

Swachhta Samachar

Inaugural issue of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin newsletter

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It gives me immense pleasure to launch *Swachhta Samachar*, the pioneer newsletter which brings to the fore the tales and initiatives from the field that are shaping up the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin. The Swachh Bharat Mission, launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on October 2, 2014, with an aim to ensure clean India by 2019, will succeed with the involvement of 127 crore Indians. Embarking on this vision of collective action, the programme is facilitating behavioural change at the grass roots level and integrating the whole country.

It gives me great pleasure and pride that many people have emerged as champions and leaders, fighting for a 'Swachh Bharat'. We share with you their stories and struggles.

Swachhta Samachar is one such platform which will celebrate the hard work and dedication of people and applaud their sincere efforts. I look forward to many more stories from such champions which will inspire us to be the change.

Birender Singh
Minister, Rural Development,
Panchayati Raj,
Drinking Water and Sanitation

People's participation promotes healthy sanitation practices in Nadia

Immediately after taking over as the District Magistrate of Nadia in West Bengal in 2013, Dr. P B Salim observed a link between physical stunting among children and the practice of open defecation. He also found out that as many as 3,09,881 households in the district had no access to toilets and were defecating in the open. These households had allocated different timings and separate spaces to men, women and children for this purpose.



Looking at the issue of open defecation, Dr. Salim realized that merely construction of toilets was not the answer to the problem. Along with providing access to toilets for the people, he understood that bringing about a change in their behaviour was equally important. Both were doable and within a reasonable period of time, Dr. Salim felt, noticing the better sanitary conditions in neighbouring Bangladesh.

Soon after, trained teams began holding dialogues with people from all walks of life – political leaders, religious heads, faith-based organisations, government officials and others, with the objective of promoting good sanitation practices. With participation of all the schools in the district as well as women's groups, the campaign soon took the form of a mass movement.

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Swachhta Smiles by Sudhir Dar



To provide toilet construction related skills to men and women self-help groups, the district administration set up two masonry institutes. The medical fraternity did their bit by prescribing toilet usage as a crucial preventive measure for diarrhoea management and malnutrition among children.

To ensure that people did not lose interest, events such as cycle rallies, hot air balloon shows, signature campaigns and marathons were held. Among such events was a

122-km. human chain that was formed by three lakh individuals, all of whom took a pledge to ensure good sanitation practices.

The movement continued over a period of two years. Dr. Salim's efforts bore fruit and Nadia was among the first districts in the country to be declared 'Open Defecation Free' under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) on April 30, 2015. The district's 'Sabar Shouchagar' (Toilet for all) initiative received the United Nations Public Service Award.

Dakshina Kannada relies on compost pipe technology to manage biodegradable waste

Nestled among the hills of Dakshina Kannada are scattered houses with just one house in every 10 acres, quite unlike the colony style settlements common in cities.

The district administration found it difficult to collect waste from such a spread out community. Under these circumstances, many families in the district, which is home to 230 Gram Panchayats including 368 villages, collected their waste - both wet and dry in plastic bags. The accumulated waste polluted the area, attracting birds and animals and also caused damage to the nature.

In October 2015, with a view to addressing this issue, the district administration led by P. I. Sri Vidya, CEO of the Zilla Parishad, introduced compost pipe technology to manage bio-degradable waste, as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). The simple compost pipe technology is low cost, requires low maintenance and occupies less space.

Many colleges were involved in the installation process. According to the Head of the Department of Civil Engineering, Alva's Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mr. Durgaprasad Alva, their institute conducted awareness sessions in Temkamijaru GP about the technology and its benefits to all stakeholders, giving them options to manage waste - pit compost or pipe compost, the latter being more suitable for smaller properties. A detailed multimedia presentation was made followed by a 10-minute film called 'Bhuvi' on the need to protect earth.

Once the pipes were installed, students of the institute visited homes after 15 days to review progress and found the communities satisfied with the compost pipes.

According to Manjula Guddehithlu, District Coordinator, the use of compost pipes got people to segregate waste at the source and manage their biodegradable waste.

