

“MODI SWACHHATA ABHIYAN”: A REAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR NEW ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi had rightly said, “Sanitation is more important than Independence”. He was aware of the pathetic situation of Indian rural people at that time and he dreamt of a clean India where he emphasised on cleanliness and sanitation as an integral part of living. Unfortunately, we have completed 67 years of independence and we have only about 30% of the rural households with access to toilets.

President Pranab Mukherjee in his address to Parliament in June 2014 said, “For ensuring hygiene, waste management and sanitation across the nation a “Swachh Bharat Mission” will be launched. This will be our tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary to be celebrated in the year 2019”.

The Narendra Modi Government launched the “Swachh Bharat” movement to solve the sanitation problem in India, to solve the problem of waste management and make India a clean country, ensuring hygiene all across the country. Emphasising “Clean India” on August 15, 2014 in his Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister said that this movement is associated with the economic activity of the country. This mission for creating a clean India will be launched on October 2, 2014, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi with the target of completing the mission in 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of the father of the nation. The basic objective behind Swachh Bharat Mission is to create sanitation facilities for all and eliminate completely the unhealthy practice of responding to the nature's call in the open. It aims to provide every rural family with a toilet by 2019.

Keywords: Independence, Waste Management, Sanitation, hygiene

"Let us fulfill Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Clean India – Swachh Bharat"

"Cleanliness was very close to Mahatma Gandhi's heart. A clean India is the best tribute we can pay to Bapu when we celebrate his 150th birth anniversary in 2019. Mahatma Gandhi devoted his life so that India attains 'Swarajya'. Now the time has come to devote ourselves towards 'Swachhata' (cleanliness) of our motherland. 2nd October we are launching Swachh Bharat Mission, a massive mass movement that seeks to create a Clean India".
- **Shri Narendra Modi, [Prime Minister, India]**

All the governments in this country have made one or the other effort to do this work. Several political, social and cultural organizations have made efforts in this

direction. I greet all those, who have worked, "Modi said in his 25-minute address at Rajpath, where he formally kicked off the five-year-long campaign that will cover 4,041 statutory towns. Recalling that he had congratulated all governments even from the ramparts of Red Fort, Modi said," even today from this stage; I greet and salute all the governments--central, state and municipal, social organizations which have worked in this direction, whether they are leaders from Sarvodaya or workers of Seva Dal. I launch this programme with their blessings." "I am seeing that Gandhi is looking through these specs that whether we have made India clean or not, what we have done and what we have done," he said.

Objectives of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

The details of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan are under development presently. But the following principles will be included:

Construction of individual, cluster and community toilets.

To eliminate or reduce open defecation. Open defecation is one of the main causes of deaths of thousands of children each year.

Not only latrine construction, the Swachh Bharat Mission will also make an initiative of establishing an accountable mechanism of monitoring latrine use.

Public awareness will also be provided about the drawbacks of open defecation and promotion of latrine use.

Proper, dedicated ground staff will be recruited to bring about behavioural change and promotion of latrine use.

For proper sanitation use, the mission will aim at changing people's attitudes, mindsets and behaviours.

To keep villages clean.

Solid and liquid waste management through gram panchayats.

To lay water pipelines in all villages, ensuring water supply to all households by 2019.

What is Modi's opinion?

Modi has directly linked the Clean India movement with the economic activity of the nation. This mission, according to him, can contribute to GDP growth, provide a source of employment and reduce health costs, thereby connecting to an economic activity. Cleanliness is no doubt connected to the tourism and global interests of the country as a whole. India is already a known hub in the world tourist map. It is high time now that India's top 50 tourist destinations display high class levels of hygiene and cleanliness so as to change the nation's

global perception.

Clean India can bring in more tourists, thereby increasing the revenue. He has appealed to the people to devote 100 hours every year to cleanliness. Not only had the sanitation programme, Modi also laid emphasis on solid waste management and waste water management. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Rural Development, Drinking Water & Sanitation, said that solid and liquid waste management activities using scientifically proved advanced techniques will be launched in each gram panchayat. Narendra Modi has also directed that separate toilets for boys and girls should be provided in every school in the country by August 15, 2015.

