the progress achieved is encouraging to reach the goal of an Open Defecation Free India by October 2, 2019.

The Swachh Bharat Mission sought to reform the sanitation sector with the primary focus being on behavioral changes as the fundamental tool for achievement of Open Defecation Free outcomes. Inclusiveness under the Swachh Bharat Mission was achieved by designing public and community toilets keeping in mind the special needs of menstruating women, the elderly, the specially abled and small children. Further the Mission sought to promote gender sensitive information, education and communication/ behavioral changes. The Mission issued Gender guidelines in 2017 and Menstrual management guidelines in 2015.

An innovative monitoring and evaluation system was put in place. The Swachh Sarvekshan was conducted for rural India and revealed that Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Sidhudurg (Maharashtra) were the cleanest districts in India. The Swachh Sarvekshan assessed 22 Hill districts and 53 Plain areas. National level monitors were hired to carry out sample-based checks of sanitation coverage and open defecation free status across the country.

A massive survey covering 92000 households in 4626 villages across the country is being conducted. An additional 200 villages located on the banks of Ganga are being surveyed. Eminent personalities like Amitabh Bacchan was nominated as the Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Mission and celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Akshay Kumar attended champion collector conclaves for motivational purposes. The Swachh Bharat Mission maintained a significant social media engagement for enhancing awareness levels and a newsletter Swachhta Samachar Patrika was published on a regular basis. A recent Bollywood film titled "Toilet – Ek Prem Katha" based on the Swachh Bharat Mission witnessed considerable box office success.

The Swachh Bharat Mission represents a national movement with diverse stakeholders comprising of Central Ministries, State Governments, local institutions, non-government and semi-government agencies, corporates, NGO's, faith organizations and media. This approach is based on the Prime Minister's call that Swachhta has to be everyone's business and not only that of the sanitation departments.

A host of special initiatives and projects have come out in quick time. The Inter-Ministerial Projects

included Swachhta Pakhwadas, Namami Gange, Swachhta Action Plan, Swachh Swasth Sarvatra campaign, School Sanitation drives, Anganwadi Sanitation drives, Railway Sanitation etc. The inter-sectoral collaborations included Swachh Iconic Places, Corporate Partnership, Inter Faith Cooperation, Media engagement and Parliament engagement. Swachhta Action Plans were developed by 76 union ministries and departments and web based portal was developed to monitor progress and highlight implementation status. Women Swachhagrahis were appointed and Swachh Shakti Awards were instituted to further enhance women involvement with the program. The Swachh Bharat success stories said that accessible and secure toilets had made a big difference to the lives of village communities, as they did not have to travel distances in the dark to relieve themselves. Further the health risks of open defecation were greatly reduced by having a toilet in the house.

The Vice President of India said that Swachh Bharat Mission is at a tipping point from where a major is expected to spiral it into a massive Jan Andolan – a people's movement. The Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign seeks to mobilize people to come out and get directly involved with the Swachh Bharat Mission by offering shramdaan for swachhta in the fortnight leading upto Gandhi Jayanti.

Come join the Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign.

**V.Srinivas is an IAS officer of 1989 batch and is currently posted as Chairman of the Rajasthan Tax Board with additional charge of Chairman Board of Revenue for Rajasthan.*

Views expressed in the article are author's personal.

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Cabinet approves Extension of time period of the Scheme "Special Industry Initiative for J&K" (SII J&K) - Udaan**Cabinet approves Extension of time period of the Scheme "Special Industry Initiative for J&K" (SII J&K) - Udaan**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs for extension of time period of the Scheme "Special Industry Initiative for J&K" (SII J&K)- Udaan till 31st December, 2018 without any modification and cost escalation. Initially the time period of Udaan was upto 2016-17.

Udaan provides exposure to the youth of J&K to the best of corporate India and corporate India to the rich talent pool available in the State. So far, 109 leading Corporate have partnered with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under UDAAN with a commitment to train youth from the State covering Organized Retail, Banking, Financial Services, IT, ITES, Infrastructure, Hospitality etc. So far, 34,587 candidates have been selected of whom 31,903 candidates have joined, 22,237 candidates have completed the training, 7,649 are undergoing training and 14,694 have been offered jobs.

In spite of four months of unrest, the scheme has gained a good momentum and pace of implementation has been the best during FY 2016-17 since its inception. More than 12,000 candidates had joined training and nearly 10,000 candidates were offered jobs. 140 mega selection drives were held so far covering all districts of the State.

Udaan is a national integration scheme with the goal to mainstream J&K youth with rest of the country. The scheme not only provides skill enhancement and job opportunity but also connects these bright youths from the J&K with the vibrant corporate sector of India.

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Cabinet approves Revamped Khelo India Programme

Cabinet approves Revamped Khelo India Programme

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the revamped Khelo India programme at a cost of Rs.1,756 crore for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20. This marks a watershed moment in the history of Indian sports, as the Programme aims at mainstreaming sport as a tool for individual development, community development, economic development and national development.

The revamped Khelo India Programme would impact the entire sports ecosystem, including infrastructure, community sports, talent identification, coaching for excellence, competition structure and sports economy.

Salient features:

Some of the salient features of the Programme include:

- an unprecedented Pan Indian Sports Scholarship scheme, which would cover 1,000 most talented young athletes each year across select sports disciplines.
- Each athlete selected under the scheme shall receive an annual scholarship worth Rs. 5.00 lakh for 8 consecutive years.
- This is the first time ever that a long-term athlete development pathway would be made available to gifted and talented youngsters to excel in competitive sports and will create a pool of highly competitive athletes who can compete to win at the world stage.
- The Programme aims to promote 20 universities across the country as hubs of sporting excellence, which would enable talented sports persons to pursue the dual pathway of education and competitive sports.
- The Programme also aims at creating an active population with healthy life-style.
- The Programme would cover about 200 million children in the age group of 10-18 under a massive national physical fitness drive, which will not only measure the physical fitness of all children in the age group, but also support their fitness related activities.

Impact:

- The power of sport in promoting gender equity and social inclusiveness is also fully recognized and special measures are provided for to achieve these objectives.
- The programme also aims at engaging youth living in disturbed and deprived areas, in

sporting activities, to wean them away from unproductive and disruptive activities and mainstream them in the nation-building process.

- The programme strives to raise the standards of competition, both at school and college level, to have maximum access to organized sports competitions.
- It also includes the use of latest user-friendly technology in all aspects of sports promotion such as, use of mobile apps for dissemination of sports training; National Sports Talent Search portal for talent identification; interactive website for indigenous sports; GIS based information system for locating and using sports infrastructure, etc.
- This programme strives to promote “Sports for All” as well as “Sports for Excellence.”

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Cabinet apprised of the progress under National Health Mission and decisions of the Empowered Programme Committee and Mission Steering Group of NHM

Cabinet apprised of the progress under National Health Mission and decisions of the Empowered Programme Committee and Mission Steering Group of NHM

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been apprised of the progress under National Health Mission (NHM). The Cabinet was also apprised of the decisions of the Empowered Programme Committee (EPC) and Mission Steering Group (MSG) of NHM. National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched in April 2005 and it morphed into National Health Mission (NHM) with launch of National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) during 2013. Thereafter, NRHM and NUHM became two sub-missions under the overarching NHM.

Cabinet noted the progress under NHM including accelerated decline in MMR, IMR, U5MR and TFR. It also noted the progress in respect of various disease control programmes like TB, Malaria, Leprosy etc.

The Cabinet noted that:

- The rate of decline in U5MR during NHM period has nearly doubled.
- With the rate of decline achieved in MMR, India would have achieved the target of MDG 5.
- **Millennium Development Goal 6** of halting and reversing the incidence of **Malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS** had been **achieved**.
- Number of endemic blocks with prevalence more than 1 case of **Kala Azar** per 10000 population was 230 in 2010. It has been brought down to 94 blocks in 2016.
- Incentives were being provided @ of Rs 150 to Post-Partum Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Device (PPIUCD) service provider and Rs 150 to ASHA for motivating/escorting the client for PPIUCD insertion. To provide impetus for uptake of PPIUCD and Post-Abortion Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Device (PAIUCD) services, proposals for provision of incentives to the acceptor of PPIUCD services and incentives on the same pattern for PAIUCD were placed before the MSG. The MSG approved proposals for providing an incentive to acceptors of the PPIUCD to cover incidental cost and travel cost for follow up visits and provision of incentives for PAIUCD insertion for acceptor, service provider and ASHA at the same rates as applicable to PPIUCD.
- Relaxation of norm of one MMU per 10 lakh population in cases where patients served through existing MMUs exceeds 60 patients per day in plain areas and 30 patients per day in hilly areas, on a case to case basis. The MSG also noted the operational guidelines for MMUs.
- The proposals under Menstrual Hygiene Scheme for Adolescent girls to - (i) increase the budget support from Rs.8 to Rs.12 for a pack of 6 sanitary napkins for the first year for the 19 States that are yet to take up the scheme and thereafter at the existing rate of Rs 8 for a pack of 6 sanitary napkins and (ii) authorise Ministry to approve any further cost escalations.
- Increase in ceiling of Programme Management Budget under NHM, including monitoring and evaluation, from existing 6.5% to 9 % of the total Annual Work Plan for that year for bigger States and existing 11% to 14 % of the total Annual Work Plan for that year for smaller States/UTs.

