

## Clean India Mission: A Challenge, Responsibility or an Opportunity?

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### **Abstract**

#### **“Swachh India, Swasth India”**

This paper attempts to provide some facts about the 'Clean India Mission' regarding its image as a challenge, responsibility or a biggest opportunity. This paper is going to discuss the significance of clean India mission. It attempts to answer whether this mission is a challenge, responsibility or opportunity in front of people and the government. The objective is to find out the root cause of all around dirtiness, to investigate whether waste is actually waste or wealth and to deal with the environment friendly management of waste, which can act as a big opportunity in the growth and prosperity of Indian economy. This is an exploratory paper, which explores the idea behind launch of this mission and suggests remedies to deal with the filth. The paper concludes that the waste is actually not the waste but the wealth of the nation if treated timely & scientifically and the mission is not the challenge but the responsibility of the people and opportunity for the growth and development of the country.

**Keywords:** Clean India Mission, Clean India, Challenge, Responsibility, Opportunity, Waste Management

### **Introduction**

After completing 67 years of independence, our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the 'Clean India Mission' on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 on the eve of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This Mission is a national level drive by the Indian government covering 4041 statutory towns to clean the filth of the country. The objective is to achieve the target of clean India by 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This Mission urges people to devote 100 hours a year towards the cause of cleaning. Every individual wish to have its surroundings clean but is it happening? No, this is because neither the municipal corporation and nor the people are working in the right way. Right way means neither all the people segregate the waste in proper way nor municipal corporation deal with the waste in eco-friendly way. This is the reason that even after 67<sup>th</sup> years of independence, our India is not as clean as other foreign country. Even it is likely seen by us that whenever there is visit of some eminent personality like political leader from India and abroad then our government and municipal corporation becomes active to deal with the filth. Why day to day cleanliness efforts are not undertaken? This is because we are living in

the age of demonstration effect. We are trying to reflect what those personality wish to see but instead of showing that if we show our actual problem then probably some permanent solution will come out. This is the reason that so much of attention is given by our Prime Minister and he launched a 'Clean India Mission' to deal with the filth.

Actually, there are two root causes of the problem. The first one is our people and the second is the municipal corporation. Firstly, we Indians has the habit to sweep and mop our house at least once a day, but the garbage and trash collected from our house are thrown carelessly. Also (Narayanan, 2014) mentioned that Indians keep their homes clean but litter their surroundings. Here there are two supportive views; first, it is all about human psychology. If the place is clean and kept clean, the tendency of a person is not to make it dirty. On the other hand, if the place has been previously dirty, the tendency is not to concern about making it filthier. Secondly, there are no waste bins in some of the public places and if there are waste bins, they are overloaded as there is no schedule to clean it regularly, so people simply throw waste on the road or the sidewall if it exists. Now, it means people have habit to clean, but it depends upon the situation or the condition of the concerned place. Now what is this mystery? If our people have habit to clean and our psychology, allowing to keep a clean place clean, then why the concerned authority is not able to clean the surroundings in these long years of journey? Who actually is responsible for all this? The second and the main root cause of the problem is the municipal corporation. The municipal corporation of our country is spending a very huge amount in the cleanliness, but still there are mountains of garbage and waste near the outskirts of every big city. Hence, at one side, nature has endowed with great beauty to India, but at the same time, disaster looms a large in India. Therefore, this Mission has been started to clean the country to protect the Indians from the hidden danger of this problem. Because the mountains of garbage will first affect the nearby people and then it slowly and gradually spread through air, water, and food to all the parts of the country and will harm everyone.

### Objectives of the Study

Though, this Mission has been launched recently, but till now none of the author has touched this issue in their writing. Hence, this topic is selected to achieve the below mentioned objectives:

- a) To examine the root cause of the problem of dirtiness and to find out the objectives and significance of the Mission,
- b) To search whether this Mission is a challenge, responsibility or an opportunity and to investigate whether waste is actually a waste or a wealth and to find out the environment friendly methods to convert waste into wealth.