Emphasising on the connection of Swachh Bharat with economic activity of the country Modi said, "The pursuit of cleanliness can be an economic activity, contributing to GDP growth, reduction in healthcare costs, and a source of employment." Modi also asked everyone to be a part of the 'Swachh Bharat' campaign and to make it a public movement rather than just a government mission. Relating cleanliness to tourism and global interest of India, Modi said that world-class levels of hygiene and cleanliness are required in India's top 50 tourist destinations, to bring about a paradigm shift in the country's global perception. Modi also stressed on his vision of solid waste management and waste water management through the PPP model in 500 towns and cities across India. How is Swachh Bharat Mission and Indian economy connected? Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with senior ministers briefing them on his dream mission of Clean India, 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'. He said if the tourist destinations in the country are clean, it will bring more people and will also bring a change in India's global perception.

Cleanliness of a country is directly linked to tourism and economy and thus Modi has asked everyone to make the 'Clean India Mission' an economic activity.

Wielding the broom, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched the country's biggest-ever cleanliness drive that is expected to cost over Rs 62,000 crore, asserting that the "Swachh Bharat" mission is "beyond politics" and inspired by patriotism. India, he said, should learn from foreign countries, where people are disciplined and do not litter in public places. He said though it is a difficult task, it can be achieved and for that people will have to change their habits. "If people of India can reach Mars with minimal expenditure, why can they not keep their streets and colonies clean," he said asking people to take up the responsibility to make the mission a success. He also wondered whether the task can only

be left only to the government to accomplish. "If we make it a public movement, we can make our country being counted as one among the cleanest nations," he said. The Prime Minister said that a campaign has been unleashed on the social media as well where a separate website for the mission has been launched and he is tweeting about the drive on his Twitter handle.

The Prime Minister said he had invited nine public figures: Mridula Sinha, Sachin Tendulkar, Baba Ramdev, Shashi Tharoor, Anil Ambani, Kamal Hasan, Salman Khan, Priyanka Chopra and Team Tarak Mehta ka Oolta Chashma - to make a contribution towards Swachh Bharat, share the same on social media, and invite nine other people to do the same, hence forming a chain. He urged people to share their contributions on social media using the hash-tag #My Clean India.



The country is all set to witness a majestic launch of 'Swachh Bharat Mission' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of 145th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Administering a pledge to people to make India clean, he said that this task is not the responsibility only of safai karamcharis or the government but of all the 125 crore Indians. While ruing that 60 percent of populace in rural areas still defecate in open, the Prime Minister said the stigma of women lacking toilet facilities has to be removed. Modi said that he has requested the corporates to evolve plans under corporate social responsibility to build clean toilets especially for girl students in schools.

In an event marked by fervour and symbolism, the Prime Minister earlier wielded a broom and swept pavement in Valmiki Basti, a colony of sanitation workers. The urban component of the Mission is proposed to be implemented over 5 years starting from October 2, 2014 in all 4,041 statutory towns. The total expected cost of the programme is Rs 62,009 crore, out of which the proposed central assistance will be of Rs 14,623 crore. Quoting a WHO estimate, he said a person in India loses about Rs 6,500 per annum due to illness and poor health as he is unable to perform day-to-day duties.

The Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) or the Clean India Campaign is an ambitious programme of the Government of India for sanitation that aims to revamp the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) to make India Open Defecation Free by 2022. NBA envisages an integrated approach to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). With NBA, the roles of District level Sanitation coordinators, who were an integral part of TSC, have undergone a major shift. Now known as Swachhata Preraks, they are the catalysts of the programme at the district level, facilitating Gram Panchayats to achieve the Nirmal Gram (100% Open Defecation Free-ODF) status. To achieve the

ODF status, Swachhata Preraks will spearhead the activities of NBA by planning, coordinating, monitoring, and executing the annual implementation plan for sanitation in their respective districts. The Swachhata Preraks will be functional in 607 rural districts of the country.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: The need of the hour

Cutting across party lines and socio-economic identities, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan or the 'Clean India Mission' has had a massive civic impact on people on a pan-India scale. Apart from direct issues like cleanliness, sanitation and environment, it also covers a wide ambit of causes, such as socio-economic development or well-being, social justice, economic growth, health and community rights. First visualized by the PM in his Independence Day speech when talking about the issue of open defecation and linking it to a violation of women's rights, the Clean India Mission struck a similar chord when it was launched on October 2nd and vowed to make India clean by 2019. Launched by the PM from the Valmiki Colony in New Delhi, its inception was marked by an overarching message of equal inclusion on one hand and hopes of uniting people in civic nationalism on the other hand.