- Proposal for strengthening of school health activities under NHM in all the public and private schools in the country in coordination with Ministry of Human Resource Development through specified activities including promotion of healthy lifestyle behaviours.
- Incentive to ASHA @ Rs 100 per month for mobilising and conducting mother's meeting for promotion of breast feeding for conducting Mother's Group Meeting under Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA).

Implementation Strategy:

- Facilitate increased access and utilization of quality health services by all.
- Forge a partnership between the Central, state and the local governments.
- Set up a platform for involving the Panchayati Raj institutions and community in the management of primary health programmes and infrastructure.
- Provide an opportunity for promoting equity and social justice.
- Establish a mechanism to provide flexibility to the states and the community to promote local initiatives.
- Develop a framework for promoting inter-sectoral convergence for promotive and preventive health care.

Targets:

- Achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable & quality healthcare services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.

Major impact:

- **Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR):** Declined from 59 in 2010 to 43 in 2015. Percentage annual rate of decline during 2010-2015 has accelerated to 6.1% from 3.7% observed during 1990-2010. Annual rate of decline in 2014-15 was 4.4%. India is likely to have achieved the Millennium Development Goal 4 of U5MR at the present rate of decline.
- **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** (number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) declined from 178 during 2010-12 to 167 during 2011-13. Subsequent data is yet to be notified by RGI. *India is likely to have achieved the Millennium Development Goal 5 of MMR at the rate of declines that were achieved.*
- **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** (number of deaths of children less than one year of age per 1000 live births) - declined from 39 in the year 2014 to 37 in 2015.
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** - declined from 2.5 in 2010 to 2.3 in the year 2015 (Presently it is 2.2 as per NFHS 2015-16). *We are likely to achieve the 12th Five Year Plan target for TFR of 2.1 by 2017.*
- **Malaria API** has declined from 1.10 in 2011 to 0.84 in 2016. *The 12th Plan target in respect of Malaria has been achieved and the API has been kept below 1 case per 1000 population.*
- **Mortality due to TB** per 100000 population reduced from 40 in 2010 to 36 in 2015. Prevalence per 100000 population reduced from 465 in 1990 to 195 in 2014. Similarly, incidence of TB per 100000 population also been reduced from 289 in

2000 to 247 in 2010 and to 217 in 2015. The annual prevalence and mortality from TB have been reduced to half as compared to 1990 level.

- **Leprosy Prevalence Rate** at the national level per 10000 population has been reduced from 0.68 as on 31st March, 2012 to 0.66 as on 31st March, 2017. *By March 2017, 556 districts had achieved the 12th Plan target.*
- **Kala Azar** - Number of endemic blocks with prevalence more than 1 case of Kala Azar per 10000 population was 230 in 2010 which has been reduced to 94 by 2016.
- **Filariasis** - Till 31st March 2017, 94 districts achieved <1% Mf rate out of 256 endemic districts which was validated by Transmission Assessment Survey (TAS) and successfully stopped Mass Drug Administration (MDA).

In the period from 2012-13 to 2016-17, the amount released to States and UTs was 88,353.59 crore (including kind grants) while Rs 18,436.03 crore (including kind grants) was released to States and UTs during the financial year 2016-17.

NHM is implemented for universal benefit – i.e. entire population; services are offered to everyone visiting the public healthcare facilities; However during 2016-17, total people who availed Out-Patient services in public facilities was 146.82 Cr and 6.99 Cr people availed In-Patient services. Public health facilities carried out 1.55 crore surgeries during 2016-17.

It will cover all States and Districts in the country.

Programmes already running:

National Health Mission (NHM), has two Sub-Missions, viz. the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM). While NRHM was launched in April 2005, launch of NUHM was approved by the Cabinet on 1st May 2013. NHM envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable & quality healthcare services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs. The main programmatic components include Health System Strengthening in rural and urban areas, Reproductive-Maternal-Neonatal-Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) interventions and control of Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases.

Progress under NHM during 2016-17 is as under:

The following initiatives were also rolled out under NHM during 2016-17:-

- **New Vaccines roll out:**
 - **Measles-Rubella (MR) Vaccine:** Rubella vaccine introduced in Universal Immunization Programme as Measles-Rubella combination vaccine to provide protection against congenital birth defects caused by Rubella infection. The vaccine was introduced on 5th February 2017, initially in five states namely Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Puducherry & Lakshadweep though MR vaccination campaign for children aged between 9 months and 15 year. Till 31st March 2017, 3.32 crore children were vaccinated in MR vaccination campaign in these States.

- **Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV):** India is polio free but to maintain this status, IPV launched on 30th November 2015.
 - **Adult Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccine:** National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) had identified 21 high burden districts from Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal for adult JE vaccination in the age-group of 15- 65 years and more than 2.6 crore adults in these 21 districts were provided JE vaccination.
 - **Rota-Virus vaccine:** To prevent morbidity and mortality in children due to rotavirus, Rotavirus vaccine introduced in Universal Immunization Programme. In first Phase, vaccine introduced in 4 states: Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha; Planned to be scaled up in few more states after evaluation of its implementation in four states.
- **Mission Indradhanush (MI)**
 - Mission Indradhanush was launched in December 2014 to rapidly increase the full immunization coverage of children to at least 90% and sustain the same by 2020.
 - Three phases of Mission Indradhanush have been completed and fourth phase is ongoing. A total of 528 districts were covered in the four phases of Mission Indradhanush. During the three phases and ongoing fourth phase of Mission Indradhanush, as on 31st March' 2017, around 2.11 crore children were reached of which 55 lakhs children were fully immunized. Further, 56 lakhs pregnant women were also vaccinated with Tetanus Toxoid.
 - The first two phases of Mission Indradhanush led to an increase of 6.7% in the full immunization coverage across the country.
 - During 2016-17, Mission Indradhanush Phase-3 was carried out in 216 districts during which around 61.84 lakh children were reached of which 16.28 lakh children were fully immunized. Further, 17.78 lakh pregnant women were also vaccinated with Tetanus Toxoid.
- **Free Drugs Service Initiative:**
 - Support provided to States for provision of free drugs and setting up of systems for drug procurement, quality assurance, IT based supply chain management system, training and grievance redressal etc.
 - Aimed at reducing Out of Pocket Expenditure at the point of care.
 - Detailed Operational Guidelines developed and released to the States on 2nd July 2015.
 - Model IT application Drugs and Vaccines Distribution Management Systems (DVDMS), developed by CDAC, shared with States.
 - Drugs procurement, quality system and distribution streamlined through IT based Drug Distribution Management Systems in 23 States.
 - All States and UTs have notified policy to provide essential drugs free in public health facilities.
- **Free Diagnostics Service Initiative:**
 - Operational Guidelines developed and shared on 2nd July, 2015
 - Also contain model RFP documents for a range of PPPs e.g. Tele radiology, hub and spoke model for lab diagnostics and CT scan in District Hospitals.
- **Bio Medical Equipment Maintenance:**
 - Aim - reduce dysfunctional rate of bio-medical equipment in public health facilities

