



First step towards a developed India is to create a clean, hygienic and a healthy India: Vice President Inaugurates 'Swachhta Hi Seva' and 'A Crusade for Toilets' Programmes

Posted On: 26 SEP 2017 6:28PM by PIB Guwahati

The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that the first step towards a developed India is to create a clean and hygienic and therefore a healthy India. He was addressing the gathering after inaugurating "Swachhta Hi Seva" and "Shouchalayakkagi Samara" (A Crusade For Toilets) Programmes in Konnur Village, Gadag District, Karnataka, today. The Governor of Karnataka, Shri Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala, the Minister of State for Drinking Water & Sanitation, Shri Ramesh Chandappa Jigajinagi, the Minister of Rural Development & Panchayat Raj, Government of Karnataka, Shri H.K. Patil and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

The Vice President said that every Indian should become part of this "Jan Andolan" with a missionary zeal so that the goal of a "Clean India" is achieved by 2nd October, 2019 - the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He further said that the dream of the Father of the Nation could be realized through 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' if everybody from celebrities to common man selflessly participate and take ownership of the programme.

The Vice President said that good sanitation can save Rs.50,000 per year per family, as said by UNICEF, and over 1,00,000 children die every year in India due to diarrhea. He further said that lack of sanitation also contributes to physical and cognitive stunting in children. Besides, women and girls face a serious threat to their safety when they resort to open defecation, he added.

The Vice President said that the number of Indians defecating in the open in rural and urban areas is estimated to have reduced to 30 crore, from about 60 crore in 2014. He further said that he was sure 'Swachhta Hi Seva' campaign will give a big thrust to the momentum of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan'.

The Vice President said that this campaign aims to mobilise people from across the country, especially government functionaries across all levels, local leaders, youth groups, women, school children, defence personnel, corporate, celebrities, faith organizations and citizens at large to offer shramdaan to construct twin-pit toilets and clean public places like railway stations, bus stands, parks, markets, hospitals, schools etc. He further said that recognizing the need to preserve the sanctity and cleanliness of our natural endowments and places of cultural heritage like places of worship, heritage sites and beaches, they are likely to be given a face lift. We should collectively search for innovative solutions that will make a tangible difference to the lives of the people, he added.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"I am very pleased to be here in Karnataka on the occasion of declaration of Naragund block of Gadag district, as a part of the Swachhata Hi Seva fortnight and Shouchalayakkagi Samara. I would like to congratulate the residents of Naragund, and also the district administration and Government of Karnataka.

Every Indian should become part of this "Jan Andolan" with a missionary zeal so that the goal of a "Clean India" is achieved by 2nd October, 2019 - the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhiji accorded highest priority to sanitation and cleanliness and had famously said "Sanitation is more important than political freedom", He had also pointed out that "the cause of many of our diseases is the condition of our lavatories and our bad habit of disposing of excreta anywhere and everywhere".

I have recalled these telling statements made by Gandhiji to drive home the point that the dream of the Father of the Nation could be realized through 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' if everybody from celebrities to common man selflessly participate and take ownership of the programme, rather than treating it as a government-driven campaign.

According to UNICEF, good sanitation can save Rs.50,000 per year per family. Over 1,00,000 children die every year in India due to diarrhea.

Lack of sanitation also contributes to physical and cognitive stunting in children. Besides, women and girls face a serious threat to their safety when they resort to open defecation. These are all serious issues and can no longer be ignored by adopting a status quoist mindset.

A World Bank report had said that lack of sanitation costs over six per cent of our GDP.

Ever Since Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' with a call to achieve 'Clean India' by 2019, there no doubt has been tremendous response from different sections of the people as also various State Governments, local bodies, public representatives, NGOs and local communities.

Overall, the Swachh Bharat Mission has made remarkable progress and has transformed the sanitation situation in the country.

The number of Indians defecating in the open in rural and urban areas is estimated to have reduced to 30 crore, from about 60 crore in 2014.

Over 2,45,000 villages, 1300 cities, 200 districts and 5 states have been declared open defecation free (ODF). All villages along the banks of the Ganga have been declared ODF.

Over 50% of urban wards have door to door collection of municipal solid waste. Nearly 100 megawatts energy is being produced from waste in the country.

Over 5 crore toilets have been constructed in rural and urban areas. There is some distance to travel, and we are all committed to achieving a clean and open defecation free India by October 2019.

In 2014, the household sanitation coverage in Karnataka was only 30%. Since then, the State showed remarkable progress achieving over 72% coverage today. The state has also declared nearly 12,000 villages, 50 blocks and 7 districts Open Defecation Free. The program called "Shouchalayakkaagi Samara" (Crusade for Toilets) is being implemented across the state of Karnataka as a people's movement to stop open defecation on a war foot basis. , I compliment the government of Karnataka for the same

I am sure 'Swachhta Hi Seva' campaign will give a big thrust to the momentum of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan'.

