

SANITATION: AN ALARMING SITUATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Public Sanitation is one of the most crucial issues that have been faced by most of the Indians these days. A huge number of people still relieve themselves in the open area which causes a great disaster to human body as well as the environment. This is among the leading causes of the spread of very threatening diseases that are not even easily curable. This articles provide us information that why the sanitation facility is important for the people. What are the problems they can face due to open defecation and what are the important steps taken by the government to control this disastrous situation. The article gives us the complete view of the sanitation condition of India with the proper statistics details.

Keywords : Sanitation, open defecation, faeces etc.

Introduction:

Public Sanitation is one of the most crucial issues that have been faced by most of the Indians these days. A huge number of people still relieve themselves in the open area which causes a great disaster to human body as well as the environment. This is among the leading causes of the spread of very threatening diseases that are not even easily curable. At one side India is seen as one of the biggest IT capital in the world and on the other side we can see the image of India as a country, where more than 38% of people live below the poverty line and they are betrayed of even the basic facilities of clean drinking water and proper disposal of human waste. And this is not only limited to the rural area but we can see the same picture in many metropolitan cities of India. According to the statistics shown by UNICEF it has estimate that only 31% of India's population is able to utilize the proper sanitation facilities as of 2008.

Looking at the current scenario, according to WHO/UNICEF joint monitoring report 2012:

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The overall world sanitation overview:

- 63 % of the global population use toilets and other improved sanitation facilities.
- 1.1 billion people (15 per cent of the global population) practice open defecation.
- 949 million open defecators live in rural areas.

Overview of India according to WHO/UNICEF:

- India accounts for 90 per cent of the 692 million people in South Asia who practice open defecation
- accounts for 59 per cent of the 1.1 billion people in the world who practice open defecation



Picture 1

As India's population is increasing at a rapid rate and due to open defecation we have seen that dispersion of deadly diseases have been increasing over the period of time. Open defecation gives invitation to various diseases such as diarrhea, malaria, cholera, dengue, etc. The infected bacteria spread all over the intestine and thus prevent the body from absorbing the nutrients and thus the rate of malnourishment is increasing in India over the last few years. As per the UNICEF reports, in India, it estimates that 1 in every 10th deaths is linked to poor sanitation and hygiene. Around 450,000 deaths were reported due to diarrhoea in 2006, out of which 88% were deaths of children below the age group of five and also one-half of Indian children remain malnourished due to this reason.

A report said that 1 gm of faeces contain 10 million viruses, 1 million bacteria and 100 worm eggs. The Ganga river has 1.1 million litres of sewage disposed into it every minute and contained a high level of human waste which germinate the diseases of cholera very easily and this will result in many deaths.



Picture 2

So inadequate sanitation is one of the main root causes of deadly diseases. Not only our health is badly affected by this but also somewhere it affects the economic health of the economy. The economy is badly affected because the large part of the expenditure has to be incurred on the medical and health care which lead to huge losses to the productivity of economy. According to Water and sanitation Program (WSP) study (2010) showed that inadequate sanitation facility has causes India a huge economic losses approx. to 6.4% of India's GDP in 2006 i.e. (Rs.2.4 trillion). According to the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, more than 12 billion rupees is spent every year on poor sanitation and its resultant illnesses. Thus, this issue is also a prime issue that has to be settled down early to safeguard the economy from the bad consequences in future. So now it's a great need for basic sanitary facility for all the people of india and it is also a major challenge for the government to take the matter seriously and will take desirable steps to improve the present situation.

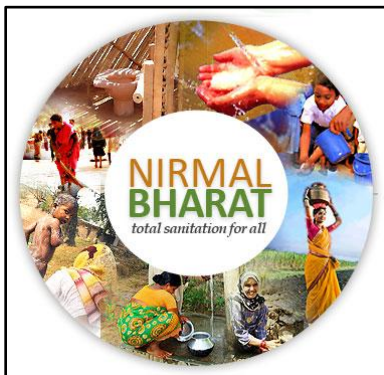
We cannot say that the government is not executing any step to improve this situation. Our honorable Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi is also doing commendable job in improving the sanitary facility in India. According to him they will surely end up the open defecating in India by 2019. Means every person will be able to take the advantage of the basic amenities. In 2001, the World Toilet Organization (WTO) declared 19th November as a World Toilet Day to raise the global awareness of the 2.6 billion people without access to proper and clean sanitation. So to accomplish the task central and state governments have now increased their activities and funding to achieve the sanitation MDG target, thus various measures and programs have also been introduced in recent year to control the situation. Following are the initiative by the GOI:

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- Central Rural Sanitation Program (CRSP) was introduced in 1986. This program was reviewed in 1999 and the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) was launched by Ministry of Rural Development. Programs like Individual Household Latrines (IHHL), School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE), Community Sanitary Complex, Anganwadi toilets were implemented under the TSC. Under these programs, incentives were given to the people to use more of these amenities and make themselves clean and hygienic.
- The government has also introduced Nirmal Gram Puraskar in October 2003 which was given to the Gram Panchayats which has been successful in achieving 100% sanitation. The Ministry of Urban Development in November 2009 also introduced a new award scheme 'Nirmal Shahar Puraskar'. With the partnership MoUD carried out a study to rank 423 cities on a set of fixed factors for sanitation and healthy living based on which best performer will be awarded this award at national ceremony. According to NBA, government's programme to solve 'toilet crisis' in India, by 2022 the country will be declared as free from open defecation.



Picture 3

Objective of NBA:

The goal of Nirmal Shahar Puraskar is to encourage cities to have the larger access to sanitation facilities to all cities and also the safe disposal of all city generated waste.

Operationalizing systems for the safe management of solid and liquid waste at scale.

- A strong network of Rural Sanitary Marts and centers has also been established that are run by local governance and the NGOs to provide the materials essential for the construction of amenities and other facilities. These centers also guide the people who are interested in building up the toilets.

- Government had also introduced the National Urban Sanitation Policy in 2008. Under this programme 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) supports the Ministry of Urban Development of India towards the improvement of the sanitation system as well as facilitating the knowledge sharing and awareness raising at different levels. Further to this, State Sanitation Strategies were made in 8 states and more than 120 City Sanitation Plans are prepared with funding assistance from Ministry of Urban Development and external agencies like GIZ, JICA, UN Habitat, USAID and WSP.
- With the collaboration of India's Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, and the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, has launched the reinvent Toilet initiative. Objective of the program is to make the cost effective sanitary solution and help the poor family to adopt the system.
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) is used to bring the awareness about the hygiene factor. Audio and video clips on cable or on radio are telecast so that people get more information regarding this issue and be encouraged to construct the basic amenities at their home.

Though the cost of all the projects are very high but at the end it give the fruitful result where people can live their life happily and hygienically. A regular campaigning are required in the backward areas , in schools ,media so that people be informed about the serious consequences if this situation is not control now. Mere construction of sanitation facility is not fulfill the purpose but it is important that people should use it and also make it clean for themselves and for the others. It is true that it is the responsibility of the government to provide the basic amenities to their citizens but it is also required on the part of citizens to give encouragement to proper sanitation facility and should himself take the initiative to construct the toilets and to use it.

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[List of Nirmal Gram Puraskar awardees - External website that opens in a new window](#)

[Nirmal Gram Puraskar photo gallery - External website that opens in a new window](#)

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