- valuing about Rs 11,000 crores (varies between 20% -60% in States)
 - States did inventory mapping and BMMP effectively rolled out in 13 States during 2016-17.
 - Total 7,56,750 number of equipments in 29,115 health facilities of 29 States, costing approximately Rs. 4,564 Crore identified.
 - Rs. 113.11 Crore approved in 2016-17 to 20 States/ UTs under this initiative.
- **Launch of Kayakalp- an initiative for Award to Public Health Facilities:**
 - Launched to promote cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices in public health facilities.
 - During 2016-17, Kayakalp initiative extended to Sub District Hospitals (SDHs) /CHCs and PHCs in addition to DHs
 - Approved Rs 107.99 crore to 27 States.
 - Over 30,000 Public Health facilities assessed and over 1100 public health facilities including 179 DHs, 324 SDHs/CHCs and 632 PHCs received Kayakalp Prizes.
- **Kilkari & Mobile Academy:**
 - Weekly time-appropriate 72 audio messages about pregnancy, child birth and child care directly sent to families' mobile phones from the second trimester of pregnancy until the child is one year old.
 - Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand covered under Kilkari.
 - Approximately 5.82 crore successful calls (average duration of content played in each call: approximately 1 minute) made under Kilkari as on 31st March, 2017.
 - **Mobile Academy** - free audio training course designed to expand and refresh knowledge base of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and improve their communication skills.
 - Rolled out in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
 - 79,660 ASHAs registered in MCTS started the Mobile Academy course, out of which 68,803 (i.e, approximately 86%) ASHAs completed the course as on 31st March, 2017.
- **Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS) / Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) portal**
 - Web based name based tracking system called Mother & Child Tracking System (MCTS) across all the States & UTs to facilitate timely delivery of entire complement of quality MCH services including antenatal and postnatal care services to all the pregnant women and immunization to all the children.
 - 1.68 crore pregnant women and 1.31 crore children registered in MCTS / RCH portal as on 31st March, 2017.
- **Family Planning** - Three new methods introduced in the National Family Planning program:
 - Injectable Contraceptive DMPA (Antara) –3-monthly injection.
 - Centchroman pill (Chhaya) –non hormonal once a week pill.
 - Progesterone-only pills (POP) – for lactating mothers.

- **New Family Planning Media Campaign:**
 - A 360° holistic Family Planning campaign with a new logo launched.
- **Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP)**
 - 121 Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (CBNAAT) Machines existed till 2016.
 - 500 additional CBNAAT Machines provided in States/UTs
 - Provides rapid quality diagnostics for fight against TB, especially DR-TB.
 - New anti-TB drug Bedaquiline introduced under Conditional Access Programme (CAP) to improve outcomes of drug resistant TB treatment.

Background:

The Cabinet approvals of the NHM framework provided for setting up of the Mission Steering Group (MSG), chaired by the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare with 10 Ministers of related Ministries, 16 Secretaries, 10 independent experts, 4 State Secretaries etc and the Empowered Programme Committee (EPC), chaired by the Secretary, Department of Health & Family Welfare. Besides policy guidance and oversight, these bodies have been delegated powers to provide and approve/ modify financial norms in respect of all schemes and components that are part of NRHM. **The Cabinet approval further stipulates that exercise of these delegated powers would be subject to the condition that a progress report regarding N(R)HM, along with deviation in financial norms, modifications in ongoing schemes and details of new schemes be placed before the Cabinet for information on an annual basis.**

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Andhra Pradesh to be declared ODF by March 2018**Andhra Pradesh to be declared ODF by March 2018****Madhya Pradesh to construct 1 lakh toilets by October 2nd 2017**

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri N Chandrababu Naidu, announced that Andhra Pradesh will be declared ODF by March 2018. This was announced during a Collectors' Conference in Vijaywada, as a part of the **Swachhata Hi Seva** Campaign.

Adding momentum to this drive more than 2 lakhs toilet pits were dug on 17th September in Madhya Pradesh. These are targeted to be converted into one lakh toilets by 2nd October.

In Maharashtra, the focus has been on Shramdaan and IPC, during the week. In J&K, the administration and masses came together to make their areas swachh.

Cleanliness Drive was carried out in important and iconic places and Solid and Liquid Resource Management activities were undertaken in Mizoram. Solid and Liquid Resource Management was also the key focus in Chhattisgarh.

To aid with generating awareness about Swachhata Rajasthan undertook SwachhtaChitran – a campaign where Block level officers, motivators and masons, took to the streets to paint on public walls, water tanks and other such public spaces.

To create awareness amongst community members, SwachhtaRaths along with nukkadnataks were launched in Uttarakhand.

In Punjab, the cleanliness drives gained momentum wherein the major activities undertaken were cleaning of drains, cremation places, ponds, roads.

IHHL pit digging, cleanliness drive at school, village, street, community place, religious place, jail and Anganwadi centres, sanitation pledge at block level and village level were the focus in Jharkhand. In Telangana mass construction of toilets has been initiated.

Swachhata Hi Seva is a pan India campaign launched on 15th September till October 2nd. It calls all citizens across the country to participate actively through shramdaan to the cause of swachhata.

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Dr. Harshvardhan launches Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Vigyan Gram Sankul Pariyojana**Dr. Harshvardhan launches Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Vigyan Gram Sankul Pariyojana**

Department of Science and Technology is implementing several initiatives for upliftment and economic development of rural areas in the country. A number of appropriate technologies have been developed, demonstrated and deployed at several locations in the country.

The Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Harshvardhan today launched "*Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay Vigyan Gram Sankul Pariyojana*" which will experiment and endeavour to formulate and implement appropriate S&T Interventions for Sustainable Development through cluster approach in Uttarakhand.

Addressing the press, the Minister said that this project has been inspired by teachings and ideals of Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year.

DST has conceived to adopt a few clusters of villages in Uttarakhand and transform them to become self-sustainable in a time bound manner through the tools of Science and Technology (S&T). The key deliverable in this approach is to utilise local resources and locally available skill sets and convert them in a manner using science and technology, that substantial value addition takes place in their local produce and services which can sustain the rural population locally. Further, the local communities are not compelled to migrate from their native places in search of jobs and livelihoods. Once this concept is validated in the few selected clusters, it can be replicated across large number of village clusters in the country.

Four clusters at *Gaindikhata, Bazeera, Bhigun* (in Garhwal) and *Kausani* (in Kumaon) have been selected for the intervention through a series of dialogues held among officials of DST and Uttarakhand State Council of Science and Technology (UCOST); Gramodaya Network, Surabhi Foundation and Uttarakhand Utthan Parishad; and other experts. Intensive interaction with local population and field visits were carried out to identify the challenges and opportunities that exist in the clusters.

About a lakh of people would benefit directly or indirectly through this project in four identified clusters of 60 villages in Uttarakhand for pilot phase which are located at different altitudes (up to 3000 meters). As the living conditions and resources available at different altitude is relatively different, the adopted strategy would help in creating models that are appropriate for different altitudes and could then be replicated in other hill states as well.

Areas of interventions in these selected clusters would be processing and value addition of milk, honey, mushroom, herbal tea, forest produce, horticulture and local crops, medicinal & aromatic plants and traditional craft and handloom of Uttarakhand. Post-harvest processing of Kiwi, Strawberry, Cherry, *Tulsi, Adrak, Badi Elaichi* through solar drying technology, extraction of apricot oil using cold press technology. Stringent product and process control interventions for energy and water conservation would also be ensured through this project.

Novel strategies for sustainable development in this ecologically fragile state are important. Practice of agriculture, agro-based cottage industries and animal husbandry in an eco-friendly manner will be emphasized during the implementation of the project.

Sustainable employment and livelihood options within the clusters such as eco-tourism, naturopathy and yoga, are also planned to be promoted.

These clusters would act as model production cum training and demonstration centres. There is a possibility of replicating this pilot phase initiative in other hill states of the country once it is established and stabilized. Various scientific institutions would participate collectively in this endeavour to accomplish the dream of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay towards '*Swavlamban*'.

Department of Science and Technology (DST) has committed Rs 6.3 crore support for a

period of three years for this project.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, former Chairman, KVIC and Director General, Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology and now Chairman, Gramodaya Network and Coordinator Gram Sankul Yojana is steering this unique initiative. Addressing the gathering, he said, "In my opinion, this is not a routine project. DST has responded to a call from the grassroots by providing technical and scientific inputs which is critical for any project."

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PM launches Pradhan Mantri Saubhagya Yojana; dedicates Deendayal Urja Bhawan to the nation

PM launches Pradhan Mantri Saubhagya Yojana; dedicates Deendayal Urja Bhawan to the nation

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today launched the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, or Saubhagya, at New Delhi. The aim of this scheme is to provide power to all homes.

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, the Prime Minister also dedicated a new ONGC building - the Deendayal Urja Bhawan.

The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation, the Booster Compressor Facility in Bassein Gas Field.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister gave examples of the success of Jan Dhan Yojana, insurance schemes, Mudra Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, and Udan, to highlight how the Union Government is implementing schemes which benefit the poorest of the poor.