## Clean India Mission: An Overview

### Introduction:

Indians are traditionally and culturally clean people. If we see Indians on the basis and their traditions, then, India must be a clean place. But, (The Times of India, Jaipur, 2015) mentioned that if cleanliness is the state of mind then we Indians have a dirty mind. 'Clean India' was the vision of Mahatma Gandhi, where people feel it as their responsibility and work together to clean the beautiful country. In this direction only, the PM Narendra Modi launched the biggest ever cleanliness drive on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 on the eve of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to work seriously towards his vision. This Mission is a national level drive by the Indian government covering 4041 statutory towns to clean the filth of the country. This drive urges people to devote at least their 100 hours a year to clean the beautiful country. (Ministry of Urban Development, 2014) mentioned that around 8 million people defecate in the open in 4041 statutory towns. (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, 2014) highlighted that around 69 percent of the total population lives in rural areas and there are only 32.7 percent of families having access to sanitation facilities and rest 36.3 percent are deprived of these facilities. Though, it is an open secret that (The Hindu, 2013) India is the number one country in the world for practicing open defecation, as more than 60 per cent of worldwide population lives in India who defecates in the open in our country. Therefore, this mission is declared to achieve the open defecation free country by 2019.

This mission is being implemented by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDW&S) and Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) in rural and urban areas respectively. Prior to this program Nirmal Bharat Mission was in practice, but fails to achieve complete success. What actually this Mission is? Is it related only to sweep the garbage and trash across the country or more than this? What are the objectives of this Mission? What is the duration of this program? These are the few questions, which will be answered in this section.

### What is 'Clean India Mission'?

Actually, this 'Clean India Mission' is the pledge to restore and regain the lost beauty of India. This Mission is not only related to sweeping garbage and trash all across the country and dumping it near the landfill sites or dumping grounds. However, it has a much broader concept. It has been classified into two parts, one for rural (Gramin) and other for urban. There are varieties of issues that are taken into consideration while implementing this Mission. In actual this mission has aim not only to remove physical dirt but also the dirty habits of all the peoples whether done intentionally or due to lack of facility. For example, people defecate in open due to lack of toilet facility, people dump garbage openly due to lack of garbage facility, people dump all the waste from home jointly due to lack of awareness to

segregate solid & liquid waste and people destroy our historical & tourist places by writing on the wall, spitting at the corners of wall intentionally, etc. Hence, this Mission has vision to resolve all these causes of filth.

### Objectives of the Mission

To improve the habits of 125 crore people is not an easy task. This requires a lot of efforts not only from the side of the government, but also cooperation from the public. Why it is only seen as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary? Can't we have vision to welcome our generation in clean India? How we Indian tolerates the word 'Unclean India', if we fails to tolerate 'Unclean Indians'? Yes, it is the fact, then why don't we retaliate others when they abuse India by the word 'Unclean'? This requires a strong pledge and dedication to overcome the problem of unclean. Hence, the start of cleanliness must be done from the home itself. Parents must teach their children to make their home clean. This teaching must be given equally to the boys and the girls. Because it is generally seen that girls are engaged in cleanliness work more than the boys and boys are engaged in creating the mess. These boys slowly and gradually develop the habits to spit on the walls or peeing on the walls or at any place in the open or throwing wrappers anywhere etc. Therefore, keeping all the problems in mind, following are the objectives of this Mission:

- a) To develop awareness about sanitation and health education to promote sustainable sanitation facilities
- b) To eliminate the open defecation and eradicate the inhuman practice of manual scavenging
- c) To induce improvement in the general quality of life of the people, specifically in rural areas
- d) To accelerate sanitation coverage and encourage people to adopt healthy sanitation practices
- e) To motivate the adoption of cost effective and appropriate technologies for ecologically safe and sustainable sanitation
- f) To develop the community managed environmental sanitation system which focuses on the solid and liquid waste management for overall cleanliness in rural areas
- g) To adopt scientific and modern solid waste management in urban areas by the municipalities or private bodies
- h) To create an environment for private sector participation in capital expenditure and operation and maintenance

Therefore, to achieve the above mentioned objectives this Mission has well defined mechanism to construct individual

household toilets, conversion of insanitary latrines into pouring-flush latrines, construction of community toilets and public toilets, assistance to producers of sanitary materials and rural sanitary marts, management of solid and liquid waste, creation of awareness among people through the delivery of information, education and communication. (The Times of India, 2014) highlighted that the estimated cost of the project is Rs.1.96 lakh crore, of which Rs.62000 crore to build 5.1 lakh communities and public toilets in urban areas and Rs.1.34 lakh crore will be spent to build 11 crorepucca toilets in rural areas.