This is an important message, as the issues of open defecation, waste mismanagement and lack of public hygiene and sanitation have crept in like cancer in our system and become a foundation for national shame. Not only has this dissuaded both foreign tourists and Non Resident Indians from visiting India and [investing](#) in opportunities here, but has also become a source of discomfort for India at various international

forums, despite all its progress in various fields. The lack of cleanliness in India is one of the major stumbling blocks to our international policy and, in turn, to the economic growth prospects that may be utilized with international outreach. This is particularly crucial at a time when the PM is trying to attract foreign tourists to India through various incentives, like the Visa-on-arrival facility for the US nationals, who are the most extravagant globe-trotters, visiting India.

A comparison with past initiatives: Best practices and failures

Prior to the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, there have been related government policies which have been instituted over the years, but have largely been ineffective. The financing for these schemes has been massive, as, since 1986, more than Rupees 18,000 crore has been spent on sanitation policies. However, the abysmal performance of the previous governments' Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, the Total Sanitation Campaign and the Central Rural Sanitation Programme, resonated with the general failure of the issues of cleanliness and sanitation in public policy priorities, which tended to focus on grand and electorally-exploitable issues. Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan failed mainly because of improper policy implementation and plan; its financing was linked to the MNREGA programme which was itself ineffective. This failure was further compounded by a lack of awareness and mobilization which kept the public alienated from these concerns.

The present Clean India Mission may mark a clean break from these past programmes for the following reasons:

- First, unlike the past programmes which were treated merely as an obligatory government policy, the Swachh Bharat

Abhiyan has been launched both as a policy and a campaign. Thus, it encourages active involvement of the people which can, in turn, make the government officials more accountable.

- Second, a major drawback of previous programmes was that they were confined to a decentralized approach enclosed within communities and were, thus, characterized by problems of supply and meeting completion targets and compounded by the huge scope of corruption that such a confined approach entailed. This impaired their utilization and coverage. However, the present Swachh Bharat Abhiyan will likely avoid these pitfalls if the spirit of nationwide concern fuelling local-level accountability and direct intervention, from time-to-time, by the central administration is maintained.

However, there have also been examples of successful implementation and lessons from these best practices can be taken for this mission. A case in this regard was the Nandigram II block (West Bengal) which, in 1990s, became the first block to provide all rural households with toilets. The case was a community-led programme which encouraged social cooperation among people to ensure attitudinal change and also effective political coordination between the block and district levels and reasonable technical assistance. Apart from this, various other community-led programmes, conceived through a campaign mode, in states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Sikkim, were also successful.

Thus, to sum up, important features of successful programmes include:

- A practical roadmap for implementation.
- Strong and exemplary political leadership at all the three levels - centre,

state and local.

□ Mobilizing people and encouraging change and cooperation among them through various ways, including by spreading the programme through the campaign mode rather than the policy mode. This will also help to create demand for sanitation services.

□ Optimal financing of the programme.

The need of the hour is to ensure a sound roadmap through which the Swachh Bharat campaign can be made successful and sustainable.

From symbols to reality: Ensuring implementation

The government has succeeded considerably in mobilizing people for the Clean India cause, both by seeking to raise awareness among people through various campaigns and educational initiatives and by setting symbolic examples by roping in various popular personalities. The Ministry of Culture has directed its institutes of art and culture to come up with innovative ideas on mobilizing people for this cause, and the government has also directed hospitality institutes to include this issue in their course curriculums. The government has also roped in religious leaders to generate awareness.

However, the public spirit is often transitional and prone to relapse. Already there were reports of heaps of waste beginning to appear just two days after the cleaning drive was launched on October 2nd.

Therefore, what is needed is a clear roadmap of this mission which can be sustained effectively. We need to recognize that the solutions to the problem of waste are not limited to having public spaces which appear to be clean and enhance our national

prestige, but need to improve our quality of health and minimize the impact of environmental degradation.