In this context he mentioned the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, which would provide power connections to all the estimated four crore households which currently did not have a power connection. The outlay for this scheme would be over Rs. 16000 crore. These connections would be provided free of cost to the poor, the Prime Minister said.

Speaking to the accompaniment of a presentation, the Prime Minister recounted how he had set a target of electrifying over 18000 unelectrified villages within 1000 days. He said less than 3000 villages are now left to be electrified.

He explained how coal shortages have become a thing of the past, and capacity addition in power generation has exceeded targets.

The Prime Minister also spoke of an increase in renewable power installed capacity, towards the target of 175 GW by 2022. He mentioned how the power tariff in the case of renewable energy has been reduced significantly. A considerable increase has also been made in transmission lines.

The Prime Minister mentioned how the UDAY scheme has brought down losses of power distribution companies, describing it as an example of cooperative, competitive federalism.

Explaining the impact of economies of scale in the UJALA scheme, the Prime Minister said that the cost of LED bulbs has come down significantly.

The Prime Minister said that New India will require an energy framework that works on the principle of equity, efficiency and sustainability. He said the change in work culture in the Union Government is strengthening the energy sector. This in turn, will positively impact the work culture of the entire country, he added.

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PM launches Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana “Saubhagya”**PM launches Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana “Saubhagya”**

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has launched a new scheme **Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana –“Saubhagya”** to ensure electrification of all willing households in the country in rural as well as urban areas here today.

The **total outlay of the project is Rs. 16, 320 crore** while the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) is Rs. 12,320 crore. The outlay for the rural households is Rs. 14,025 crore while the GBS is Rs. 10,587.50 crore. For the urban households the outlay is Rs. 2,295 crore while GBS is Rs. 1,732.50 crore. The Government of India will provide largely funds for the Scheme to all States/UTs.

The States and Union Territories are required to complete the works of household electrification by the 31st of December 2018.

The beneficiaries for free electricity connections would be identified using Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 data. However, un-electrified households not covered under the SECC data would also be provided electricity connections under the scheme on payment of Rs. 500 which shall be recovered by DISCOMs in 10 instalments through electricity bill.

The solar power packs of 200 to 300 Wp with battery bank for un-electrified households located in remote and inaccessible areas, comprises of Five LED lights, One DC fan, One DC power plug. It also includes the Repair and Maintenance (R&M) for 5 years.

The expected outcome of the Scheme is as follows:

- (a) Environmental upgradation by substitution of Kerosene for lighting purposes
- (b) Improvement education services
- (c) Better health services
- (d) Enhanced connectivity through radio, television, mobiles, etc.
- (e) Increased economic activities and jobs
- (f) Improved quality of life especially for women

For easy & accelerated implementation of the Scheme , modern technology shall be used for household survey by using Mobile App. Beneficiaries shall be identified and their application for electricity connection along with applicant photograph and identity proof shall be registered on spot. The Gram Panchayat/Public institutions in the rural areas may be authorised to collect application forms along with complete documentation, distribute bills and collect revenue in consultation with the Panchayat Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies. **The Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC) will remain the nodal agency for the operationalisation of the scheme throughout the country.**

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Power problem — On Saubhagya scheme

Universal access to electricity has been a familiar and long-standing promise of governments at the Centre. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has signalled he is serious about providing this by owning responsibility for its realisation. Success, however, will require more than just budgetary fund allocation; it will depend largely on addressing structural issues that plague the broken power sector. The Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, or [the 'Saubhagya' scheme](#), launched by Mr. Modi aims to make electricity accessible to every household by the end of 2018. Under the scheme, expected to cost a little over 16,000 crore, poor households that have no access to electricity will be provided electricity connections free of cost. This builds on previous work carried out under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana launched in 2015, and the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana launched by the UPA government in 2005, both of which also aimed to provide free electricity connections to the poor. In particular, it hopes to improve electricity access within villages that are already classified as "electrified", according to the criterion that 10% of households enjoy access to electricity. However, the Saubhagya scheme does very little to address the real problem of affordability. In fact, by failing to account for illegal connections taken by households which find it difficult to afford legal access to power, government data on electricity accessibility understate penetration.

A free electricity connection can ease the financial burden on the poor to some degree, but it will not address the recurring burden of power bills. The aim of improving affordability would require that supply be increased drastically to lower the price paid by retail consumers. Paradoxically, amidst the government's claims that India is a power-surplus nation, the power generation utilities remain vastly under-utilised. The plant load factor (PLF) of coal and lignite-based plants, an indicator of capacity utilisation of power generation units, has dropped consistently over the decade from 77.5% in 2009-10 to 59.88% in 2016-17, according to data from the Central Electricity Authority. This is due to demand for electricity from State distribution companies dropping in tandem with their deteriorating financial status. The Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), introduced two years ago to restructure the debt of State distribution agencies, has failed to make enough of a difference to this state of affairs. The outcome is not surprising, given that UDAY has failed to address the root problem of populism in the pricing of electricity. In the absence of the freedom to sell at a profitable price, distribution agencies have had very little incentive to demand more electricity from power generators, as evident in the constantly falling PLF. This in turn holds back investment in power generation units. Saubhagya, unfortunately, does very little to address the fundamentals of India's crippling power problem.

Rajasthan's ordinance shields the corrupt, threatens the media and whistle-blowers

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FAQs on Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana “Saubhagya”**FAQs on Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana “Saubhagya”**

Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana –“Saubhagya” a new scheme was launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to ensure electrification of all willing households in the country in rural as well as urban areas on 25th September, 2017.

The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) give a detailed view of objectives, features, expected outcomes and implementation strategy of the Scheme.

Qs. No. 1 What is the objective of this new scheme?

Ans. The objective of the ‘Saubhagya’ is to provide energy access to all by last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all remaining un-electrified households in rural as well as urban areas to achieve universal household electrification in the country.

Qs. No. 2 What all is included in the last mile connectivity and electricity connection to households?

Ans. The electricity connection to households include release of electricity connections by drawing a service cable from the nearest electricity pole to the household premise, installation of energy meter, wiring for a single light point with LED bulb and a mobile charging point. In case the electricity pole is not available nearby from household for drawing service cable, the erection of additional pole along with conductor and associated accessories shall also be covered under the scheme.

Qs. No. 3 Will electricity connection would be totally free of cost for every un-electrified households?

Ans. Yes. Poor households would be provided electricity connections free of cost. Other households would also be provided electricity connections under the scheme on payment of Rs.500 only which shall be recovered by the DISCOMs/Power Departments in ten (10) instalments along with electricity bills.

Qs. No.4 Does the free electricity connection also includes free power for consumption?

Ans. There is no provision in the scheme to provide free power to any category of consumers. The cost of electricity consumption shall have to be paid by the respective

consumers as per prevailing tariff of the DISCOM/Power Deptt.

Qs. No. 5 The earlier programme of Government of India '24x7 Power For All' has similar objective.? How is it different from this programme ?

Ans. '24x7 Power for All' is a joint initiative with the states covering all segments of power sector i.e. Power generation, transmission and distribution, energy efficiency, health of Discom etc. to finalise State/UT specific roadmap and action plan to ensure 24x7 power for all in consultation with States/UTs. The Power for All documents contain details of various interventions required across the value chain of power sector.

Providing connectivity to all households is a prerequisite to ensure 24x7 power supply. Saubhagya is a schematic support to address the issue of energy access.

Qs. No. 6 In distribution sector, two major schemes; DDUGJY for rural areas and IPDS in urban areas are already under implementation- then what is the need for a new scheme?

Ans. Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) envisage creation of basic electricity infrastructure in villages / habitations, strengthening & augmentation of existing infrastructure, metering of existing feeders / distribution transformers / consumers to improve quality and reliability of power supply in rural areas. Besides this, last mile connectivity and free electricity connections are also provided to BPL households only identified by the States as per their list. However, in villages which are electrified in past for a long period, many households do not have electricity connections for many reasons. Some of the really poor households do not have BPL cards but these households are not capable of paying applicable initial connection charges. There is also lack of awareness as to how to get connection or taking connection is not an easy task for illiterate people. There may not be electricity pole nearby and the cost of erection of additional pole, conductor is also chargeable from the households for obtaining a connection.

Similarly in urban areas, Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS) provides for creation of necessary infrastructure to provide electricity access but some households are not yet connected mainly on account of their economic condition as they are not capable of paying the initial connection charges.

Therefore, Soubhagya has been launched to plug such gaps and comprehensively address the issues of entry barrier, last mile connectivity and release of electricity connections to all un-electrified households in rural and urban areas.

Qs. No. 7 Is the cost of Saubhagya scheme over & above the outlay available under DDUGJY?

