

## **Sanitation Economy And Dignity Of The Sanitation Workers**

- **Sanitation economy** is not just about toilets but it also includes provision of clean drinking water, elimination of waste and converting them into useful resources and **digitised sanitation system** that optimises data for operating efficiencies, maintenance, consumer use and health information insights.
- Sanitation, in addition to an **economy in itself** is also cross-cutting theme and has the potential to contribute in a big way to the growth and employment of many other sectors such as health, consumer goods and new and renewable energy.

### **Emergence of Sanitation As An Economy**

- The major initiatives launched by the Government are **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in 2014, Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA)** and **curbing single-use plastics** in 2019. This aimed at providing basic sanitation to all Indians, ensuring piped water supply to all rural households and combating pollution, respectively.
- A recent report by the **Toilet Board Coalition** estimated the **sanitation market opportunity in India alone to be at US\$ 32 billion in 2017** and doubling to US\$ 62 billion by 2021.
- It will help in improving the quality of life and ease of living of the citizens. In addition to this, the sector holds immense potential in terms of generating large number of new job opportunities for our youth.
- India's success in this sector would help in achieving the **global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)** of providing access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and ending open defecation by 2030 (**SDG 6; Target 6.2**).

### **Government's Initiatives Towards Sanitation**

- The first building block of having a '**New India**' by **2022** is the pledge towards a '**Clean India**'.
- The first major initiative towards sanitation was the **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** with an aim to accelerate sanitation coverage to achieve an Open Defecation Free (ODF) and Clean India by 2 October 2019.
- A new **Ministry of Jal Shakti** was created in May 2019 by reorganising the existing ministries and departments. Government launched **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** to bring piped-water supply to all households (**Har Ghar Jal**) by **2024**.
- Like the SBM, the JJM mission target is quite ambitious and challenging given the fact that of the 18 crore rural households, only 3 crore rural households have piped drinking water. The JJM will **further boost the sanitation economy** and generate new employment in the country.
- Government's initiative to curb single-use plastics from 2 October, 2019 will help in significant reduction in littering as about **14 million tonnes of plastic** are used annually in the country. This will not only scale up the ongoing sanitation movement significantly but will also help in combating land and water pollution and improving health of our citizens.

### **Dignity To the Sanitation Workers**

- Sanitation workers suffer from social stigma with respect to their work, especially the manual scavengers. The Government has taken a number of steps to effect changes in the perception of the people towards the sanitation workers.
- In 2014, the Prime Minister himself initiated a campaign to urge the public to change the way we call sanitary workers as **Kudawala/Kacharawala to Safai Wala**. Further, during recently concluded Kumbh Mela in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, the Prime Minister went on to the extent of **washing the feet of the sanitation workers** in recognising their efforts and contribution in keeping the Mela and its surroundings clean and hygienic.

**(a) Legal Protection for Eliminating Manual Scavenging**

- Sanitation workers are divided broadly into two categories: Safai Karmcharis & Manual Scavengers.
- In order to prohibit employment of manual scavengers, the Government had enacted **Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013**.
- The objectives of this Act are to
  - I. eliminate the insanitary latrines:
  - II. Prohibit (a) employment as manual scavengers and, (b) hazardous manual cleaning of sewer and septic tanks and, (iii) survey of manual scavengers and their rehabilitation within a time-bound manner.
- Any contravention of the provisions is punishable with imprisonment up to 2 years and fine up to Rs.2 lakh, or both.
- In 2014, **convergence** between various line Ministries and their respective schemes were achieved for faster identification and elimination of insanitary latrines and for eradication of manual scavenging.

**(b) Ensuring Minimum Wages, Safe Working Conditions and Pension Benefits**

- For ensuring minimum wages and timely payment of wages to all workers including the sanitary workers, Ministry of Labour and Employment has enacted the **Code on Wages Bill, 2019**.
- This bill also provides for **higher wage premium** for workers engaged in arduous and hazardous work in difficult circumstances. The code also **prohibits gender discrimination** in wages, recruitment, and conditions of work, which will benefit women sanitation workers.
- In addition to the Code on Wages, 2019 Government also introduced in the Lok Sabha the **Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2019**.
- The various enabling provisions of this Code will not only boost the well-being of the sanitation workers but will also ensure safe and healthy work environment.
- Efforts are currently underway to **draft a Social Security Code**, which will benefit not just the minuscule organised sector workers but will also include vast unorganised sector workers under its scope and ambit.
- The Ministry has also introduced a pension scheme for unorganised workers namely **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)** to ensure old-age protection for unorganised workers, which will benefit the sanitation workers.