Hence, this Mission not only deals with the mountains of garbage, but also deals with the traditional behavioral pattern and lack of awareness of people about the associated health hazards.

### Duration of the Mission

The vision is to achieve the target of clean India till 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

### Campaign: A challenge, responsibility or an opportunity?

No doubt if the dream becomes reality, it is going to be a great achievement for India in each and every aspect. The clean countries or cities are the places on the globe with best quality of air, outdoor spaces and with cleanliness everywhere. To achieve the target of 'Clean India' there must be a proper balance between population, sanitation, and tireless work. In India, out of 29 states, seven Union territories and one national capital, there are few places that are very clean and beautiful. Among these, the Chandigarh is the first cleanest and greenest city in India; Mysore the city in Karnataka is a second cleanest city and regarded as a Palace city of India and Surat the most dynamic city of Gujarat state and the third cleanest city in India.

Hence, this shows that India is not totally unclean or dirty. But, is all round cleanliness a very difficult task? Is it justifiable to call this drive as a challenge to Indian? Is it not the responsibility of every person? If India has the capability to launch satellite to the mars at a cheaper cost, if Indians have capability to settle in the foreign country, which is regarded as clean, then can't we deal with the filth in India? (Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2010) mentioned that waste management in an environmentally sustainable way is a challenging task. However, I think the challenge is given for the task which is difficult to be done and cleaning India is not the challenge but the responsibility of 125 crore people.

**(Mukane , 2014)** emphasized that cleanliness is not only the responsibility of the 'safaaai karamchari', but also the responsibility of 125 crore Indians . This is because if some task is taken as a challenge then no doubt it will give result, but after completion of that task, the craze will decline. Similarly, if 'Clean India' is taken as a challenge then the

country will not be kept clean for a longer period. But, if it is taken as responsibility, then it will continue and pass on from generation to generation and cleanliness of India will become the routine task in mind and as it is in the blood of Indian that what they decide to do, they definitely do. Responsibility makes people mature and if we really become mature to deal with the solid and liquid waste, then the day will not be far away when we find our self in win-win situation. (Chavan, Rasal, & Kalshetti, 2011) studied the sustainability of total sanitation campaign in Kambalwadi Village of Kolhapur District, Maharashtra. The study concluded that the active participation of villagers and award declared by the state government of Maharashtra encouraged people to work towards cleanliness in their village and attain clean and hygienic environment.

Actually, it is very old saying that “**Waste, Never is Useless**” means it is beneficial in some way or other. (Banerjee, Dasgupta, & Mondal, 2014) mentioned that there is nothing to waste as every waste is an asset. In economics, we study that the goods, which have utility, has value and again its value depends upon its availability. Further, utility is subjective term not the objective and it is not related to the ethics. As we all know that when Baba Ramdev, declare bottle gourd as an important vegetable for health, then demand of that vegetable increases in the market as a result its prices also increased. This is because the utility of product increases in the mind of the general consumer. Similarly, until now we are unaware of the utility of garbage and trash spread all around and throwing carelessly. However, in reality these are very important and valuable item, which, if treated seriously then it will generate sufficient revenue. And once we came to know that our waste is going to generate revenue to the other person than we become alert and the day will come when we sell our garbage in exchange of either money or product developed through that waste. Hence, scientific management of solid and liquid waste can generate opportunity and prospects for the development of new business.