Ans. Yes, the cost of Saubhagya scheme i.e. Rs. 16,320 crore is over and above the investment being made under DDUGJY.

Qs. No. 8 What is the criteria for allocation of funds to the States?

Ans. Projects under the scheme would be sanctioned based on the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to be submitted by the States. There is no upfront allocation of fund under the scheme.

Qs. No. 9 How the scheme would be implemented in the entire country?

Ans. Project proposals shall be prepared by the State DISCOMs / Power Deptt. and sanctioned by an inter-ministerial Monitoring Committee headed by Secretary (Power), GOI. The electrification works under the sanctioned projects shall be executed by respective DISCOMs/Power Deptt. through turnkey contractors or departmentally or through other suitable agencies capable of doing this work as per norms.

Qs. No.10 What is strategy for achievement of target in a time bound manner?

Ans. In order to hasten the process of release of connections to households, camps would be organised in villages / cluster of villages for identification of beneficiaries using modern IT technology with a Mobile App / Web Portal. Application for electricity connections shall also be registered electronically and requisite documentation including photograph of applicant, copy of identity card and / or details such as mobile number/Aadhar number/bank account number etc. shall be completed on spot in the camps, so that connections are released at the earliest.

The Gram Panchayat / public institutions in rural areas shall also be authorized to collect application form, complete documentation and also for distribution of bills, collection of revenue and other activities, as applicable.

Qs. No.11 What would be estimated rise in power demand with the inclusion of 4 crore households in the electricity network?

Ans. Considering an average load of 1 KW per household and average uses of load for 8

hours in a day, there will be requirement of additional power of about 28,000 MW and additional energy of about 80,000 million units per annum. This is a dynamic figure. With the enhancement of income and habit of using electricity, the demand of electricity is bound to vary. This figure will also vary if the assumptions are changed.

Qs. No.12 What is the provision for households where it is not feasible to extend grid lines?

Ans. For households located in remote and inaccessible areas, solar power packs of 200 to 300 Watt and battery back with 5 LED light, 1 DC Fan, 1 DC power plug along with repair and maintenance for 5 years would be provided.

Qs. No.13 How many un-electrified households would be covered under Saubhagya.

Ans. There are about 4 crore un-electrified households estimated in the country of which about 1 crore BPL households in rural areas are already covered under sanctioned projects of DDUGJY. Thus, total of 300 lakh households, 250 lakh households in rural areas and 50 lakh in urban areas, are expected to be covered under the scheme.

Qs. No.14 Would the Scheme envisage providing amnesty to illegal consumers to come and register? Is that also something the Scheme targets?

Ans. The illegal connections need to be dealt with by the respective DISCOMs/Power Deptt in accordance with their rules/regulations in this regard. However, the scheme categorically provides that the defaulters whose connections have been disconnected shall not be given benefit of the scheme.

Qs. No.15 In what manner, the Scheme would be useful for people in their daily life?

Ans. Access to electricity definitely has positive impact on quality of life of people in all aspects of daily household chores and human development. Firstly, Access to electricity would substitute use of Kerosene for lighting purposes resulting in reduction in indoor pollution thereby saving people from health hazards. Further, electricity access would help in establishing efficient and modern health services in all parts of the country. Lighting after the sunset also provide a sense of enhanced personal safety especially for women and increase in post sunset social as well as economic activities. Availability of electricity will boost education services across all areas and quality lighting post sunset would facilitate children to spend more time on studies and move ahead further in

prospective careers. Household electrification also increases the likelihood that women would study and earn income.

Qs. No.16 In what manner, the Scheme would facilitate economic growth and employment generation?

Ans. Substitution of use of Kerosene with electricity for lighting purposes would reduce annual subsidy on Kerosene and would also help reduce the import of petroleum products. Electricity in each home would provide improved access to all kind of communications like Radio, Television, Internet, mobile etc. through which everyone would be able to access all kind of important information available through these communication mediums. Farmers can access information about new and improved agriculture techniques, agro-machinery, quality seeds etc. resulting in significant increase in agriculture production and consequently increase in income. Farmers and youths can also explore the possibilities of setting up agro based small industries.

Availability of reliable electricity services would also facilitate establishment of new shops of daily use goods, fabrication workshops, flour mills, cottage industries etc. and such economic activities would generate direct as well indirect employment. Implementation of scheme itself would result into employment generation in view of the requirement of semi-skilled / skilled manpower for execution of works of household electrification. About 1000 lakh man-days works would be generated for implementation of the scheme.

The expenditure of over Rs 16,000 crore will create positive externalities which will further help in generating employment and benefit the economy.

Qs. No.17 Is there any plan for creating awareness amongst public at large about the Scheme so that more & more people are benefited from the Scheme ?

Ans. Government of India would take up publicity campaign through Radio, Print Media, Television, Sign Boards etc. Lack of awareness about procedure to obtain electricity connection including cost of connection, uses of electricity, cost of uses vis-à-vis Kerosene, benefits of using electricity (Direct & Indirect) etc. has been cited as one of the major reasons of slow progress on household electrification in various research studies.

Therefore wide multi-media campaign would be undertaken to make people aware of all aspects the Scheme. The DISCOM officials would also organise camps in rural areas for creating awareness about electricity as well as Saubhagya. School teachers, Gram

Panchayat members, local literate/educated youth would also be associated in the awareness campaign.

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Vice-President inaugurates a “Crusade for Toilets” in Karnataka**Vice-President inaugurates a “Crusade for Toilets” in Karnataka**

The Vice President, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, today inaugurated the “Swachhta Hi Seva” and “Shouchalayakkagi Samara” (A Crusade For Toilets) Programme in Karnataka. He was presiding as the Chief Guest over a public event at Hubli.

The Vice President later visited Konnur Village, in Naragund Taluk, Gadag District, where he initiated the activity of ‘Tippe Samskarane’ (Waste Processing). He also inaugurated a “Shudda Kudiyuva Neerina Ghataka” (Purified Drinking Water Plant), visited the Janata Colony in the village, and addressed a “Shouchalayakkagi Samara” public gathering at the local high school.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice President emphasized the need for Swachhata to become a jan aandolan. He complimented the taluka, district and State for the good progress made by them. He urged all present to participate in Swachhata activities and said that Swachh Bharat Mission is a national program, a people's program, and not one of any particular political party. He gave several examples of ordinary people making extraordinary contributions, including Ms Lavanya, a young girl from Karnataka who persuaded her unwilling family to build a toilet and then went on to inspire her entire village. The Vice President appreciated the fact that many young women are now demanding toilets before they get married into another family.

On the occasion, the Vice President also honoured 13 Village Panchayat Presidents and the Naragund Taluka Panchayat President, the achievers of “Shouchalayakkagi Samara”. He also declared the rural areas of Naragund Taluk as an ODF block.

Shri Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala, the Governor of Karnataka, began his address by thanking the Vice President for starting the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign from Karnataka. He also emphasized the importance of caring for one another, as enshrined in the slogan of the government, ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas’. He said that to care for others, we need to start by taking the initiative ourselves in the direction of a Swachh Bharat.

Shri Ramesh Jigajinagi, the Minister of State, Drinking Water and Sanitation, congratulated the State government on the occasion and re-emphasized the importance of the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign. He reiterated the fact that the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, in his recent visit to Uttar Pradesh, had appreciated the naming of a toilet

as “Izzat Ghar”.

Shri H.K. Patil, Karnataka Minister for Rural development and Panchayati Raj, gave a snapshot of the progress being made by the State under the Swachh Bharat Mission and said that both, the State and the nation, were moving at a good pace towards becoming clean and free from open defecation.

In his welcome address at the gathering, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, the Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, shared a nationwide progress update on Swachh Bharat Mission and appreciated the good progress being made by the Government of Karnataka in meeting the goals of the Mission.

Shri P.C. Gaddigoudar, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, and Shri B.R. Yavagal, MLA, Naragund, were also present on the occasion.

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Special Feature: "Swachhta Hi Sewa" Pakhwada

Swacch Bharat Abhiyan giving wings to Bapu's dream of Clean India



*Vikas Khanna

It will be a stock-taking exercise for the government when India celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary this year as it will also mark the completion of three years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's flagship cleanliness drive – the "Swacch Bharat Abhiyan". The Modi government has set an ambitious target of Open Defecation Free India by October 2, 2019 when Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary will be celebrated.

