



FOUNDATION *for* RESTORATION of NATIONAL VALUES

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः॥
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत्॥

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NEWSLETTER

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Message from CEO

Why is it so difficult for us to keep our surroundings, neighbourhood and public places clean? While there may be several factors attributed to this, it is also our attitude that is responsible for the filth and garbage that we see all around us. Government campaign, slogans and efforts made by different groups at various levels, will yield result only if people realise its need deeply, and take steps to ameliorate the dirt and filth.

Small steps like always carrying a small recycled paper bag to collect small trash, not littering, segregating our waste in separate bins, re-using old bottles, and preparing a compost pit at home to collect garbage, are something that we can all do. It is not at all difficult to practice some of these.

Equally important is to instill a sense of "doership" and pride in our youth, in being self reliant and keeping the surroundings clean, irrespective of the caste, creed, class and background you come from. We are all Indians first.

Keeping our locality/colony clean is a local matter. All the garbage on the streets is locally produced and deposited on the streets by individuals. Every piece of trash was thrown by someone or the other either deliberately or thoughtlessly. If it becomes culturally unacceptable to throw trash in the streets, then the streets would be clean.

Equally important is collective action, in terms of having places to deposit garbage and regular garbage collection. But without a change in the attitude and culture, streets will continue to be an eye-sore.

In this newsletter, we have tried to analyse this mind set and shared our thoughts with you.

Anupama Jha

Cleanliness Drive in India- There is more to it than sweeping dry leaves

- Br. Prasanna Swaroopa, Life Member, FRNV

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan had been a good beginning. It had created sufficient awareness across the Nation. We had good media coverage. We had the whole country talking about it. The celebrities too had pitched in. The launch had been a good one. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's website has evidence of a vibrant participation from the enthusiastic public. This is also heartening.

But then what? However, if we feel satisfied just sweeping away some dried leaves, we need to re-examine our concept of 'Clean India'. In fact, dried falling leaves are one of the few beautiful natural elements we are left with in the densely concretized environment!

The challenges in front of us are the problems created by the supposedly 'civilized' human!

The other day, I saw a group of residents joyously picking up some strewn garbage in a neighbourhood park. It was a sight very pleasant to the eyes. However, not far from where they were collectively picking up garbage, there are open drains, exposed and overflowing with garbage, which have been like that for years, perhaps.

Another disturbing sight, for example, is the one just at the main gate of one of the most reputed hospitals of our country, that too at the heart of the capital. A vendor has set up his 'open restaurant' right in front of the gate, on the ground, occupying an area of about 100 sq ft. Cooking, washing, exposed raw material lying in filth, a constant puddle of water, and so on, all under the sky. The only advantage perhaps is that if something happens to you, you don't need an ambulance to take you for medical attention!

Anyway, we have made a good beginning. We need to clearly examine how to proceed from here capitalizing on the momentum created – some of which I am afraid we are losing.

First of all, we need to define the scope of this 'movement'. Here are some of the factors that make our surroundings 'unclean', 'unhygienic':

1. People spitting wherever they feel like (including from moving vehicles)
2. Almost every corner becomes an open, exposed urinal
3. Ill-maintained urinals in public places including railway stations, bus

stations, etc.

- Public conveniences are not easily spottable (standard signs, colour etc. that makes it easy to identify)
- Public conveniences along highways
- People feel free to throw whatever they want, wherever they want, whenever they want.
- Open garbage dumps in localities
- Open garbage pickup trucks which move across the city even spilling some part of the garbage collected
- Stray, uncared for dogs and other animals who do their bit wherever they can
- People throwing food items on the roads from speeding cars (fancier the car, more junk food gets thrown)
- Spitting of chewed beetle leaves, paan-masala etc. disfigures so many places in our country.
- Strewn plastic wrappers of eatables are everywhere
- No organized solid waste management by residences
- Eatables cooked and sold in open places. The cooking is carried out in the most unhygienic conditions.
- Open drains in various places with near-stagnant water
- Polluted rivers (passing through Delhi, the Yamuna river water looks like used engine oil)
- Disfiguring of walls, sign boards and road signs by election posters and slogans.

The list can go on....



For the purpose of creating a plan of action, we see the following four components:

The following are the four components:

- Cleanliness:** This ensures that all places are clean and tidy. This includes cleaning of the rivers, which are the backbone of any civilization.
- Hygiene:** This ensures that we prevent diseases and create a healthy environment.
- Beautification:** Tourism being so important, beautify places so that they provide a pleasant experience to tourists.
- Waste Management:** This is a very important component of the 'cleanliness drive', so that we have a long-term and sustainable plan to manage waste.

How do we address all these issues? We need the following:

- Facilities like proper garbage dumps, public conveniences, etc. (importantly, these should get maintained regularly);
- Awareness campaigns to create sensitive citizens (without citizen participation, cleanliness and hygiene can only remain distant dreams);
- Strict law enforcement;
- Proactive and prompt municipal corporations;
- Alert and participating businesses, other establishments, housing societies, etc.

And importantly, we need these to be sustained forever. **Corr**

There is so much talk about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The establishments like businesses, hospitals, shopping malls and centres, cinema halls, railway stations, bus depots, and metro rail stations should take it upon themselves to ensure that their neighbourhood is maintained. Even if they are not in a position to clean it up, they should chase and demand from the municipal authorities an immediate resolution.

The unclean setting we see all around us is not only pointing a finger at the lack of hygiene, but also to the rapidly declining values and debilitating culture!

Let us hope and urge the government and concerned authorities to act with swiftness. The citizens are equally responsible for the condition that prevails.

