

Swachh Bharat Mission campaign catching up

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As the nation braces to scale new heights on the flagship programme of 'Swachh Bharat Mission' (SBM) after its year-long drive, general awareness for cleanliness and hygiene is spreading like a “infectious smile.” A plethora of success stories and increasing commitment to the cleanliness indicate that it is not a paper tiger project.

Profiling the mission and its accomplishments, not only officials but many social institutions and other bodies, involved in the mission, flag piles of data. Statistics, they say, do not matter in such a gigantic task which has picked a natural momentum. Now, more and more people and government and non government institutions are on board for the realisation of Swachh Bharat dream. Urban Development Minister M Venkaiah Naidu says SBM has been one of the major initiatives of the Government but while other initiatives are largely demand driven, it aims at creating demand for sanitary services and infrastructure and involves motivating people and sensitise them towards need for adopting right behavioural attitudes.

He describes SBM as the mother of all new missions launched by the Central Government given its unique nature. A Clean India, Mr Venkaiah Naidu said, is the most profound statement that the country can make to the world which is keenly watching it in the context of various initiatives launched during the last over one year. The UD Minister said that since the launch of the Mission in October last year by the Prime Minister, people across the country and age groups have been inspired by its philosophy and objectives and this is its major achievement.

To further reinforce and consolidate behavioural changes, an intensive campaign has been launched last month and will continue till March next year to propel people into action for cleanliness and intensive cleanliness drive will be taken up in 11 thematic areas. The areas to be covered include agricultural and grain markets, religious and tourism places, educational institutions, resident welfare associations, under passes and fly overs, cantonment boards, water bodies and recreation places, hospitals, old cities and Government offices.

A Swachh Bharat conclave is also being planned. Based on reports received till August this year, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Chattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana have performed well in respect of construction of individual household toilets. As against the target of construction of 25 lakh household toilets in urban areas till March, 2016, construction of 16.45 lakh toilets has been taken up and 4.65 lakh toilets have already been built. Major states including UP, Bihar and Tamil Nadu are still to pick up momentum, said the Minister on the first anniversary of the SBM. According to him, toilet construction is still to begin in five UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Delhi and four North-Eastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Tripura besides Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Referring to the enthusiasm on the part of several states, Mr Naidu said that over and above the

central assistance of Rs.4,000 per construction of each toilet in urban areas, 13 states are providing additional assistance in the range of Rs.4,000 to Rs.13,000. Regarding construction of community and public toilets in urban areas, Government records say as against target of building one lakh toilet seats by March, 2016, construction of 94,653 toilet seats has been taken up and 24,233 seats have already been built and the rest in progress.

The Minister said Solid Waste Management is the largest component of the Mission in urban areas and till August this year, 100% door to door collection of municipal solid waste has been reported in 31,593 of the total 78,003 wards in urban areas of the country and the mission is on course to achieve the target of door to door collection of 50% of solid waste by March,2016. Regarding solid waste, as against the target of processing of 35% of 1,42,580 tonnes of solid waste being generated every day in urban areas, 17.34% is being processed at the moment.

On performance by some urban local bodies, Mr Naidu said that Surat and Morbi in Gujarat have already met the Mission targets of construction of 6,634 and 3,028 individual toilets already. Ahmedabad and Mahisagar, also in Gujarat are very close to meeting the Mission targets of construction of 22,562 and 3,028 toilets. In respect of solid waste management, Chandigarh leads the list of good performers with 100% processing followed by Meghalaya (58%), Delhi(52%), Kerala and Manipur(50%), Telangana(48%), Karnataka(34%) and Andaman & Nicobar Islands(30%).Ahmedabad (64 wards), Surat(38), Mahisagar(27) and Morbi(14 wards) In Gujarat and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (30 wards) have reported 100% door to door collection of solid waste.

Under Swachh Bharat Mission in urban areas, construction of 1.04 crore household toilets and 5.28 lakh community and public toilet seats besides 100% door to door collection of solid waste and its scientific disposal are envisaged at a total cost of Rs.66,009 cr. The Ministry of Urban Development has so far released Rs.1.038. 72 cr to 30 States and Union Territories. UTs of A & N Islands, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Lakshdweep besides the ne state of Manipur are still to be released funds.

Amid these developments, eyes are riveted towards cleanliness drives being undertaken even in remotest areas.From Prime Minister to State Chief Ministers, ministers ,accompanied by volunteers, caught attention as they embarked on symbolic cleaning with brooms It set the tone and many joined the stream unfazed by critics who rubbish it as a drama.

Many Ministries in the central government embarked upon their own programmes and the Railway Ministry drive on the mission came in sharp focus both for the achievements and lapses as aspirations of passengers swung upscale. The Mission is in the centre of discussions almost every day. Recently , a anguished senior bureaucrat, in a sprawling Government complex, lamented that one of his close relatives died recently following an acute intestinal ache. She could not get admission in any major hospital on account of flooded wards of dengue and other viral fevers patients in the Capital, smarting under threat of deadly viral fevers carried by mosquitoes breeding in wastes.

Debates erupt that menace of such diseases, striking with ferocious annual regularity and taking toll of scores of human lives, could be combated effectively by initiatives like cleanliness

and hygiene and mass awareness programmes.“ Imagine the quantum of its impact on human lives and strain on the country’s health system, if missions like Swachh Bharat would have not been launched. One may agree or disagree on the success and flops of such missions ,but almost every day –during last one year,Swachh Bharat mission was debated and practiced ,” said a middle-aged class four employee who quoted instances of cleanliness drives in colonies and people’s involvement.