Given the giant strides made in a short span of three years, the government seems headed towards meeting the 2019 deadline of providing toilets to every household. Under the Swacch Bharat campaign, more than 4.90 crore toilets have already been constructed since October 2, 2014. According to Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, more than 2.44 lakh villages have been declared open defecation free and 203 open defecation free districts as on September 24, 2017. What makes the programme noteworthy is that several public sector as well as private institutions have joined hands with the government to make it a grand success. Many business houses have adopted several villages in this connection under the Corporate Social Responsibility. It is no surprising then that the country's sanitation coverage has leapfrogged to more than 68 per cent compared to just 38 per cent in 2012. But still much more needs to be done.

Keeping this in view, the government has launched a fortnight long 'Swachhta Hi Seva' (Cleanliness is Service) campaign which will culminate on Gandhi Jayanti next month. Under the campaign, several programmes have been planned to give a fillip to the nationwide cleanliness drive. The purpose is to reinvigorate the "Swacch Bharat Abhiyan" which was started as a national

movement three years ago. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, which is spearheading the campaign, has been joined by various other ministries, government departments and non-government organizations to spread the awareness of cleanliness.

October 2, 2014 will go down in the history books as the biggest campaign for “Swachh Bharat” when Prime Minister Modi himself wielded a broom and swept the dirty streets of New Delhi. The people responded to his clarion call to join him in this endeavour to give a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, who wanted to make sanitation a priority for India more than a century ago. The campaign aims to end the wide-spread practice of open defecation, build more toilets and improve waste management, among other goals.

While underlining the importance of cleanliness, the Prime Minister has often said that the idea of Swachh Bharat has nothing to do with politics, as it is inspired by patriotism. One is reminded of Gandhi's saying that “Sanitation is more important than independence.”

While the father of the nation championed the cause of self-service in cleanliness and end the despicable practice of untouchability, the movement faltered after independence. Though several programmes were undertaken since then by several governments, it is a sad commentary that the twin issues of sanitation and untouchability continue to haunt the country even almost 70 years after Bapu's death.

Poor sanitation leads to several health-related diseases and untimely deaths. A charity organization “WaterAid” had painted a grim situation in one of its reports in 2014. It had then reported that less than a third of India's 1.2 billion people had access to sanitation and more than 186,000 children under the age of five used to die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation. It has its economic pitfalls also. It is estimated that the country is losing 6.4 percent of GDP annually as poor access to sanitation results in diseases and deaths. But all that is set to change now as various government agencies are working on war footing to meet the challenge.

Quoting the World Health Organization, the Prime Minister has said in the past that an average of Rs. 6,500 per person is lost in India due to lack of cleanliness and hygiene. He said Swachh Bharat would therefore make a significant impact on public health, and in safeguarding income of the poor, ultimately contributing to the national economy. He said sanitation should not be seen as a political tool, but should only be connected to patriotism (rashtrabhakti) and commitment to

public health.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which carried out a survey to estimate the cost of benefits of the Swachh Bharat Mission, has in a recent report said one rupee invested in improving sanitation helps save Rs 4.30. It said that each household could save Rs. 50,000 every year if there is Open Defecation Free society because the medical costs will come down, the value of time savings and the value of mortality will be averted. It also said the benefits are highest for the poorest quantile of the population.

But to make the programme successful, the local bodies and state governments will need to redouble efforts to create more awareness and educate people to change their age-old attitudes towards hygiene and purity. Despite best of governmental efforts, a large number of people in the hinterland still believe that it is unclean to defecate inside. The government and business houses may construct toilets, but one needs to draw people out from the open fields to the confines of a toilet in order to realize the full health and economic benefits of sanitation. There is an urgent need to educate people through awareness campaigns to help eliminate such negative notions. The success of the programme will be largely dependent on people's participation. It is therefore imperative that people rise to the occasion to make India clean and healthy.

**The author is a senior journalist and columnist. He has worked with several newspapers, news agency and television news channel in his 29 years career. Presently, he is a guest faculty at Indian Institute of Mass Communication.*

Views expressed in the article are author's personal.

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A people's movement

For the first 11 years of her life, Avantikapa, now 12, grew up without a toilet in her house in West Bengal's East Midnapur district. As she approached adolescence and felt increasingly uncomfortable with the multiple risks of open defecation and the sheer embarrassment of it, Avantikapa spoke to her parents and got them to build a toilet at home. "I don't have to worry about dogs, I don't have to go under the cover of night," she says happily.

In East Sikkim, a co-education school has seen attendance of girl students improve after toilets were built inside the school. "Earlier, they would go in the bushes. Many students fell ill with diarrhoea, and it became harder to find places to defecate. Now many girls who dropped out of school have come back for further studies," says school principal Aarti Gautum.

These are two heartening stories of the success of Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#)'s Swachh Bharat Mission. But anecdotal evidence is an imperfect method of impact assessment. For decades, public discourse about the impact of sanitation programmes has been informed by anecdotal evidence from the other end of the spectrum: Toilets are constructed only in government files and, even if made, are never used for practical or cultural reasons. Whether positive or negative, this gives, at best, a skewed understanding of the impact of social sector schemes. That is why three years into the mission, the Quality Council of India (QCI) launched a massive survey of rural sanitation to gather empirical evidence and measure service levels against promises.

QCI is a national accreditation body that has been involved in most of the marquee Swachh Bharat schemes to evaluate sanitation performance through an internationally bench-marked evaluation matrix. It's an article of faith in the most reputed management courses that what gets measured gets improved. With a continent-size population of 1.3 billion plus, it is implicit that any outsize scale project like Swachh Bharat must constantly measure the right metrics.

The survey, Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017, covered 140,000 households across 700 districts. QCI surveyors personally visited the households to physically verify if they had a toilet, and if they had one, were the toilets were being used. Every enumerated household was geo-tagged to lend the survey authenticity. The survey, conducted over six months ending in August 2017, threw up stunning results.

In their criticism of the Swachh Bharat Mission, many have cited anecdotal evidence about toilets being used to store grains, but the QCI survey gathered empirical evidence of a dramatic improvement in both coverage and usage of toilets. Three years after the launch of the mission, a behavioural change is discernible, especially in rural India.

Let the figures do the talking: As per Census 2011, more than five in 10 households did not have a toilet or individual household latrine (IHHL) in technical lingo. Further broken down, this translated to nearly seven in 10 rural homes not having a toilet and almost two in 10 urban homes where family members had to defecate in the open. Against that, the survey found, only less than three in 10 households (26.75 per cent) are without a toilet in the country (against 50 per cent as per the 2011 census). The improvement is dramatic in rural India where the number of households without toilets has come down to 32.5 per cent (from 69 per cent). That is, toilet coverage has more than doubled in rural India in these three years. For urban areas that number is 14.5 per cent (down from 18 per cent).

Now on to toilet usage. The survey found that more than nine in 10 (91.29 per cent) rural households having access to a toilet are actually using it. The results are similar for urban areas.

Of 73 cities that participated in Swachh Survekshan 2016, 54 cities have improved their score in overall municipal solid waste management in 2017. Here again, there is anecdotal evidence that open defecation persists in cities declared ODF but these are isolated cases. Even if we are not yet at 100 per cent, isn't 90 per cent plus a remarkable number, considering the daunting scale of the mission?

The Swachh Bharat urban and rural projects have set-off healthy competition among cities and districts. Self-help groups, NGOs and popular icons have pitched in and the results are showing in the form of a record number of sustainable toilets, open defecation-free towns, schools with gender specific toilets and decrease in water borne diseases in ODF villages and towns.

The public health benefits of ODF spaces far outweigh any criticism of non-compliance. Swachh Bharat is getting a state push but at its best, it's a social project where we are all conscience-keepers. If funding and resources for local bodies are one end of the spectrum, equally crucial are social factors such as caste, gender and poverty.

The three-pronged job of measuring, ranking and naming-shaming is working and we must leverage this approach across domains. Railways and Ports Authority have already begun implementing similar projects. So far, the QCI has measured toilets built, usage, ODF and structural issues such as sewage systems and solid waste removal systems. As these achieve usage at scale, we should also measure behaviour changes. Pouring concrete alone won't solve the problems of public hygiene. The combination of a people's movement and the force multipliers of infrastructure readiness and impact measurement can deliver results very quickly.

But just as real as the figure the survey has thrown up is the fact that hundreds of Indians die from preventable conditions each year even now, especially in places which have maximum incidence of open defecation. Faeces in groundwater spread encephalitis, an annual post-monsoon scourge, diarrhoea stunts children and adults and underweight mothers produce babies prone to sickness. The cycle is lethal.

