

SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN: AN ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

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INTRODUCTION

Environment means “the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity”. It can also be defined as “the aggregate of social and cultural conditions that influence the life of an individual or community”.¹ It is needed, therefore, to have a healthy environment so that the human beings can survive without being susceptible to the ill effects of diluted environment. Human beings interact with the environment constantly and these affect quality of life and health disparities. This environment can be termed as human environment as the humans are dependent on the environment in every aspect of their life. The Stockholm Conference, 1972 laid down 26 principles² regarding preservation and enhancement of human environment so that the Governments of member countries can abide by it and regulate their environment.³ The government can make environmental policies to protect its environment based on these principles. These policies need to be implemented prudently so that the human environment can be sustained for the future generations to come. This goal of having a healthy environment should be pursued harmoniously to achieve economic and social development.

¹<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/environment>, February 1, 2019.

² Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, https://www.soas.ac.uk/cedep-demos/000_P514_IEL_K3736-Demo/treaties/media/1972%20Stockholm%201972%20-%20Declaration%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20Conference%20on%20the%20Human%20Environment%20-%20UNEP.pdf, February 5, 2019.

³ India has ratified only the 12 initially listed POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants). The Convention was adopted on May 22, 2001 and entered into force on May 17, 2004. India ratified the Convention on January 13, 2006, Press Information Bureau Government of India Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=161203>, February 5, 2019.

Poor environmental quality has a great impact on lives of people and thus needs to be addressed. One such way is environmental governance. It is the means by which society determines and acts on goals and priorities related to the management of natural resources. This includes the rules, both formal and informal, that govern human behavior in decision-making processes as well as the decisions themselves. Appropriate legal frameworks on the global, national and regional level are a prerequisite for good environmental governance.⁴ India's position in Environmental Performance Index was 155 out of 178⁵ and it was direly needed to make policies to regulate environment. One such initiative taken by the Government of India is Swachh Bharat Mission which aims to promote healthy sanitation practices and eliminating social issues like open defecation and manual scavenging.

BRIEF ABOUT THE MISSION

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) was launched on October 2, 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi⁶. It consists of two sub missions: One being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (M/o HUA) in urban areas and the other by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (M/o DWS) in rural areas. This mission emanates the vision of the Government to ensure hygiene, waste management and sanitation across the nation so that no home would suffer from indignity of not having a toilet and public spaces would be free of garbage littering.⁷ Thus, it will be a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary in the year 2019. The estimated cost of implementation of SBM (Urban) based on unit and per capita costs for its various components is Rs. 62,009 Crore. The Government of India's share as per approved funding pattern amounts to Rs. 14,623 Crore. In addition, a minimum additional amount equivalent to 25% of Government of India funding, amounting to Rs. 4,874 Crore shall be contributed by the States as State/ULB share. The balance funds is proposed to be generated through various other sources such as Swachh Bharat Kosh, corporate social responsibility, market borrowing, external assistance, etc.⁸

⁴ <https://www.iucn.org/theme/environmental-law/our-work/governance-and-meas>, February 5, 2019.

⁵ <http://archive.epi.yale.edu/epi/country-profile/india>, February 6, 2019.

⁶ https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/major_initiatives/swachh-bharat-abhiyan/, February 6, 2019.

⁷ http://164.100.228.143:8080/sbm/content/writereaddata/SBM_Guideline.pdf, Guidelines for Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban, Revised as on October 5th, 2017, p.8. February 8, 2019.