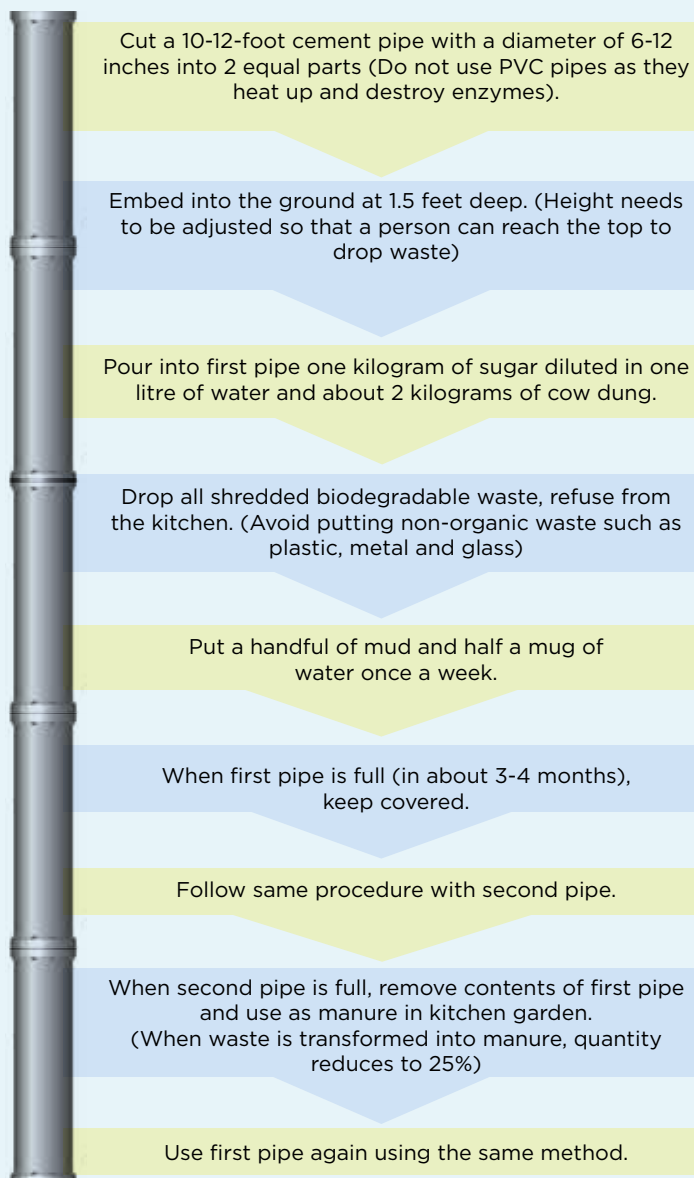
"As on March 2016, nearly 30,000 families in the district have adopted this system," she said.

The district administration sends a vehicle once a week to collect the dry waste and sends it to recyclers.

Bakery owner, Mr. M S Bhat who has a one-acre property with 150 areca trees and 40 coconut trees found the compost pipes very useful.

"We get sufficient manure to meet our needs," he said.

How to install compost pipes:



Source: Manjula Guddehithlu, District Coordinator, Dakshina Kannada

Meghalaya's Umthli village focuses on community cleaning

It's 7 a.m. on a Saturday and the alarm goes off. The alarm is actually a wake-up call with a special tune that has been composed and is played on a public address system with the objective of summoning the entire community to participate in an hour-long weekly cleaning exercise.

Within minutes, doors are opened and families including children, women and men rush out of their homes, equipped with brooms and other cleaning gear. The place is village Umthli located in block Khatarshnong Laitkroh of District East Khasi Hill, Meghalaya. The practice of weekly community cleaning has been followed for quite some time now, resulting in spick and span surroundings that everyone is proud to call their own.

Umthli is an ideal village with about 300 families and having clean backyards and surroundings. The village's primary livelihood is farming and construction. It boasts of storm and waste water drains with proper slopes, all constructed with the support of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act).

The people of Umthli ensure that cleanliness is maintained in the village on a regular basis and its importance is not



forgotten. While children make sure that trash is not littered around, the women continue to share the responsibility by monitoring cleanliness drives.

