



NEWSLETTER

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Urban Sanitation- Its impact on environment

What next

*- By Dr. M Ramachandran **

In our country we tend to appreciate issues relating to sanitation either through the frame of urban sanitation or rural sanitation basically because of the silo approach we have at the government level. Water and sanitation are supposed to go together but the subject of water resource is with one ministry, urban water is with another and in many states, the water board or authority is with yet another ministry. Rules relating to waste management are governed by the ministry of Environment and at the centre. Apart from Urban Development (now Housing & Urban affairs) and Rural Development, we have a separate department for Drinking water. Has the separate existence of this department, earlier as a separate ministry, resulted in ensuring access to water to each and every individual in the country?

First some basics. Sanitation is broadly defined to include management of human excreta, solid waste and drainage. The UN-WHO Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply & sanitation has defined 'improved' sanitation facilities as those that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact. These include facilities that flush or pour-flush to piped sewer systems, septic tanks or pit latrines. Unimproved facilities include defecation in the open, bucket or hanging latrines. Shared toilets are also an unimproved facility. And a brief reference to economic impacts of inadequate sanitation- these include health related impacts resulting from premature mortality, health care costs incurred in treating diseases caused by poor sanitation etc., domestic water related impacts, household treatment of drinking water, having to



get cleaner water from a distance because the source which is nearer the house may be contaminated due to poor sanitation, access time impacts like cost of additional time needed for accessing shared toilets and open defecation sites and also tourism impacts to a certain extent which means loss of tourism revenues because of perceived gastrointestinal diseases.

The question is how much did we prioritise this agenda during the plan process and where did we get to. In the Twelfth five Year Plan document for the period 2012 to 2017, the last of the five year plans we had, said the following:

-as per 2011 census, 70.6 percent of urban population is covered by individual water supply connections

-Duration of water supply in Indian cities ranges from one hour to six hours with per capita supply ranging from 37 liters per capita per day (lpcd) to 298 liters.

-Even a partial sewerage network is absent in 4861 cities and towns of India. Almost 50 percent of households in cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad do not have sewerage connections. As per 2011 census, about 13 percent of urban households did not have access to any form of latrine facility and defecate in the open

-Census 2011 also revealed that about 37 per cent of urban households are connected with open drainage and another 18 per cent are not connected at all.

It is in this context that two key initiatives of the central government are to be seen:

The first is that of formulating the National Urban sanitation Policy in 2008. Its vision stated: "All Indian cities and towns become

totally sanitized, healthy and livable and ensure and sustain good public health and environmental outcomes for all their citizens with a special focus on hygienic and affordable sanitation facilities for the urban poor and women.” Goals such as awareness generation and behavior change, open defecation free cities, integrated citywide sanitation, sanitary and safe disposal of human excreta and liquid wastes and proper o & m of all sanitary installations were set. But like in many other sectors, since there was not much of a separate central funds flow to undertake these tasks except for limited provision under the National Urban renewal Mission, states and city local bodies which were the ones to really implement the agenda, could not do much to move towards the goals set.

And so the second initiative became significant. The Swachh Bharat Mission announced in 2014, with the Prime Minister himself leading it, in effect became the game changer. The objectives of elimination of open defecation, eradication of manual scavenging, having modern and scientific municipal solid waste management, effecting behavioral changes regarding healthy sanitation practices, generating awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health, capacity augmentation of the urban local bodies and creating an enabling environment for private sector participation were the requirements of the day for better sanitation. The five year Mission program with a total estimated cost of Rs 62,009 crore succeeded in having many cities and towns becoming open defecation free, very large number of household/community/public toilets got built and thus the sanitation agenda has come to the forefront.

With this huge change in sanitation infrastructure, as a natural next step, one hopes there is adequate focus and attention on municipal wastewater treatment and seepage management. Safe disposal of excreta and black waste water could be either through the sewerage system or onsite sanitation like leach pits and septic tanks. Improved sanitation does not mean just increase in access to toilets, it becomes equally important to ensure the safe collection, conveyance and treatment of sewage before it is safely released into the environment. The problem is that coverage of the population by sewerage systems is partial or lacking in many of our cities and towns. Just to draw attention to a figure, a 2009 study of 498 class I and class II

towns in India found that sewage generated was more than 38,000 million liters per day whereas treatment capacities existed for about 12,000 MLD only. Naturally the rest flows openly all over. Hence the importance of improving both the capacity and optimization of sewage treatment plants to prevent pollution of rivers and lakes and water bodies. As per status available some years back, a prominent city like Kochi in Kerala had only 5 percent sewage network coverage. It is in this context that one of the stated key purposes of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT scheme for small towns and cities currently under implementation), of ensuring that every household has access to a tap with assured supply of water and a sewerage connection becomes important.

Now a very brief reference to municipal solid waste management. As per Central Pollution Control Board report of 2012-13, our municipal areas generate 1,33,760 metric tonnes of waste per day of which 91,152 MT gets collected and 25,884 MT was treated. Therefore as much as 1,07,876 tonnes per day was getting dumped. The SBM has brought about substantial change in this scenario with segregation of waste gaining prominence, more efforts being made to convert waste into energy, discouraging dumping of waste on the roadside and cities gradually recognizing the need to have a zero waste strategy. Integrated solid waste management is based on the hierarchy of waste management, referred to as the three ‘R’s namely reduce, reuse, recycle and a fourth R of recovery also getting added.

Thus sanitation is a complex subject, requiring active attention to manage its complexities and action at the state level in the form of policy clarity and adequate resource support so that the urban municipal bodies can implement the agenda well. Proper data generation about the types of wastes getting generated, its trend and an overall integrated strategy to manage the same, going beyond individual cities to have a cluster approach are all requirements of the day.