An important factor which will help in the implementation of the Clean India Mission is that it is not confined to a single or a group of ministries. Almost all government departments are trying to contribute to it in their own ways. While some Ministries such as those related to sanitation, health, social justice and rural and urban development would be directly involved with the implementation report of the mission, other government ministries/departments too are identifying with this mission. The Culture Ministry has directed the Archaeological Survey of India to clean up all its sites and arrange for proper toilet facilities.

The government has laid out clear guidelines for assessing the implementation of this programme. It will bring out a Swachhta Status Report every year from 2016 onwards after carrying out extensive surveys, in order to assess the progress made on the ground. Apart from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the other key ministries who would be consulted in developing this implementation assessment plan include Ministries of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Health, Social Justice, Rural Development, and Urban Development.

However, beyond laying down the structure for assessing implementation, how the actual implementation process will proceed is not very clear, as there are a variety of debated views in the fray. The critical point to note is that the availability of physical infrastructure alone will not ensure its utilization or the effectiveness of the programme. The issues involved in cleanliness, sanitation, environment and

psychological well-being are highly interconnected and neglect of any one issue will have spill-overs in all other areas as well. Moreover, the government will be spending a massive amount of money on this programme – Rupees 2 lakh crore over the next five years –, thereby, making it important that it succeeds.

In this regard, it is important to take note of the following:

□ First, the issue of sanitation needs to be looked at holistically, rather than simply a matter of constructing toilets to prevent open defecation. Studies have shown that despite Kerala's high sanitation coverage, diseases continue to prevail, since there are insufficient treatment mechanisms when pits fill up.

□ Second, apart from addressing the provision of physical infrastructure, it has to be ensured that this infrastructure is utilized and does not remain dysfunctional.

□ Third, it is important to note that the problem of waste cannot be addressed without the reduction of the source of waste. The production of e-waste and the use of plastic should especially be discouraged and strict laws must be put in place to ensure that both manufacturers and consumers comply with them. Internationally too, India must negotiate contracts to prevent the dumping of e-waste and chemical waste in its territory. Instead, biodegradable waste which can be used for composting or as a fuel through incineration is much more manageable in solving the problem of waste. Mechanisms to ensure management of biodegradable waste should not be allowed to remain lax, however as it produces methane which is the most dangerous greenhouse gas.

□ Fourth, to cement the relations between higher and local-level authorities, the

disbursement of funds should be regulated. Regular inspection of implementation should be conducted from time-to-time and if, upon monitoring, gaps are found, then grants to the local level authorities should be strictly withheld.

□ Fifth, it should be recognized that stray animals are one of the biggest hurdles to public cleanliness. The issue of stray animals is also a politically sensitive issue, with several large animal activism organizations involved. It would be extremely costly and unproductive to clean up every time a stray animal relieves itself in a public space. Instead, it is much less costly to take care of this problem once-and-for-all, by creating a separate sanctuary for stray animals where they could be fed as well as taken care of. This also takes care of the political opposition coming from organizations like PETA.

Finally, it must be recognized that forms of pollution which cannot be seen but exercise a strong impact on us, also need to be tackled.

This is particularly true of noise and air pollution. Psychological well-being and mental balance forms an important aim of cleanliness. Noise pollution, through its disruption, and air pollution, through the diseases it causes, impairs this aim. Strict implementation of laws is required to ensure that people and organizations do not perpetuate noise pollution, and these laws should be applied to all, including religious organizations.

Air pollution in waste management needs to be dealt with by substitution of inorganic waste and proper management of biodegradable waste.

These aims are just the tip of the iceberg. Without them and in the absence of a host of cooperative social and administrative

mechanisms, the dream of Swachh Bharat will simply remain rhetoric and will lose strength over time. However, if this plan is successfully implemented, it will develop the civic and national consciousness tremendously and will also go a long way in strengthening India's global role.

Let's make Swachh Bharat Abhiyan a success

The PM has rightly asserted that Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should be a combined effort of both the Government as well as the people. We hope that the Swachh Bharat Mission does not become another Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan started by the previous Government in 1999 with the same mission but were not a success.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should not be a mere re-branding exercise. There is no doubt about the fact that change begins at home. Every citizen of the country should be clean and have hygiene and think of progress rather than waiting for the Government to make this plan successful. Let us also hope that we can change the minds of the people and focus on the real issues and not just constructing toilets. Let us all pledge to make this mission a success...

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