**(c) Housing Education, Financial Assistance and Skill Development Schemes**

- Under **Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)** of the Ministry of Rural Development, there is a provision for providing assistance for construction of new houses and upgradation of kutcha or dilapidated houses.
- Assistance of up to Rs.75,000 is provided to the eligible households. A provision has been made under IAY for **special coverage of identified manual scavengers** for providing them housing facilities in rural areas, irrespective of their BPL Status.
- Under the Scheme of **Pre-Matric Scholarship**, the children of manual scavengers, tanners and flayers, waste pickers and those engaged in hazardous cleaning are also provided scholarship between Rs. 225 to Rs. 700 per month for a period of 10 months in a year for pursuing their studies up to class 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Further, the **National Safai Karmcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)** acts as an **Apex Corporation for the all-round socio-economic upliftment** of the safai karmacharis, scavengers and their dependents by creating alternate means of livelihoods. NSKFDC was set up in 1997 as a wholly-owned GoI Undertaking under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

- It also **provides financial assistance** at concessional rates of interest to the State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs), Regional Rural banks (RRBs), and Nationalised Banks for onward disbursement to the target group of NSKFDC.
- It also implements non-loan –based schemes in the form of imparting skill development training to the eligible to the members.
- Apart from these, the NSKFDC is the Nodal Agency for implementation of the **Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)** scheme.

**(d) Protecting Sanitation Workers through Ayushman Bharat**

- The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) will cover over 10.74 crore poor and deprived families providing coverage up to Rs. 5 lakh per family per year (on a family floater basis) for almost all secondary care and most of tertiary care hospitalisation, with no cap on family size.

**Way Forward**

- **Maintaining ODF status is important** so that villagers are not returning to the old practice of open defecation. We must focus on putting in place a robust monitoring mechanism to check the condition of sanitation at the district and Panchayat level.
- We must focus on **circular economy for converting our waste into resources**. The first step in this regard will be 100 per cent achievements in terms of waste segregation, successful disposal, and streamlining waste infrastructure.
- Despite a ban on manual scavenging, its existence is reported from time to time. Therefore, **use of technology** can play a key role.
- **Prioritization and faster identification** of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers through a time-bound plan must be seriously and earnestly pursued for effective rehabilitation of manual scavengers.

**The People's Policy**

**How The SBM Became The Global Benchmark For Participatory And Transformative Development?**

**A. Strategic Focus**

- Team Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin (SBM-G) has **identified four key pillars** of India's sanitation revolution, which can, more or less, be applied to any large-scale transformation in the world.
- First is **political leadership**. Arguably, the biggest game-changer for the SBM-G was the Prime Minister investing his personal political capital in the mission.
- Second is **public financing**. Over Rs. 1 lakh crore was committed to ensuring universal access to sanitation. About 90 per cent of 10 crore households which received toilets were from socially and economically weaker sections of society and they received financial incentives to build and use toilets.
- Third is **partnerships**. The SBM-G Partnered with implementers and influencers alike. This "**all hands on deck**" approach, **making sanitation everyone's business**, helped to mainstream it into the national consciousness.
- Fourth is **peoples' participation**. The SBM-G trained over half a million swachhagrahis, grassroots motivators, who triggered behaviour change in every village of India. *A large-scale transformation can be truly successful if it captures the imagination of the people and becomes a **people's movement** or a Jan Andolan.*

**B. Administrative Focus**

- **Administrative disruption** led to efficient on-ground implementation. It started with the Prime Minister **setting a target, a sunset clause** for the Mission- 2 October, 2019. A sunset clause brought with it a sense of urgency and accountability.
- The next important step was **building a team of people who believed that the goal is achievable**. Low-hanging fruits were targeted first-the districts with the highest sanitation coverage-to become ODF on priority. This created a **demonstration effect** for others to learn from and created belief in the system.
- The SBM-G **made sanitation glamorous** by engaging extensively with the media, leveraging popular culture, and associating Bollywood stars, etc.
- And lastly, the mission **kept the buzz alive** throughout its lifecycle through regular, large-scale events with the Prime Minister at important milestones, **helping sanitation stay on top of public recall**.