The costs of public health crises are far greater than the price of fixing it. That is why Swachh Bharat must power on, its efficacy sharpened by regular impact assessment studies and the learning they provide.

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Clean India Mission prioritises behavioural change



***K V Venkatasubramanian**

Till three years ago, millions of people across India, mostly the rural population and many in urban regions, were nonchalant about performing their early morning rituals, particularly relieving themselves anywhere out in the open. They were unconcerned about hygiene, and diseases that could afflict them. Parents were exposing their children to grave dangers.

All these have changed considerably for the better following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for a Swachh Bharat with universal sanitation by October 2, 2019 (Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary). Down this period, open defecation, a way of life over centuries, has been curtailed.

Universal sanitation is at the core of India's development agenda. Till 2014, only 39 percent people had access to safe sanitation facilities. As the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) completes three years, five states, nearly 200 districts and nearly 2.4 lakh villages across the country have declared themselves open defecation free (ODF). Besides, 1.5 lakh villages have ranked themselves on the village Swachhta Index based on solid and liquid waste management in villages.

Improved sanitation has resulted in major household savings. Every rupee invested in improving sanitation leads to a saving of Rs 4.30, shows a recent independent study by UNICEF to estimate the cost benefits of the SBM. On an average, the cost-benefit ratio was 430 percent, "considering on one hand the expenditure from households and the government, and on the other hand the financial savings induced by improved sanitation," the study found. The benefits are the highest for the poorest quintile of the population.

Besides, in fully ODF communities, an average family that invests in a toilet saves around Rs

50,000 per year--considering medical costs and mortality averted, and also time savings. The study, carried out in 10,000 rural households randomly selected across 12 states, found that 85 percent of family members use their latrines. The survey was conducted to measure the economic impact of sanitation at a household level.

Parameswaran Iyer, Secretary, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, says an independent survey conducted across 140,000 households by the Quality Council of India found that "household toilet usage stands at 91 per cent."

Accessible and secure toilets have induced a big qualitative change in villagers' lives, especially women who were forced to defecate in the open in darkness, suffering mental torture—with their safety, security and dignity imperilled.

Want of access to proper sanitation prompts high health and economic outlay: it costs India 6 percent of its GDP every year. Research has highlighted an indisputable link between toilets, malnutrition and irreversible stunting. For the populace continuously exposed to a faecally-contaminated environment, absence of a toilet can have far-reaching effects. Insanitation affects children leading to 100,000 deaths due to diarrhoeal diseases. Nearly 40 percent of India's children are physically and cognitively stunted, according to the World Bank.

A major challenge facing the government is to bring about behavioural change in people's mindsets, especially among rural masses—totally different from building a toilet, an infrastructure programme, that can be accomplished. It is focusing on this most important factor, which requires dealing with a centuries-old deep-rooted habit of people going out (to defecate) and then getting them to talk about it. Several interpersonal techniques through community approaches to sanitation are being used across the country to trigger behavioural change; fundamental to the SBM.

"Beyond the hundreds of thousands of toilets being built, "a genuine prioritisation of behaviour change interventions is taking place," says Nicolas Osbert, Chief of WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene), UNICEF India.

To strengthen and take the mission forward, the Centre, under an accelerated fortnight-long campaign "Swachhta hi Seva" (cleanliness is service), is executing a series of activities--such as cleaning toilets, bus stands, movie halls, railways stations, public halls and more. The campaign will culminate with Swachh Bharat Diwas on October 2.

Efforts are on to move beyond the current drive for open defecation-free cities and work towards faecal sludge management for a safe urban environment without any risk to land and rivers. Every day, India generates a colossal 1.7 million tonnes of faecal waste. About 78 percent of this sludge (human excreta and water mixture) remains untreated and is dumped into rivers, groundwater or lakes in the absence of proper treatment systems. Sludge contains disease-carrying bacteria and pathogens and poses threat to health.

Youths and other stakeholders are being encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to problems for sustainable, environmental-friendly and affordable toilet technology for hilly, dry, flood-prone and remote areas; novel technological solutions to monitor usage of toilets and bring behavioural change for toilet usage and hygiene;

They have been invited to suggest unconventional models and methods to improve operation and maintenance of school toilets; pioneering solutions for menstrual health management and innovative solutions for early decomposition of faecal matter.

Unlike earlier open-ended programmes, the mission has been put on a fast track to accomplish the sunset clause--an ODF India by constructing 12 million toilets. Realising that this is a difficult and time-consuming venture involving behaviour change, sanitation has been made everyone's business—be it the pradhan or the collector or the Member of Parliament. It is being operated through the Prime Minister, chief ministers, district magistrates, VMs (village mukhiyas). Also, an army of swachhagrahis has been created and nukkad nataks (street plays) have been promoted.

Behavioural change is being motivated through mass media and interpersonal messages communicated by celebrities, who are creating awareness about the ill-effects of open defecation.

The author is an independent journalist and columnist, with four decades of experience across media streams--print, online, radio and television. He writes on science and developmental issues.

Views expressed in the article are author's personal.

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Special Feature – “Swachhta Hi Sewa”Pakhwada

Gandhi Jayanti

Swachh Bharat Diwas



V.SRINIVAS

Public sanitation was a subject about which Mahatma Gandhi was deeply interested throughout his life. Gandhi devoted a great deal of time to instilling in Indians an appreciation of the importance of sanitation and tried to rouse the Nation's consciousness on this vital issue. It is important to note Gandhi's published works devote significant attention to the cause of public sanitation, on parity with his focus on Satyagraha, Ahimsa and Khadi.

Gandhi's vision of an ideal village was one with perfect sanitation, village lanes and streets free of all avoidable dust. In his book "*Ashram Observances in Action*", Gandhi writes that sanitary service is an essential and sacred service and yet it is looked down upon in society, with the result that it is generally neglected and affords considerable scope for improvement. The Ashram laid emphasis on engaging no outside labor for this work. The members themselves attend in turns to the whole of the sanitation. The Ashram designed simple, easy to use latrines that did not require a scavenger to clean. The Sevagram Ashram rules laid down that it was necessary that inmates must wash their hands with pure earth and pure water and wipe them with a clean napkin.

Public Sanitation has been accorded significant importance in Gandhi's life in South Africa. In his book "*Satyagraha in South Africa*", he describes his life on Tolstoy Farm - "The spring was about 500 yards away from our quarters and the water had to be fetched on carrying poles. Here we insisted that we should not have any servants... Everything therefore from cooking to scavenging was done with our own hands...The lion like Thambi Naidoo was in charge of sanitation...In spite of the large number of settlers, one could not find refuse or dirt anywhere on the farm. All rubbish was buried in trenches sunk for the purpose ...A small spade is the means of salvation from a great nuisance."

In his book *“My Experiments with Truth”* Gandhi writes, plague broke out in Bombay in 1897 and there was panic all around. Gandhi offered his services to the State in the sanitation department. Gandhi laid special emphasis on inspection of latrines and carrying out improvements. In his inspections of untouchables’ quarters Gandhi found that they were beautifully smeared with cow dung and the few pots and pans were clean and shining. There was no fear of an outbreak in those quarters. Gandhi also records that he visited the Vaishnava Haveli, and was pained to see uncleanliness about a place of worship. He knew that the authors of the Smritis had laid the greatest emphasis on cleanliness both inward and outward. Gandhi further notes that sanitation was a difficult affair in penetrating Indian villages. The people were not ready to do their own scavenging. Gandhian volunteers concentrated their energies on making villages ideally clean, they swept the roads and the courtyards, cleaned out the wells, filled the pools and persuaded the villagers to raise volunteers from amongst themselves.

Gandhi sensed a relation between poor sanitation and practice of untouchability. People neglected sanitation because it was considered to be the responsibility of the ‘untouchables’. Gandhi felt that untouchability must be abolished and at the same time the conditions of public sanitation must be improved. Gandhi repeatedly forbade his followers from hiring anyone from the so-called lower castes for sanitary work. Gandhi felt that once the ‘untouchables’ whom he christened Harijans – children of God, were freed from the occupation of scavenging, their rise to a position of equality with others in the society would be facilitated. Following independence, untouchability was abolished by law. Gandhi’s vision is embellished in the Fundamental Rights – Article 17 which proclaims abolition of ‘Untouchability’ and forbids its practice in any form. The enforcement of any disability arising out of “Untouchability” shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. The principal object of Article 17 is to ban untouchability in any form.