### **Significance of 'Clean India Mission'**

If garbage is treated scientifically, then this will have a multiplier effect to the Indian economy. This not only clean the mountains of garbage giving foul smell and spreading number of diseases due to leakage of chemicals which is responsible for contaminating water & agriculture and also spread through air, water and food to other parts, but also vacant the spaces lying useless for so many years which can be used for either dwelling or greenery or industrial purpose, etc. Hence, we can say that this garbage is not the waste but the wealth of the nation. If everything goes in a systematic and scientific way, then, this waste will become the additional source of revenue for the individual household and if that place is used for some commercial purpose than it will generate additional employment opportunities to the

people. If this mission is successfully completed then it will prove to be the biggest support for growth and prosperity of the economy as a whole. It opens the doors of success in many ways as its outcome will prove to be to beneficial in number of ways like, the first and foremost will be India stood in the list of the clean country, it will attract more and more tourists, film production cost will be reduced to certain extent as India's scenic beauty can be used in place of scenic beauty of foreign countries, increased production of methane will support various ouseholds in cooking food, compost production will supplement the agriculture production, the cost of municipality in dealing with filth will decrease largely, the fund earlier used for these purposes and additional revenue generated through proper management, can be utilized for development and last but not the least the living standard of people will rise. In this direction, (Khan , 2014) searched that every day there are total 1.6 metric tonnes of waste generated from 424 municipal corporations and if these wastes are treated scientifically then it will help in forming 90 lakh tonne compost yearly, which is equivalent to Rs.27000 crore annually. This compost will help in making the 45-lakh acres of barren land fertile and by this country may get an additional food grains of 90 lakh tonnes. This is not the miracle but the fact.

## **Waste Management**

### **Introduction**

(Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2010) defined waste as the material which are thrown away after use at the end of their proposed lifespan. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has recommended the management and handling rules i.e. the Municipal Solid Wastes Rules, 2000 to manage solid wastes. (Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2010) defined waste management as a collective action comprising of separation, gathering, transportation, reprocessing, reusing and dumping of different types of wastes. Sustainable waste management includes handling waste in an environmentally comprehensive, socially acceptable and a techno-economically feasible manner. The fundamental principle of waste management is 3R means Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. If each household follows these three principles, then there is no need to dump garbage. The law states that it is the first and foremost responsibility of the municipal corporation to inform and ask the people to segregate the wet waste (our leftover food) and dry waste (things we can't eat) and then to give directives to deal with the wet waste by using different techniques. (Banerjee, Dasgupta, & Mondal, 2014) stated that the reluctance and ignorance of people about the segregation of waste is the main problem in the management of waste.

However, the ground reality is very different. None of the municipal corporation is following these guidelines. On a daily basis, we people collect garbage from our house and throw it carelessly. These small quantities of garbage from 125 crore people, when collected at different places

becomes the huge mountains. (Khan , 2014) investigated that every day the quantity of waste produced in our cities is 1.6 lakh metric tonnes means around 16 crore Kg waste in 424 municipal corporations. While, according to MoUD as mentioned in the report, (Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2010) the municipal solid waste generation was 1 lakh metric tonnes per day in the year 2001-02. The report also examined Kochi (0.67 kg/capita/day) as the highest per capita waste generation and Kohima, Imphal and Nashik (0.17-0.19 kg/c/day) as the lowest waste producing cities in the country. These wastes are being dumped by the municipalities in the landfill sites, which are spread over around thousands of acre lands in the country. Due to shortage of further place, these mountains of garbage grow slowly and gradually to almost 80 to 100 feet. Is these waste mountains are not harmful for the country? The unsegregated waste collection and transportation to landfill sites produces leachate and gaseous emissions besides causing irritation in the surrounding environment. Leachate pollutes the surface water as well as underground water in the locality; gaseous emissions contribute to global warming. Besides this, the waste not collected by municipality lies littered in the city/town and causing blocking of drains and pollution of surface water. Hence, there is an urgent need to deal with these resources, which is called as waste.