Politics apart, things had moved –“one may agree or not- Swachh Bharat is in circulation and is bound to leap forward by every passing year” the employee asserted. The recently-released national health profile warns of spread of such diseases and stresses need for cleanliness to face burgeoning challenges to the national medicare set up and strain it causes on economic architecture. During the past four years, 2010-14,as many as 820 people died of dengue alone and latest data of death and seizures are yet to be compiled.

Medical experts say solution to such diseases lies in clean environment and people, getting aware of cleanliness, appreciate Swachh Bharat campaign. At many places, residential welfare societies (RWAs) were seen going for the cleanliness drives and purchasing fogging machines through personal contributions. Senior private sector employee, Mr Sreedharan, hailing from Kerala,said the drive had picked up momentum in his state and now, municipalities are providing specifically designed tubes for degradable garbage which gets converted into manure in a stipulated period.

Welfare bodies had sprung up during the year to collect non-degradable waste like plastic and pay back money to sellers of that “raddi(waste) after recycling. Such practices, Mr Sreedharan pleads, should be replicated in other parts of the country. SBM, a major initiative of Government of India, aims to make the nation litter and open defecation-free by 2019. Its objectives envisage a complex set of action that can be delivered through the fundamental instruments of social change: behavioural change and greater public awareness about the ill-health effects of poor sanitation and solid waste management (SWM), officials say.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the programme on the Gandhi Jayanti day last year and in the 69th Independence day address from ramparts of the Red Fort proudly announced achievements of the SBM and said toilets made and the situation was being closely monitored. Mr Modi said that Team India- people from all walks of life whether they are celebrities, diplomats, social workers, educationists, community leaders or spiritual leaders or media –all of them have taken a major responsibility to train the common man without criticising anybody and without pointing towards the lacunas and made the mission a success. He said the mission got maximum support from crores of youth in the age group of five, 10 and 15 and they became the greatest ambassadors of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan".

He said these children prevent their parents from littering in their homes and ask them to avoid spreading filth and rubbish here and there. In case, any father is addicted to consuming gutka and whenever he opens the windows of the car to spit, his progeny prevents him to do so on the plea of keeping India clean. Mr Modi said it was his belief that such a country where children are so much aware, so committed towards cleanliness,is bound to become clean; Abhorrence against filth and dirt is bound to arise there."In 2019, we are about to celebrate the 150th birth

anniversary of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and on that occasion we have to hand over "Swachh Bharat" as a tribute. There cannot be a greater tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.

“The task has just started, but I have to take it forward, not to stop it, not to get satisfied. When we started work, Team India figured out its responsibilities, we realised that there were 262,000 such schools, where more than 4.25 lakh toilets were required to be built. This figure was so huge that any government could rethink to extend the deadline, but it certainly was the resolve of the Team India that no one sought any extension.” According to Mr Modi, till August 15, this year, Team India has now nearly achieved the target of building all the toilets. He said it was not just an issue of building more than 4.25 lakh toilets. This is an issue of creating an atmosphere of self-confidence at a time, when "we were so engulfed with the negativity that it was being told that nothing could happen, there was no hope, it was not possible. But now, the Team India has demonstrated that."

Latest figures reveal that more than 4.18 lakh toilets were made in 35 states and Union Territories to provide separate facilities for boys and girls in schools and work is underway in other parts. The 'Swachh Bharat' campaign ever since it was launched by the Prime Minister on Rajpath on October 2, 2014, has engineered massive public response. Mission was launched with the objective of ensuring cleanliness and open defecation free urban areas in all 4,041 statutory cities by 2019. Estimated cost is Rs. 66,009 crore out of which the Centre's share is Rs.14, 643 crores.

The national government has allocated Rs.14, 623 crore as a central share for the SBM in urban areas. In addition, a minimum additional amount of Rs.4 874 crore (as equivalent to 25 percent of GoI funding) will be contributed by the States/ ULBs share. The balance funds is proposed to be generated through various other source. The State Governments and ULBs are expected to prepare City Sanitation Plans (CSPs) and State Sanitation Strategies (SSS) as per National Urban Sanitation Policy, 2008

Officials say the aims of the SBM describe a complex set of action that can be delivered through the fundamental instruments of social change: behavioural change and greater public awareness about the ill-health effects of poor sanitation and solid waste management (SWM). To institutionalise the change, the SBM prescribes capacity building for municipal officials and technical staff. The E-learning program launched by Ministry of Urban Development, is new efforts to build capacity of municipal functionaries to achieve objectives of the SBM. It provides flexibility to busy city managers and provides them options of choosing their own pace of learning. This platform will serve as a one stop hub with videos showcasing leading practices, technology options and peer to peer learning. This is divided into seven components in accordance with the SBM (U) Guidelines.

These components include introduction to urban sanitation in India, municipal solid waste management, individual household toilets, community and public toilets, IEC (Information, Education and Communication) and public awareness, PPP and financing and other relevance modules. To achieve the ambitious scale of effort required for a 'Clean India', the Mission seeks to involve the Private Sector through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Many schemes were taken up during the year like AP set up Swachh Bharat Corporation ;Telangana introduced concept of Parichay to apprise citizens of worker in each ward;Karnataka set up composting facilities;TN introduced “Namma Toilets; Ugly Indian group turned dirty corners into clean spots in cities; Mata Amritanandmayi contributed Rs100 crore for the mission and many Central ministries launched several plans and states also undertook many other initiatives.

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