⁸ *Ibid.*

GANDHI'S IDEOLOGY ON SANITATION

He believed that sanitation holds an indispensable place in nation building. He stated 'cleanliness is next to godliness'. According to him, one of the chief causes of our poverty is the non-availability of this essential knowledge of hygiene.⁹ Mahatma Gandhi had a revolutionary vision about making India clean. 'Revolutionary', because he was probably the only leader of his time who realized India's emancipation was possible through sanitation, not just independence.¹⁰ He dreamt not only about ensuring sanitation but also about people contributing in achievement of this goal. He highlighted that sanitation is not only an issue in rural India but also in urban India as well. He had an advice for people residing in urban areas and municipal councillors that, "municipal councillors should be imbued with a real spirit of service so that they will convert themselves into unpaid sweepers, bhangis and road-makers, and take a pride in doing so." For those who defecate in the open, Gandhi's message was sharp and clear. "Leaving night-soil, cleaning the nose, or spitting on the road is a sin against God as well as humanity, and betrays a sad want of consideration for others. The Man who does not cover his waste deserves a heavy penalty even if he lives in a forest."¹¹ He was a stern believer of the principle that one should be the change he/she wishes to see in the world. Thus, many a times, he would start cleaning places by himself. Also, during the campaigns for independence, he used to lecture people about the importance of cleanliness and sanitation along with the need to achieve freedom from the British Empire. The government has launched the "Swachh Bharat Mission" on October 2, 2014 to encourage the ideologies of the Father of our Nation.

SWACHH BHARAT MISSION AND THE CONSTITUTION

The definition of 'Health' as per WHO is "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of infirmity".¹² The right to health is not included

⁹ P.Venkata Subbarao, S.Somasekhar, Swachh Bharat: Some Issues and concerns, International Journal of Academic Research ISSN: 2348-7666: Vol.2, Issue-4(4), October-December, 2015, p. 91.

¹⁰ What was Mahatma Gandhi's clean India dream: Take a look as Modi's Swachh Bharat completes 3 years, Rajeev Kumar, October 2, 2017, <http://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/what-was-mahatma-gandhis-clean-india-dream-take-a-look-as-modis-swachh-bharat-completes-3-years/878904/>, February 6, 2019.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19–22 June 1946; signed on 22 July 1947 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100); and entered into force on 7 April 1948, <http://www.who.int/about/mission/en/>, February 7, 2019.

as a fundamental right in the Constitution but the constitution makers imposed it as a duty on the state by stating it under Part IV as a directive principle to ensure social and economic justice which was inserted by the 42nd amendment. Article 48-A of the Constitution provides for the responsibility of the state to protect the environment and Article 51-A (g) provides that it is the duty of the citizens to protect and improve the environment. Also the responsibility of the State to raise the standard of living and the level of nutrition and improve public health has been mentioned under Article 47 of the Constitution of India. By implementing Swachh Bharat Mission Guidelines, the government is trying to achieve these directive principles to achieve social and economic justice. Also, public health and sanitation is stated in Entry 7, List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India which means only State can make laws related to it but cleanliness is not something which is bound within the State's boundaries therefore the Union can make laws related to it. Therefore, initiatives are being taken by the government to make laws regarding cleanliness. One of which is the bill introduced in the Parliament on February 9, 2016 which reads as follows:

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2016 provided that after Part IVA of the Constitution, Part IVB should be inserted, containing Article 51C which is as follows:

51C. There shall be a total prohibitions on the following acts by any person including owner, lessee or occupant of a residential or a commercial establishment, whether private or public—

- (a) Littering;
- (b) Dumping or disposal of garbage or electronic waste in a manner not authorized by the State;
- (c) Urinating, defecating or spitting in a public place;
- (d) Dirty frontage or surroundings of any building;
- (e) Stacking of garbage outside residence or establishment; and
- (f) Obstruction by placing any dilapidated appliances or vehicles or by disposing any merchandise or illegal structure along sidewalk.¹³

The object behind introducing this bill was that the State governments and local governments failed to give importance to the issue of sanitation and in 2014 the Union Government initiated

¹³ <http://164.100.47.4/billtexts/lbilltexts/AsIntroduced/4123LS.pdf>, February 10, 2019.

“Swachh Bharat Mission” to instill a sense of cleanliness and health consciousness among people and to sensitize local bodies to provide sanitation to the people. The contribution of people is also needed to make this mission a success, thus, it is needed that these kinds of provisions are inserted in the Constitution so that the State and the citizens will play their part in achieving the objectives of this mission.