### **Management of Waste: Ways to convert waste into wealth**

The word 'waste' does not exist in the nature's dictionary. (Dasgupta & Mondal, 2014) stated that waste is actually not waste, but an asset. Hence, this section focuses on the ways through which our municipality can generate revenue from the waste management. But, there are various methods to handle the waste which can be classified into three groups; Landfilling and Sanitization, Recycling of organic waste (composting and vermicomposting) and Waste to Energy (incineration, gasification, pelletization, biomethanation). Among these methods, waste to energy projects for disposal of municipal solid waste are very new concept famous in developed countries like Europe and America. These techniques destroy solid and liquid waste with heat energy. Due to differences in the composition of waste of India and developed country, that technique is not suitable for India as it generates harmful gases like Dioxin gas which is so dangerous that its effect seems to pass on from generation to generation, this technique also leads to unemployment of people engaged in waste work and above all this leads to burning of very important resource. Therefore, below mentioned are the technique that is environment friendly and converts the waste into wealth:

#### **Landfilling and Sanitization**

In many metropolitan cities, exposed, unrestrained, and

poorly managed dumping is normal exercise, giving rise to serious environmental degradation. These dumping activities have led to leaching of heavy metals into the coastal waters. Therefore, this requires proper segregation and door-to-door collection of solid and liquid waste. Separation of dry and wet garbage or waste is a very crucial element in the management of waste. After that, sanitization can be done. The mountains of waste are converted into plane land within few days without spreading disease and plague through the process. This process is undertaken with the help of natural products (herbals). In this process, the correct bacteria are inoculated in the dumping ground and then these bacteria together with flies, decompose the waste, and turned it into the soil in around 4 weeks. While scooping, the soil and compost went down and the plastics, textiles, rags etc. came to the top. These separated items are removed, cleaned, and recycled. (Khan , 2014) stated that this process will take at least 60 days and estimated cost is around 9.7 lakh for one hectare of land. Hence, this method is helpful in converting the waste mountains to original land, which can be used for a variety of purposes.

### **Recycling of Organic Waste**

#### **Bio-composting**

It is the process of conversion of waste into compost through bacterial action. In this process methane gas is also derived. Compost act as a balanced plant food and methane is used as a cooking gas. This technique has been developed by Dr. Sharad P. Kale, the Scientist at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. Dr. Sharad P. Kale in the waste management episode of SatyamevJayate pointed that with the one lakh tonne waste we can get two lakh cylinders per day. This requires an initial investment of Rs.12 Lakh for half tonne model bio-gas plant and requires a space of 40 square meters. The expected lifetime of the plant is 40 years and after 3 to 4 years the gas becomes free to the people installing the plant. (Asnani, 2006) explored that composting is one of the most simple and cost effective technology for treating the organic fraction of waste. (Sharholly, Ahmad, Mahmood, & Trivedi 2008) searched that the composting process reduces waste to 50–85% and it is the better alternative as it reduces not only the workload of municipality but also burden on the landfills and provide a valuable byproduct for agriculture and household.

#### **Vermicomposting**

It is the process in which the organic waste are stabilized with the combined act of aerobic micro-organism and earthworms. This is the method of converting the waste into gold with the help of agents like cows, hens, frogs, fish, ducks, and earth warm through natural process. This method has been developed by Mr. C. Srinivasan, the Project Director at IGS (Indian Green Service) at Vellore. (Murthi 2013) emphasized not to call solid and liquid waste

management, but call it as Solid and Liquid Resource Management (SLRM). The vermin-compost produced by this method is world's best manure, called as black gold, and can be directly shifted to the land. In addition, if the same is decompressed through the bacterial process than it will take around 45 days.

From the above-mentioned method, only the recycling of organic waste (composting and vermin-compost) is the best method of solid and liquid waste management and this will only convert raw materials into a resource.

### Conclusions

Waste is actually not the waste but resources and wealth of our country if treated timely and scientifically. Hence, we can say that 'Clean India Mission' is not the challenge but the responsibility of the people and opportunity for the growth and development of our country. This is actually the battle between the filth and us and by tackling it carefully, we can easily win the situation by converting waste into gold and the time will come when we will be paid for our waste also. The need is to create awareness among people about the value of the waste and this can be done readily and successfully with the help of NGO's and experienced people. Hence, to convert waste into wealth the cooperation of the public and government both are required.

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