This campaign aims to mobilise people from across the country, especially government functionaries across all levels, local leaders, youth groups, women, school children, defence personnel, corporate ,celebrities, faith organizations and citizens at large to offer shramdaan to construct twin-pit toilets and clean public places like railway stations, bus stands, parks, markets, hospitals, schools etc.

Recognizing the need to preserve the sanctity and cleanliness of our natural endowments and places of cultural heritage like places of worship, heritage sites and beaches, they are likely to be given a face lift.

We cannot achieve sustained progress if we adopt a business as usual approach. We should collectively search for innovative solutions that will make a tangible difference to the lives of the people.

This is the responsibility that all municipal and village Panchayats must take as a sacred mission, not a mere job or chore. It is possibly the best and the most sincere tribute to the father of the nation who was so passionate about it. It is an opportunity for each one of us to show that we care, that we care about our country and our fellow citizens.

Friends!

These kind of achievements are possible only when the community comes together to achieve public health outcomes through engaging and motivating public, generating demand for toilets and using them. Few such examples:

On this occasion let me share with you all the story of a spirited **105-year-old Kunwar Bai** from Chhattisgarh. She is an inspiration for all of us to emulate. Her zeal and actions for a better life made her sell off all her goats to build toilets in the house. She was felicitated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister himself and is now the mascot for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Mondrita Chatterjee a class VI student of Hill Top School, Telco, **spent her pocket money to build toilets for poor people in Potka block** of East Singhbhum district.

Somari Devi started 'Lota chhino, Siti Bajao and Damru Bajao' abhiyan to prevent people from defecating in the open. She went along with the Nigrani Samiti at 5 AM and again after 5 PM. As a result of such initiatives, Religarha East Panchayat in hazaribagh dist was declared ODF on December 15, 2016.

Examples from Karnataka include:

A teenager **lavanya** in Karnataka went on a **3-day fast demanding toilets in each house in her village**. She finally called it off when officials promised to construct toilets in the village.

Dr.Manjula, IAS, the former CEO of Bangalore rural achieved ODF **in 48 GPs in 6 months which was a record time in Karnataka**.

Over the past month, 45 year old **vegetable vendor, Sharanamma has been giving away one kilogram of tomatoes for free; to each home that has a toilet** in the Dhanapur village of Gangavathi Taluk in Koppal District of Karnataka.

16-year-old Mallamma from Koppal district in northern Karnataka recently **went on a hunger strike to pressurise her mother to build a toilet at home.**

AkkammaHarawal, an SHG member from Gulbarga who also represented the Swachh Shakti in March 2017 at New Delhi who motivated communities to build and use toilets.

Tanuja Gouda, who hails from **Uttar Kannada** district comes from an all-women household who **dug the toilet pit all by herself** investing in her family's health

Women and girls are taking a stand against marriage into families without toilet facilities.

Friends!

Through the past week, and especially on 17th September - Seva Diwas, several Cabinet Ministers, Chief Ministers, State Ministers, MPs, MLAs and Sarpanches have offered shramdaan to inspire their constituents.

The Prime Minister himself offered shramdaan for the construction of a twin-pit toilet in a village in his Parliamentary constituency Varanasi.

Movie stars, sports personalities, corporates, artists and faith leaders have offered shramdaan in different parts of urban and rural India.

We have seen amazing examples of service for cleanliness even by the institutions which are the epitome of service - the armed forces and police forces across the country.

The Indian army organized a cleanliness drive in the Siachen glacier, showing their commitment to fighting the country's biggest enemy - filth.

School children and youth groups like the NCC, NSS and NYKS have led the movement from the front. They have come out in large numbers and taken Swachhata pledges, held cleanliness drives, Swachhata rallies and have written essays, made paintings and short films on Swachh Bharat. Over 2.6 crore essays, over 2 crore paintings and over 3 lakh short films on Swachh Bharat have been received.

Swachhata Hi Seva has provided a further boost to the sanitation and cleanliness movement in the country.I appeal to everyone to come forward and get involved with Swachhta Hi Seva, keep up the momentum beyond the fortnight of campaign on a continuous basis so that the nation takes a leap towards a Swachh Bharat.

The first step towards a developed India is to create a clean and hygienic and therefore a healthy India. Let us ensure that this jan andolan intensifies every day and every citizen plays his part.

Jai Hind"

KSD/BK

(Release ID: 1504142) Visitor Counter : 62