#### **Conclusion:**

- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation recently released the **forward-looking 10-year Rural Sanitation Strategy** to move from **ODF to ODF Plus**, focusing on sustaining the SBM-G gains.
- The next ambition goal announced by the Prime Minister on August 15 this year is to ensure piped water supply to all households by 2024. With the programme in mission mode for the next five years, this will be an additional shot in the arm for SBM-G's sustainability efforts.

### **Gram Panchayats: Beyond ODF**

#### **Lessons That Shaped Swachh Bharat**

The approach to SBM-G itself was structured to allow more freedom in execution and a few unique advances included:

- Strong public and political willpower.
- Adequate funding.
- District-level flexibility in administering the necessary activities and campaigns to increase coverage,
- Improving the ratio of financial investment in hardware with strong investment in software (i.e. behaviour change communication) with the community-level outcomes (like-ODF status) - not single households in mind.
- Utilising the Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS) methodology.
- Women –headed households and Scheduled and Castes and Tribes prioritised in the programme,
- Concurrently, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj played a more visible role in strengthening Gram Panchayats' (GPs') ability to provide services, which included SBM-G targets.
- With the call to **shift towards GP ownership**, there have been efforts to strengthen the **3 Fs** available to GPs: **Funds, Functionaries, and Functions**.
- Through the national **Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP)** guidance of 2018, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has made efforts to ensure that GDPDs are appropriately convergent in reflecting how **WASH investments and interventions** can be mainstreamed into existing budgetary considerations.

#### **Giving FPs The Central Role**

- In the States where GPs played a pivotal role, this progressive investment in GP leadership and ownership stood out under SBM-G as compared to the roll-out of earlier programmes.

- In addition, rural families were more apt to pick up guidance issued by their local leaders. This belief has been incorporated in the efforts to transition of India, from its recent achievement of hitting its goal of reaching 100 million households with safe sanitation, to the next phase of programmes.
- To frame the **new phase**, in September 2019, the **MoJS released a newly drafted 10-year Rural Sanitation Strategy**, which lays down the steps to be taken till 2029 to ensure that sanitation access is sustained and further developed.
- India is working towards this long-term vision of **ODF Plus**. This is necessary for India to sustain its achievement towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, especially SDG 6.2 which is, 'By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.'

**ODF Plus: Key Interventions To Be Focused Upon**

- Sustained usage of Individual Household Latrines
  - Ensuring no one is left behind and providing sanitation access to new households
  - Sanitation coverage of public spaces (through public and community toilets)
  - Implementation of Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) in rural areas including compost pits/decentralized waste treatment facilities
  - Visible cleanliness, and solid and liquid waste management
- The new framework strategically place GPs at the centre of the coordinating efforts to ensure that SLWM activities are taking place in all villages.
  - This ensure that the **principle of 'subsidiarity'**, which states that 'decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level or closest to where they will have their effect'.
  - While urban areas may be able to build and utilise larger faecal sludge treatment solutions, rural communities that fall outside of the radius of off-site door-to-treatment services will have to come up with locally sustainable options that function efficiently at the GP level.
  - Finally, with the launch of **Jal Jeevan Mission**, which aims to provide drinking water to all households by 2024, It is important to converge sanitation programming with upcoming water supply work to ensure that water sources remain safe and uncontaminated and that sanitation services are sustained with water available.

**The Way Forward**

- The MoJS and UNICEF are collaborating on orienting master trainers at the State and district levels who will then interact with the GP representatives across all states.
- There are still many lessons to be learned, especially when it comes to addressing critical challenges, such as *menstrual waste management, safe disposal of child faeces and retro-fitting of pit-toilet models to make them functional and sustainable.*
- These issues and more can only be effectively addressed if GPs are firstly given the authority and there is buy-in and leadership from the GP leaders, because the power truly lies with them to make a lasting difference for their people.

**Sustaining Behavioural Change**

- The SBM which was launched on 2 October 2014 succeeded in construction of over 10 crore toilets by 2 October 2019. Because of these enormous efforts, about **6 lakh villages in approximately 700 districts in the country were declared open defecation free.**



- A major differentiating feature of SBM from all other earlier programmes has been its **demand – driven nature** where the primary objective is to bring about behaviour change leading to the generation of demand for construction of toilets as well as to increase the use of toilets.