It would be no exaggeration to call the current situation a DISASTER. We need to immediately act to save the environment and restore the basic values required to handover a cleaner and healthier earth to the coming generations.

Some easy and doable steps for better India

- Use dustbins to dispose off garbage.
- Avoid littering the road and the walls.
- Avoid writing on walls and currency notes.
- Avoid being abusive in word and deeds.
- Save water and electricity.
- Plant one tree.
- Obey traffic rules.
- Take blessings of your parents every day.
- Respect women.
- Give way to an Ambulance.

Not your country, but change yourself first.



NEWS AND EVENTS

□ On the occasion of International Women's Day, Foundation for Restoration of National Values in collaboration with ICDS-Govind Puri Circle, organised an event to observe this special day and celebrate Womanhood.

A quiz was conducted on Women's rights by Dr. Seema Pawar, Project Director- Values based Education. While a very interesting talk was delivered by Ms. Anupama Jha, CEO, FRNV on feminine Values, which all women have by virtue of being a woman.



FRNV representatives interacting with women in Chirag Dilli on International Women's Day

□ On March 18, a half-day Round-Table workshop to brainstorm ideas on maintaining business ethics and integrity as well as the creation of ethical leaders, was held by the Karnataka Chapter of FRNV, in Bengaluru at the Hotel, The Lalit Ashok. The participants were from Education and Corporate sector.

The Objective of the Round-Table is:

- To elicit ideas for action that can contribute to wholesomely changing the trajectory of our nation.
- To seek contributions in the form of ideas from the audience present.
- To collaborate with the Government and NGOs to take the Mission of FRNV forward.

The Round Table started with President, FRNV, Dr. E. Sreedharan, exhorting the participants to take steps towards steering the nation back to its old glorious self. He said that Integrity did not simply mean honesty, but also having good values, such as Compassion for all and Truthfulness.

General Secretary of FRNV, Shri Bharat Wakhlu, gave an overview of FRNV and shared the objectives of the Round Table with the audience. He facilitated the two interactive sessions where the participants were divided into working groups to deliberate on issues faced by the Management, and employees while doing business, and the way forward.



Some glimpses of the Round-Table

What will really Clean India?

- Shreyan Acharya, Volunteer, FRNV

On March 15 this year, the Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, approved the National Health Policy, 2017 (NHP 2017). The main objective of the Policy is to achieve the highest possible level of good health and well-being, through a preventive and promotive health care orientation in all developmental policies, and to achieve universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence.

This is indeed a very laudable and impressive Policy, but the devil lies in the details, such as awareness generation, capacity building, accessibility to health services, affordability, mainstreaming different health systems, skill development, developing sustainable networks for community to strengthen health services, disaster management, strategic purchasing and so on.

Even as the Government, Policy makers and various stakeholders work towards making this a reality, we as ordinary citizens can contribute simply by keeping our homes and surroundings clean. How? Because Clean and pollution-free environment and surroundings contributes to improved health for all.

Immediately after taking over as the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi gave a clarion call for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. But, truth is that our country continues to remain dirty. This is true, in particular, for shared public spaces, such as Railway stations, Bus stands, Roads, Rivers, Colonies, Hospitals and areas which belong to all. It is important that we learn to respect shared public spaces and keep them as clean as our homes.



Equally important is changing our attitude towards cleaning and manual labour. Traditionally, the concept of cleaning and doing physical work in order to make spaces clean was associated with lower classes and castes. Better-off people did not feel it was dignified to clean, while worse-off people resented being boxed into the tasks of cleaning. With education and exposure, hopefully this will change and people will come forward to contribute their bit towards making India clean.



What is needed in India is a Japanese-style attitude towards cleanliness where everyone, irrespective of their social status, learns that it is his or her duty to clean shared spaces, starting in elementary school. In many Indian schools, cleaning, especially cleaning of toilets, is a task relegated to a certain worker or student, usually of a lower caste. If this person fails to perform this task adequately (and it's no surprise that this is often the case, as a life of cleaning toilets is undesirable), nobody else does the necessary cleaning, and filth accumulates. Thus it is crucial for important social figures to set an example by openly and publicly cleaning and showing that anyone can perform this labor without losing dignity. Mahatma Gandhi showed us the way several years ago, its time we revived it.

Scavenging: The Way Forward

-Neeru Sharma, Project Manager, FRNV

Even as we deliberate on making India clean, manual scavengers in many states continue to do the inhuman task of gathering and picking up night soil and disposing them. According to the recent survey by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 86% of the total population of manual scavengers are in Uttar Pradesh alone. Our law, prohibits the engagement or employment of persons for manually carrying human excreta, and construction or maintenance of dry latrines, but fact remains that this scourge continues.



The reference to Manual scavengers has been underpinned in Kautilya's Arthashastra, Naradia Samhita, that scavenging especially disposal of night soil by a particular caste has been in existing since the beginning of civilization. During the Mughal period because of purdah system, ladies did not step out of their homes, and people from the lower caste were made to carry buckets of their excreta. As time passed it became institutionalized and got carried on generation after generation.

An important reason, that manual scavengers still exist is because of the existence of dry latrines and incomplete social rehabilitation or assimilation of manual scavengers into mainstream of the society.

Government, NGOs and private sector have to play a pro active role in attacking this undignified practice. General public have to be sensitized and Mass psyche has to be influenced to such a degree, that Social Justice and Social equality is seen as important and vital essence of the social structure.

Dear Readers,

FRNV invites stories from its readers on deep-rooted values that have helped us in our everyday lives. Some of these stories will be featured in the next issue of our newsletter. So put your thinking caps on, recall the values integral to your life which you cherish and write to us at shilpi@valuefoundation.in.