In 2017, the Government is celebrating Gandhi Jayanti - October 2 as Swachh Bharat Diwas. Government is also celebrating September 15, 2017 to October 2, 2017 for the Swachhata Hi Sewa campaign to mark the third anniversary of the Swachh Bharat Mission to provide an impetus to the largest sanitation campaign of India. The Swachh Sarvekshan conducted in several States on the impact of the Swachh Bharat Mission brought forth several success stories in 3 years of implementation – complete behavioral changes in people to keep villages clean and use toilets, people selling family jewels to construct household toilets, vanar senas of children blowing whistles and accosting people at 5 am to prevent open defecation and significant improvement in school enrolment through the Swachh Bharat Mission. The Swachh Bharat Mission has become a massive peoples movement.

Come, let us celebrate Gandhi Jayanti October 2, 2017 with the Gandhian ideals of public sanitation for a Swachh Bharat.

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Views expressed in the article are author's personal.

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Towards A Clean India

When Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) launched the Swachh Bharat Mission in 2014, it marked the beginning of the world's largest ever sanitation drive. Now, a 2017 survey by the Quality Council of India finds that access to toilets by rural households has increased to 62.45 per cent, and that 91 per cent of those who have a toilet, use it. Given India's size and diversity, it is no surprise that implementation varies widely across states. Even so, the fact that almost every Indian now has sanitation on the mind is a victory by itself.

Achieving a task of this magnitude will not be easy. Bangladesh took 15 years to become open defecation free (ODF), while Thailand took 40 years to do so. Meeting sanitation targets is not a one-off event. Changing centuries-old habits of open defecation is a complex and long-term undertaking.

When the state machinery, local officials and communities come together to focus on behaviour change, they are frequently successful. Rajasthan, for instance, has tripled the share of people with access to sanitation to nearly 70 per cent since 2011 by sending motivators from village to village to inspire people to construct toilets, and to return a few weeks later to follow up. In Churu district, one young sarpanch even loaded a camel cart with a battery-operated computer to make it easier for villagers to complete their applications.

Villages in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Haryana and Chhattisgarh have set up nigrani (vigilance) committees to exhort people defecating in the open to use toilets. In Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district, sarpanches and block officials who have sustained their communities' ODF status are honoured. Mega stars like Amitabh Bachhan and Anushka Sharma have led the "Darwaza Bandh" campaign to change age-old practices, focusing on rural men who are often the last to start using a latrine. Global experience confirms that people are more likely to use a toilet that they have constructed - or at least paid for - themselves. A 2014 study shows that half as many people continued to defecate in the open after they constructed their own toilet, compared with those for whom the government had built or fully subsidised a latrine.

Accordingly, UP mobilised unemployed youth to encourage families to build toilets with their own money. Bijnor district used only 57 per cent of the funds allocated to it for toilet construction. At the same time, one in four of the district's villages declared themselves ODF. Experience from rural Bihar shows that households are willing to pay for their own toilets. In Rohtas district, Sushila Devi - a mother of four who works as a casual labourer - took a loan of Rs 12,000 through her self-help group to construct a latrine.

Scaling up good experiences is equally important. In Bijnor, the district collector set up a control room to track the progress of motivators in real time. State and district officials are now learning from each other, and the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is documenting their successes. However, scaling up also requires staffing up. A recent review found that 30 per cent of state level posts sanctioned under SBM are vacant - vacancies at the district level as high as 50 per cent.

Three years into SBM, it is time to reinforce the focus on sustained outcomes. It will be essential to reach all sections of society, give women a greater role, and address the social issues around the manual emptying of latrines. Since the construction of toilets alone is not a measure of success, the World Bank's support for SBM Grameen focuses on incentivising their sustained use. The Government of India and the World Bank agreed to disburse project funds based on verification of toilet use by an independent agency, which is now embarking on a large-scale household survey to verify the data reported by states and districts.

We must now capitalise on the SBM's momentum to put an end to open defecation. This will improve the health of India's children, provide dignity and safety to its women, and achieve a clean India.

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For Gandhi Non-violence was akin to Swachhta

Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi: 2nd October

Special Feature – “Swachhta Hi Sewa”Pakhwada

For Gandhi Non-violence was akin to Swachhta

***Sudhirendar Sharma**

India's decisive battle against cleanliness and hygiene has got a fillip through 'Swachhta Hi Seva', Cleanliness is Service, which draws attention to making sanitation a shared responsibility. Embedded in the idea of this top-up initiative to the already ongoing 'Swachh Bharat Mission' (SBM) is a clear invocation for the masses to shun the entrenched notion that cleanliness is but the task of the 'others' who have historically been performing it on behalf of the rest of 'us'.

Nothing could be closer to the Mahatma who on numerous occasions in his checkered life had demonstrated a clear but distinct relationship between sanitation and service, by presenting himself as a living example that 'everyone be his own scavenger'. Convinced that he will not allow 'anyone walk through his mind with their dirty feet', Gandhi had held the broom firmly in his hands through his life without missing a single occasion to extend his 'service as a scavenger'.

From the Phoenix in South Africa to Sewagram in India, Gandhi's ashrams were lived-in examples of what service meant in the quest for cleanliness. More than an act in symbolism, cleanliness was perceived as a noble service in which all the *ashramites* used to engage on a daily basis. It is evident that for the Father of the Nation the service for *swachhta* was a social tool that he used to cut across class and caste barriers that hindered cleanliness. It has continued to remain relevant till this day.

However, it is intriguing how the Mahatma had kept alive his message of cleanliness throughout his non-violent crusade for attaining freedom. Even during the ultimate test of his idea and practice of non-violence following the Noakhali massacre, which had accounted for the lives of 5,000 people in the worst communal riots before independence, Gandhi had not missed out an opportunity to convey the message that sanitation and non-violence were two faces of the same coin.

One day during the peace mission through the troubled areas in Noakhali he encountered filth and dirt deliberately strewn on the unpaved street aimed at thwarting his march to spread his message of peace among the affected populace. Not deterred by it, the Mahatma used it as an opportunity to do what only he could do. Pulling some twigs from nearby bushes and converting it into brooms, the apostle of peace and non-violence had swept the street of its opposition, from inciting further violence.

For him 'a healthy mind in a healthy body' was not a physical manifestation but a deep-rooted philosophical message. Could an individual harbor non-violent thought if his actions were violent towards nature and fellow beings? That cleanliness was viewed as an integral part of his political campaign for freedom, there is little doubt that lack of cleanliness was clearly equated to an act of violence. It indeed is as lack of hygiene continues to cause death to millions of children in the country.

No wonder, lack of sanitation remains an invisible killer. Manifest in it is the worst form of violence, Gandhi had long perceived. Therefore sanitation was made an uncontested metaphor for non-violence, a co-traveler in the quest for both social and political freedom. Having observed scrupulous rules about cleanliness in the west, Gandhi could not resist applying the same in his life, and in the lives of millions who followed him. Much of his work remains unfinished, though.

"I learnt years ago that a lavatory must be as clean as a drawing-room", Gandhi had once remarked. Taking his learning to a higher level, Gandhi had made his toilet (in his ashram in Sewagram at Wardha) literally a place of worship - cleanliness is close to godliness. Only by elevating it to the high pedestal can the value of a toilet be understood by the masses. This calls for a significant shift in our perception of living amidst filth, wherein sanitation has remained more of an exception than a norm.

The ambitious target of making the country open defecation free by October 2, 2019 is the first step in that direction, and a formidable undertaking in giving a functional toilet each to over 50 million households in the country. However, converting a 'toilet movement' into a 'social movement' wherein actual toilet usage becomes a norm will call for pulling lessons from the life of Gandhi. Among other factors, reluctance of villagers to clean toilets and empty sewage pits remains a socio-cultural taboo.

No one could foresee this problem more than Gandhi himself. Kasturba had once expressed her disgust when asked to carry and clean the chamber-pots. Gandhi had rebuked her and told her to leave the house if she wanted not to observe the practice of being a scavenger herself. In doing so, Gandhi had expressed a violent behaviour *albeit* for a short moment, to inculcate the greater value of non-violence through an act of cleanliness. In many ways, *swachhta* to him was akin to non-violence or sometimes perhaps above it.

This small but significant episode from the life of Gandhi harbors a valuable message. By practicing it through the rest of her life, Kasturba had inadvertently demonstrated *Swachhta Hi Vyavhaar*, Cleanliness is Behaviour. It could be the message for the top-up campaign next year. After all, it is the behavioural change that SBM is trying to inculcate amongst millions.

****Dr Sudhirendar Sharma is an independent writer, researcher and academic***

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