### Challenges

- Apart from the behavioural factors, it is found that the design of the toilet, availability of sanitation materials, access to water, and political or social leadership account for a higher demand for construction and use of toilets.
- Many villages are not homogenous and are fragmented along the caste and religious lines. **Collective behaviour change in a village is easier when the whole village homogeneous** but difficult when there are more conflicts.
- Furthermore, caste-based notion of purity and pollution makes it difficult to construct pit latrine which requires emptying it in future.
- The challenge of behaviour change is often **compounded by the diversity** in Indian society, and therefore, would require **more contextual understanding**. As a matter of fact, without having local knowledge into the fold, the sanitation campaign will lead to fruitless activities.

### Recommendations

- The present programme, while widely appreciated leaves a scope of the **new adoptees to get back to their original behaviour**. To prevent this, the programme may include the provision of **more than one toilet for larger households**. More emphasis may be given for information dissemination at the ground level.
- Improvement of sanitation is linked with other indicators of living conditions. Hence, it is important to have a **better infrastructure at the household level** as well as public service.
- At the same time, higher income of households with higher purchasing power for durable goods would lead to better living standards of living and thus sanitation practice. Also, emphasis on female literacy is imperative for better sanitation coverage.

### Solid Waste Management: The Way Forward

- Solid Waste management is a major problem in India, where urbanisation industrialisation, and economic growth have resulted in **increased municipal solid waste (MSW) generation**.
- The main objective of an **efficient SWM system** is to maximise **resource recovery and energy generation** from waste in the processing facility and minimise waste disposal in landfills

### Legal Framework

- Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) notified **MSW (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000** and the revamped **Solid Waste Management Rules** in 2016 to ensure proper solid waste management in India.
- Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 delineate the responsibility of the different stakeholders including the MoEF&CC, MoHUA, Central pollution control Board (CPCB), State pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), state Urban Departments, Urban Local bodies, Gram panchayats, as well as waste generators.
- Whereas MoHUA, State Urban Departments and Local Bodies have mainly been entrusted with the responsibility of **development of infrastructure** related to waste management, MoEF&CC CPCB, SPCB, and Pollution Control Committee (PCC) have been entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the enforcement of the Rules.

- The **responsibility of the waste generator** lies essentially in **proper segregation of the waste** which is the core requirement of effective solid waste management.

#### **Status of Solid waste management**

- The overall solid waste generated in the country has been estimated to be 1,52,076 Tons per day (TPD) as per the Annual Report 2018-19 submitted by the SPCBs/PCCs.
- Of this, 98.5% is collected and only 35% of waste is treated. 33% of waste is landfilled and 46,156 TPD of waste which is **one-third of the total waste generated in the country remains unaccounted**. The unaccounted waste is littered on streets up in dumpsites.
- Recently, with National. Green Tribunal's intervention, **biomining** (*a method for stabilisation of waste so as to minimise its adverse environmental impact*) of these dumpsites, has been initiated in 11 states.

#### **SWM Initiatives**

##### **I. Initiatives taken by CPCB**

- Guidelines on Legacy Waste:
- Guidelines on Buffer Zone :
- Guidelines for Management of Sanitary waste: and
- Selection Criteria for Waste processing Technologies.

##### **II. Initiatives taken by States/union Territories**

- Door-to door collection, waste segregation, and transportation
- Land for waste processing facilities

III. **Setting up Waste –to-Energy plants:** Four waste-to- energy plants have been set-up in the country of which three plants are in Delhi. Electricity generated by these plants is purchased by the power regulators and is fed to the national grid.

IV. **Development of Model Cities:** Model cities have implemented efficient methods for collection, segregation, and waste processing facilities.

V. **Increased Judicial Intervention** After the enactment of the NGT Act 2010, in past few years we have seen increasing judicial intervention in ensuring compliance with the provisions of SWM Rules.

#### **Challenges**

- Segregation of waste at source by waste generators:
- Lack of infrastructure for collection and transportation of waste:
- Availability of land for setting up of waste collection and transportation facilities:
- Budgetary provisions for (ii& iii)
- Techno-economically viable solutions for fresh & legacy waste:
- Management of legacy waste:
- Rural areas not covered in most of the States/UTs: and
- Enforcement issues.