OBJECTIVES OF SWACHH BHARAT MISSION

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in the urban areas of India has been implemented with the main objectives of:

- A. elimination of open defecation,
- B. eradication of manual scavenging,
- C. to effect behavioral change regarding healthy sanitation practices and
- D. generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health.¹⁴

These issues would be dealt as follows:

A. Elimination of Open Defecation

Open defecation means the practice of defecating in public.¹⁵ It may be done because of non-access to toilets or as a result of cultural practices. It becomes a health problem when it occurs in densely populated areas such as in larger villages or in densely populated urban areas in the developing countries. This problem usually arises because of the poverty among citizens and social exclusion. Country like India faces it more because of the prevalence of caste system since ancient times which has led to exclusion of lower caste people from acquiring the means of livelihood and peaceful living, thus depriving them of right to healthy environment. According to Census 2011, India’s urban population is 377 million or 31% of the total population.¹⁶ The Census 2011 also showed that in 4,041 statutory towns, close to eight million households do not have

¹⁴ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, <http://mohua.gov.in/cms/swachh-bharat-mission.php>, February 20, 2019.

¹⁵ Eliminate Open Defecation, UNICEF India, <http://unicef.in/whatwedo/11/eliminate-open-defecation>, February 10, 2019.

¹⁶ Urban population grows faster than rural in 2001-11 period, The Hindu Business Line, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/Urban-population-grows-faster-than-rural-in-2001-11-period/article20306437.ece>, February 12, 2019.

access to toilets and defecate in the open (7.90 million).¹⁷ Also, of the 1 billion people around the world that still practice open defecation today, almost 600 million, or around 60 percent, reside in India alone.¹⁸ Under Swachh Bharat Mission, 111 million toilets will be built by 2019 that is more than 60,000 toilets per day or nearly one toilet every second.¹⁹

Impacts of open defecation:

Open defecation or lack of sanitation is a major contributor in spreading various health hazards and diseases such as diarrhea and intestinal worm infections but also typhoid, cholera, hepatitis, polio, trachoma and others.²⁰ These diseases lead to high infant mortality rate, malnutrition, poverty and huge disparities between the rich and the poor.²¹ It also has an impact on human safety and dignity especially women who are subject to sexual assault and gender biased violence when they defecate in open.

Eradicating open defecation:

The ways through which open defecation can be eradicated is as follows:

- Political will
- A focus on behavior change
- Sanitation solutions that offer a better value than open defecation
- Stronger public sector local service delivery systems
- Creation of the right incentive structures²²

However, the SBM (U) guidelines aims to ensure that no household should engage in the practice of open defecation, pit latrines are converted into sanitary latrines and no insanitary toilets are constructed during mission period.²³ Public toilets and community toilets would be built to solve this problem of open defecation. By Public Toilets, it is implied that these are to be provided for the floating population / general public in places such as markets, train stations, tourist places, near office complexes, or other public areas where there are considerable number

¹⁷ Supra Note 8.

¹⁸ Taking a holistic approach to sanitation in India, World Toilet Organization, <http://worldtoilet.org/taking-a-holistic-approach-to-sanitation-in-india/>, March 2, 2019.

¹⁹ Dr. Mahendra Pratap Choudhary, Himanshu Gupta, Swachh Bharat Mission: A Step towards Environmental Protection, file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/SwachhBharatNSRAPEM2015.pdf, February 15, 2019.

²⁰Sanitation, World Health Organisation, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sanitation>, February 18, 2019.

²¹ Diarrhoeal disease, World Health Organisation, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diarrhoeal-disease>, February 19, 2019.

²² Supra note 20.

²³ Supra Note 7 at p. 12.

of people passing by.²⁴ By Community toilets, it is implied that a shared facility provided by and for a group of residents or an entire settlement.²⁵ Community toilets would be built as they are likely to use them because of land and space constraints. NGO's, civil society organizations, community based organizations etc. may be used for this purpose.

Finance Ministry communicated to the CEO's of financial institutions, "All public sector banks, public sector insurance companies are requested to make special efforts in the construction of toilets for the public in their premises and nearby locations wherever feasible, and also arrange for their proper maintenance through outsourcing agencies under corporate social responsibility funds," in December, 2017.²⁶ Banks have been also asked to promote cleanliness in ATM booths, withdrawal slips and to suggest customers while giving loans to them.