Source: State Coordinator, Meghalaya

Family builds toilet to welcome daughter-in-law

When Shajahan's marriage was fixed, Shamshun, his mother, decided to have a toilet constructed within the premises of their home so that her daughter-in-law Shalma did not suffer the way she did.

"I never had access to a toilet in my father's home or in my in-laws' home after my marriage," said Shamshun, remembering the difficulties she had to endure while defecating in the open.

In Gram Panchayat Bollavaram of Guntur district, where Shamshun lives with her family, defecating in the open was a common practice until eight months ago. For residents, it meant walking long distances for relieving themselves.

"I cannot even talk about the monsoon months and the hardships that the season represented for us women - to answer nature's call," said Shamshun.

To her, it was even more humiliating when several of her relatives who visited her home never stayed for longer than 12 hours owing to the discomfort of defecating in the open.

When Shamshun heard that Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) was being implemented in her village, she attended the meetings conducted by district administration and decided to have a toilet built, using the incentive provided under the scheme.

"I gathered all the information I could about construction and disbursement of incentive amount through installments," she said.



In addition, Shamshun put in Rs. 4,000 and completed the toilet, well before her son's wedding.

The entire family uses the facility now. Moreover, with Shalma pregnant, she wants to be extra careful about hygiene and safety.

"I do not want to put her health at risk," said Shamshun.

Now Shamshun is planning to ask Shalma's parents to construct a toilet for the convenience and health of Shalma and the entire family.



Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin has become a massive movement across the country, where people at all levels - from gram panchayats to the state administration - are working hard to make our country clean and free from open defecation.

In this first issue of Swachhata Samachar, which we plan to bring out regularly, we showcase some of the many success stories highlighting the grit and effort shown by both individuals and communities. These include the Nadia ODF story, and other interesting initiatives. We are also fortunate to have renowned cartoonist - Sudhir Dar to add a touch of humour to the SBM movement. We look forward to your feedback.

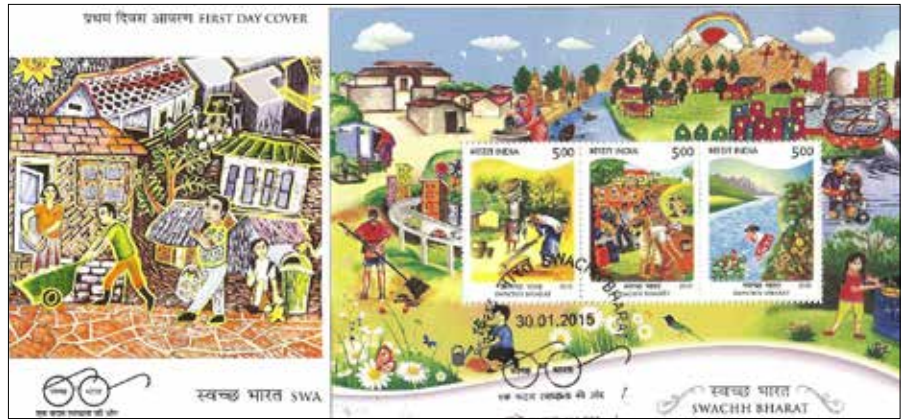
Parameswaran Iyer
Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

Tell us

Does sanitation play an important role in achieving health for all? How?



The Open Space



A Clean India is our heartfelt wish

We will clean both home and outside, now my world shimmers, Whichever corner we look at, let no dirt stick there.

Let nobody practice open defecation, and let there be toilet in every home, Let all our streets be decorated and roads gleam. Let cleanliness live in all four directions, in the villages and cities.

We pledge that, we won't litter anymore, Not only in our homes, but all around us. The message of cleanliness, we will spread together.

- Rajit Sinha
(Translated by Ankit)

Participate in the Swachh Bharat Mission

Real time Sanitation Coverage in rural areas at your fingertips with "Swachh App"

- Rate your village on Swachhta
- View the number of Household Toilets constructed for beneficiaries of Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin
- View real time sanitation coverage in percentage
- View improvement in coverage since 2nd October 2014.
- View number of toilets constructed since 2nd October 2014 by selecting the State, District, Block and Gram Panchayat's name
- View number of 'Open Defecation Free' villages

You can download the app from Microsoft App store on Windows phone and Google Play store on Android phone



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