#### **Way forward**

- a) Creating public awareness for involvement of different stakeholders for SWM:
- b) Development of ULB – wise action plan for collection, segregation, transportation and processing of waste.
- c) Emphasising on setting up of waste processing facilities
- d) Giving fillip to research & development activities with focus on resource recovery from waste:
- e) Capacity building in various regimes of SWM:

- f) Clear allocation of responsibility to ULBs and waste generators for setting up of infrastructure and for involving informal sector in waste collection segregation: and
- g) Adequate technical support to ULBs for processing technology and practices in waste management

### **Swachh Bharat : A Chapter of Success**

- **SBM** stands out with women being at the centre of all interventions and also leading the march in many cases and reclaiming dignity and empowerment in the process.
- Women in rural hinterland not only ventured out for discussing sanitation and convincing rest of the folks, they moved a step ahead by staking claim in men-dominated masonry work.
- They took up the name of '**Rani Mistris**' by constructing toilets, now affectionately called '**Izzat Ghar**' or '**Dignity Home**' in many parts of the country.
- Children and youth volunteered in a big way by inculcating Swachhata in behaviour and volunteered for *Swachhata Shramdaan* in mobilisation campaigns.
- School children have been the visible change agents at many places with their demands cries of "**Mujhe Shauchalay Chahiye**" triggering a sense of urgency among parents and school management alike.
- The success story of Swachh Bharat Mission is not complete without underline mention of the Information Education and Communication (IEC) interventions which constituted the heart of the programme.
- About 4.5 lakhs swachhagrahis led the inter-personal communication across household in the village holding forth the **community –level narratives** on sanitation and the needs for Swachhata.
- Mass media campaigns like *Darwaza Band* and *Shaucha Singh* captured the imagination and thought process of the common people.
- Campaigns like '**Swachhata Hi Seva**', '**Satyagraha se Swachhagraha**', '**Chalo Champaran**' and '**Swachh Shakti**' Stand out as great examples of social mobilisation for the cause of sanitations.

#### **Economic Benefits: Statistics**

- A WHO 2018 study had estimated that over **3 lakh lives** will be saved by 2019 when India turn ODF.
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in a study conducted in 2017 reported that **non –ODF areas have around 44% higher cases of diarrhea among children**.
- IMF 2017-18 Gender Equality study indicated approximately 10% reduction in time spent by women in household and child care and 1.5% increase in women participation in the workforce.

#### **Success Story**

- The case of **Peddapalli District in Telangana**, which was recently conferred the top honours for cleanliness, points to the **multi-dimensional nature of the sanitation** task.
- The district is free of any open sewerage or drainage besides having constructed a large number of segregated communication toilets for all.
- The district has been practicing **Swachh Shukravar (clean Friday)** when all government employees, irrespective of rank and grade, join the villagers in the morning to clean up, build sanitation facilities and plant trees.



**Dhruv : A Unique Initiative For Talented Students****'Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme' Launched**

- Union Minister of Human resource Development launched a unique initiative, the **Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning programme –Dhruv**, which will act as a turning point in the lives of extraordinarily talented students.
- The new programme, Dhruv will act as a platform to explore the talent of outshining and meritorious students and help them achieve excellence in their specific areas of interest, may it be science, performing arts, creative writing, etc.
- It has been started to identify and encourage talented children to enrich their skills and knowledge .In centres of excellence across the country, gifted children will be mentored and nurtured by renowned experts in different areas, so that they can reach their full potential.
- To begin with, the programme will cover two areas, i.e., Science and Performing Arts. There are 60 students in all from across the country, 30 from each area. The students have been broadly chosen from classes 9 to 12, from all schools including government and private.

**AI-enabled Mobile Application For Swachh Bharat Mission**

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched an **integrated waste management app and Artificial Intelligence enabled mSBM app**.
- **AI –enabled mSBM App**, a Mobile App developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), not only facilitates the applicants of Individual Household Latrine (IHHL) under SBM-U to know the status of their application in real –time after uploading the photograph but also helps them upload the correct photo.
- The app also helps the respective ULB nodal officer to verify and approve the application thereby significantly reducing the processing time for the applicants.

**Water Heroes- Share Your Stories Contest**

- The "water Heroes- Share Your Stories" Contest is launched by Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation; Ministry of Jal Shakti, with the objective of **promoting value of water** in general and for supporting country –wide efforts on water conservation and sustainable development of water resources.