B. Eradication of Manual Scavenging

Manual scavenging is the practice of manually cleaning, carrying, disposing or handling in any manner human excreta from dry latrines and sewers.²⁷ It is a caste based practice which is practiced by the Valmiki community and the Muslim Haila community. The UN Commission on Human Rights notes: "By reason of their birth, dalits are considered to be "polluted" and the removal of human and animal waste by members of the "sweeper" community is allocated to them and strictly enforced."²⁸ They are asked to remove carcasses of dead animals and other unhygienic wastes in exchange of food. Manual scavenging is still considered to be an occupation of the lower caste people as it is a hereditary profession which is handed down by one legacy to another as a profession and they are considered as agents of pollution due to their position in social hierarchy.

Impacts of manual scavenging

Manual scavenging has a lot of hazardous health impacts on the people who practice it such as musculoskeletal disorders, infections through hand to mouth contacts, skin cuts

²⁴ <https://www.definitions.net/definition/public+toilet>, March 2, 2019.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p.9

²⁶ Make a Swachh investment, PSU banks told, Manojit Saha, The Hindu, January 7, 2018, <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/make-a-swachh-investment-psu-banks-told/article22389626.ece>, February 18, 2019.

²⁷ Breaking Free: Rehabilitating Manual Scavengers, United Nations in India, <http://in.one.un.org/page/breaking-free-rehabilitating-manual-scavengers/>, February 28, 2019.

²⁸ <http://www.pacsindia.org/projects/advocacy-and-campaigning/breaking-margins-campaign/what-is-manual-scavenging>, February 27, 2019.

or by breathing which results in diseases like Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Dermatitis, respiratory infections, etc.²⁹

Also, right to equality and dignity, right to food are violated under Article 14, Article 17, Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution due to continuance of such inhumane practice.³⁰

The ways through which manual scavenging can be eradicated is as follows:

- Ensure discrimination-free, secure and alternate livelihoods by providing skill development and livelihoods training to women, linking them to government employment schemes and entitlements as well as ensuring their land rights. Vocational training linked to employment for young people, and support to liberated manual scavengers in building alternate livelihoods.
- Create a favorable environment through community awareness and sensitization of local administration so that they would feel included in the society and is being given the importance which they deserve.
- Build the capacity of the community to promote rehabilitation efforts and self-reliance and also build leadership in the community with a particular focus on dalit women.³¹

The State as per the SBM Guidelines pursues that all manual scavengers in the urban areas would be identified, insanitary toilets which are the source of their employment would be upgraded to sanitary toilets and manual scavengers would be adequately rehabilitated.

C. To effect behavioral change regarding healthy sanitation practices and

D. Generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health.

As it is often stigmatized that India is not a clean and hygienic country as people litter garbage anywhere on the streets, urinate wherever they find a place to and live in unhealthy environment, it is very much necessary to educate people about healthy sanitation practices which they should adopt so that it would become a better place to

²⁹ Shubhojit Goswami, Manual scavenging: A stinking legacy of suffocation and stigma, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/waste/manual-scavenging-a-stinking-legacy-of-suffocation-and-stigma-61586>, March 1, 2019.

³⁰ Abhishek Gupta, Manual Scavenging: A Case of Denied Rights, *ILI Law Review*, Summer Issue 2016, p. 41.

³¹ Breaking Free: rehabilitating Manual Scavengers, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://in.one.un.org/page/breaking-free-rehabilitating-manual-scavengers/&gws_rd=cr&dcr=0&ei=RcN1WsixGIvSvAT5jI-QDQ, February 14, 2019.

live in. One such initiative is taken by the government which is Swachh Bharat Mission to ensure that sanitation as an issue is mainstreamed with general public at large and should take into consideration issues like hygiene practices, proper use and maintenance of household toilets as well as public toilets and also about the related health and environmental issues. Communication material for behavior change shall be designed in consultation with the M/o Information and Broadcasting, M/o Health & Family Welfare, and should be in sync with the material being used under SBM (Rural).³²

15% of the total funds allocated for this mission would be used for this component. Out of which 12% would be used by the States to undertake massive public awareness campaigns on sanitation through various means such as radio, social media, documentaries, workshops, etc, to establish its linkage with hygiene, environment and public health. Remaining 3% would be earmarked to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to build a national media campaign to spread awareness among people about sanitation.³³

The Prime Minister has selected nine public figures as ambassadors to proliferate this campaign; Mridula Sinha, Sachin Tendulkar, Baba Ramdev, Shashi Tharoor, Anil Ambani, Kamal Hasan, Salman Khan, Priyanka Chopra and Team Tarak Mehta ka Oolta Chashma.³⁴ Many advertisements have been used to generate awareness among people. Some of them have been mentioned below:

a. **Are you a dog?**

This was used to draw an animal-human analogy to send a message that only animals defecate in open.

b. **Life is a circus, not a dumpster.**

This advertisement showed a dustbin telling people that it by his own has to put the garbage into itself which sent a very powerful message that dustbins should be used to put garbage and not to litter it anywhere.

c. **Jump on the wagon, do not spit on it.**

This advertisement was aimed at railway travelers who used to dirty the wagons and sent a message that dustbin should be used to keep the surroundings clean.

³² Supra note 6, p. 21.

³³ Supra note 7, p. 21.

³⁴ <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=110247>, February 3, 2019.

d. **Live like a slum dweller, poop like a pauper.**

The personification of poop was aimed at giving slum dwellers a dose of their own medicine.³⁵ This one was to send a message that the toilets should be used because that is the right place to defecate in and not the open areas from where the disease spread easily.

e. **Toilet: Ek Prem Katha**

This movie supported this campaign and depicted the need to improve sanitation conditions and eradicate open defecation. This movie was directed by Shree Narayan Singh and co-produced by Akshay Kumar and Neeraj Pandey.

Ways through which public awareness should be carried out to initiate behavioral change:

For ensuring an effective sanitation policy at the grassroots level, the following need to be considered:

- There is a need for mass awareness because India is a densely populated country and it is essential that each and every person should be made aware about the importance of sanitation.
- Social and occupational aspects of sanitation should be told to people so that they would be able to implement them in their daily routine.
- Coordination among administrative bodies/institutions is a must for the effective implementation of this mission among general public.
- Optimum use of technology should be made so that the message reaches clearly to the citizens and they are made aware about the consequences of not following the healthy practices.
- Reaching the unreached is quintessential as they are the ones who need to be made aware about sanitation the most.
- Bridging the demand-supply gap is necessary as the ones who are in need of the means to implement the measures provided by the government to achieve cleanliness such as constructing toilets, providing soaps and other necessary

³⁵ 10 unseen clean India ads of Modi's Swachh Bharat, BS Web Team, October 1, 2017, http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/10-unseen-clean-india-ads-of-modi-s-swachh-bharat-117100100107_1.html, February 3, 2019.

things needed to be clean should be given priority to achieve this goal in the stipulated time.

It was found out through an RTI application that India has spread around Rs 530 crore on promoting the mission in the media within three years of its launch which is higher than other campaigns like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign. Its other goals include cleaning up streets and other public infrastructure, achieving 100% door-to-door waste collection, building solid-waste management plants in each town, and persuading Indians to adopt better sanitation practices.³⁶

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MISSION

Even though India's ranking in the Environment Performance Index improved in 2016 from where it stood in 2014 i.e. 155th position³⁷ to 141th³⁸ out of 180 countries. But it again slipped to 177th³⁹ position making it quite evident that the Swachh Bharat Mission has failed drastically and therefore there is an urgent need to address the environment issues.

Not much has been achieved even after four years of implementation of the mission. The government has constructed 4.3 crore toilets in India out of 11.1 crore needed to achieve this goal by 2019 as per the mission guidelines.⁴⁰ Also it can contribute 1% to GDP growth rate each year but it has shrunk to 5.7% in 2017. In the 2018-19 budget, it was estimated that India would achieve over 7.2% GDP.⁴¹ But if we take into consideration the current scenario, the condition has not improved to what it was intended to. Missions like this are definitely needed

³⁶ Swachh Bharat spent Rs 530 crore on publicity in three years – but little on grassroots awareness, <https://scroll.in/article/857030/centre-spent-rs-530-crores-in-3-years-on-swachh-bharat-publicity-but-has-little-to-show-for-it>, February 18, 2019.

³⁷ 2014 Environmental Performance Index, India Environment Portal KNOWLEDGE FOR CHANGE, <http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/content/386993/2014-environmental-performance-index/>, February 20, 2019.

³⁸ India at the bottom of 2018 Global Environmental Performance Index (EPI) rankings: says Yale University study analysed by CSE, Down to Earth, Centre for Science and Environment, <https://www.cseindia.org/india-at-the-bottom-of-2018-global-environmental-performance-index-epi-rankings-says-yale-university-study-analysed-by-cse-8780>, March 12, 2019.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Progress Report: 5 States, 2 Lakh Villages Are Now Open Defecation Free, <http://swachhindia.ndtv.com/category/swachh-warriors/>, February 18, 2019.

⁴¹ Agri, manufacturing sectors to push GDP growth to 7.2% in 2018-19: CSO, India Today, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/gdp-growth-estimates-modi-government-cso-economy-1425501-2019-01-07>, March 25, 2019.

but what is more important is its implementation. There is now a need for a ‘Swachhagraha’, by which it means commitment to cleanliness as a way of being.⁴² Civic cleanliness needs to be imbibed in people so that they would contribute in keeping our nation clean and free of diseases. As it is the duty of the State to achieve this objective of cleanliness, it is also the duty of the citizens to contribute in its achievement by doing their bit. Paying Swachh Bharat Cess is not the only contribution which is required but there has to be a sense of understanding that a deliberate and conscious effort has to be put in when it comes to cleaning the second most populous nation. The ‘Chalta hai’ attitude should now be put to rest and a collective approach should be put forth to supplement the actions of government.

Also, poverty is a major contributor in lack of sanitation infrastructure and various health problems prevailing in our country. It is frequently observed that people are defecating in open, for example, near railway tracks, in the open fields, etc. because they do not have access to toilets. Swachh Bharat mission even though could not mark its presence on the global forum but has contributed to having given access to toilets to many individuals⁴³. It can also be inferred that cleanliness is a matter of culture rather than poverty. It is the culture itself which teaches the general public that defecating in open is good and as it keeps running for generations individuals ought not to believe that they are doing something wrong.

It is important to advertise and impart to the general public as to why defecating in open is a health hazard and should not be practiced. Also, the culture in India is based on the caste culture. This so-called hierarchy of caste has created a hurdle between the accesses to sanitation infrastructure to the rich and the poor. The work of maintaining cleanliness has been assigned to a particular caste which has subsequently led to this disparity. Unless this caste-based occupation is not done away with and people themselves take on the responsibility to maintain a clean environment, the goal of making India clean cannot be achieved.

⁴² Mistaking Symbolism for Service, Keerthik Sasidharan, The Hindu, <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/columns/mistaking-symbolism-for-service/article18191854.ece>, February 2, 2019.

⁴³ Over 9 crore toilets constructed under Swachh Bharat: Kovind, The Economic Times, Jan 31, 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/over-9-crore-toilets-constructed-under-swachh-bharat-kovind/articleshow/67773723.cms>, March 22, 2019.

CONCLUSION

The funds so allocated to Swachh Bharat Mission is shrinking⁴⁴ and the vigor with which it started is fading a bit. The Indian population do realize the importance of a pollution free environment and did appreciate the initiative taken by the government with regards to Swachh Bharat Mission. But there is still a lot to work upon. The mission needs to instil among people to recognize their responsibilities individually as well as collectively in order to practice and promote healthy sanitation practices. This campaign will only be a success when social and economic disparities would be narrowed and people would realize how much the environment has degraded and how much is needed to sustain it. The main concern however remains the same with regards to the implementations of such programs. As India is gearing up for the next general elections it has to be seen as to what happens to such initiative. Whatever may be the result it is imperative that the environment issues should be put on priority and every step should be taken to provide for a clean and healthy environment? Therefore, Swachh Bharat Mission is the call for the hour and it would be remarkable if such initiative are continued and carried out with full robustness to achieve the objectives which are not yet achieved.

⁴⁴ Budget 2018: Swachh Bharat Mission funds cut down, Down to Earth, 01 February 2018, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/water/budget-2018-swachh-bharat-mission-funds-cut-down-59596>, March 25, 2019.