**(The writer is a Former Secretary, Urban Development, Government of India)*

Encourage Sanitation for Clean Environment
*By Ms. Shivakami**

The Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi once said, ‘Cleanliness is next to Godliness’

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized on the importance of self-hygiene and clean and tidy surroundings. Cleanliness boosts the health of human beings and ultimately that of the nation. Cleanliness should become a habit. It is not connected to wealth but with the personal habits of a person. Rich or poor, urban or rural- every individual should practice cleanliness to ensure physical, mental and social well being. Proper hygiene practices like cleaning our rooms, proper waste disposal, usage of concrete public toilets etc.

One of the earliest leaders in India, who espoused the cause of sanitation was Mahatma Gandhi who emphasized the need to respect those who make our surroundings clean like the municipal sweepers, scavengers, junk dealers or scrap hawkers etc. whom he referred to as 'Harijans' or people of God.

Encouraging proper waste management can contribute to a clean environment. Many organisations are working on the mission of waste management of reuse, recycle or recovery. They are giving importance to the role of **scrap hawkers or 'kabadi walas'**. Scrap Hawkers buy recyclable or usable wastes like plastic, paper, electronic goods, glass, old furniture etc and sell them to people who can recycle them, thereby ensuring the waste is not thrown away in a landfill and the environment is not polluted. To cite a few examples, organizations such as Shayna EcoUnified recycle plastic waste to make footpath tiles. Meenakshi Sharma, an entrepreneur, converts cycle waste material to make beautiful art products. Best out of waste' is a promising startup idea and scrap hawkers facilitate this initiative.

Another practice which requires encouragement is using public toilets in place of open defecation. Efforts should be made to spread awareness of the dangers posed to individual and community health by open defecation. The Government of India's mission in '**Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan**' is to **build toilets towards this objective**. However, maintaining public toilets neat and clean requires greater infrastructural facilities like water.

In Tokyo, Japan an NGO and government came together to renovate 17 public washrooms into transparent washrooms. These restrooms are made up of a smart glass which turns opaque once a person enters and locks the door. This transparent glass ensures that the person can check the cleanliness of the washroom before using it and use

it without fear subsequently. '**The Tokyo Toilet Project**' aims to dispel the Japanese stereotypes that public toilets are dirty, smelly and scary, so that more people follow proper public hygiene.

To conclude, cleanliness is a way of life and it has to be ingrained as a habit of an individual.

NGOs and Govt. organizations which are working on waste management need to be encouraged. These steps will go a long way in improving sanitation and environment

**(The writer is an intern at FRNV)*

A Conversation with an old woman enlightened Mahakavi Kalidasa

*-By Ms. Dolly Shah**

The literature of Mahakavi Kalidasa, the revered Sanskrit poet of the 5th Century A.D. is considered holy and sacred as the Vedas in the Indian Culture. Even though he was known for his exemplary poetic work such as *Shakuntalam*, *Malavikagnimitra*, *Kumaarasambhava*, *Raghuvansha*, etc, his personal life saga is as engaging and inspiring as his poetic tales. As one of the most profound scholars, poets, and philosophers to have ever lived on earth who was honoured as the 9th gem in the court of Chandragupta Maurya, he was rumoured to have the privilege of talking directly with the divine Indian Goddess, Maa Kali. In fact, that is how he even received his name. Below is one of the conversations he had with a stranger woman would make all of us re-think about how what we think about ourselves could be far superficial from the truth.

Kalidasa was once walking through the forest, and it took him all day long to reach the end of it. The sun seemed to suck every ounce of his energy. While he did not mind the sun, as there was nothing he could do about it, it was the lack of water that bothered him. His thirst became unbearable, and the sight of a woman passing with a pot of water could not make him happier. He thus walked up to her hastily and called out,

Kalidasa – O Mother! The Sun has been particularly harsh on me, and so this unbearable thirst that pricks my throat like a thorn. Please be kind to share your water with me, I plead.

Woman – Son, I know how you must feel. My water is sure to vanish your thirst, but before you do not introduce yourself, I would not part with it.

Kalidas did not want to waste a minute in small talk. Every word that came out of his mouth seemed to torture his dry throat. However, wanting to not offend the old lady, he quickly replied,

Kalidasa – Very well! Consider me a wanderer.

Woman – How can you be a wanderer my son? There are only two wanderers in the universe, and they are the Sun and the Moon, who never cease moving. Please tell the truth about your identity.

Kalidasa was taken aback by this response. He cleared his throat and said,

Kalidasa – I agree. Why don't you treat me as a guest?

Woman – No, you cannot be a guest, young man. There are only two guests in life, one is wealth, and the second is youth. Both are sure to arrive and depart, and never stay even when pleaded a million times! Tell me, who are you?

Kalidasa was at a loss of words at such a profound philosophy! However, the lady's arguments charged him up. He replied,

Kalidasa – O mother, I am patient.

Woman – I don't think so. There are only two patient creatures in this world. First is Mother Earth, who silently bears the burden of all our sins, and the second are the trees that surround us. They are always bountiful to everybody without discrimination; even to those who mean harm to them. You are definitely no patient.

Kalidasa increasingly became irritable with his loss and the thirst that seemed to aggravate his temper. He snapped,

Kalidasa – Well, I must be stubborn then!

Woman – No, my child. You are not at all stubborn. Nails and hair are the only two to display stubbornness. No matter how many times you cut them, they always grow back. So be

truthful about who you are!

Kalidasa lost his patience. So much for a few sips of water. He yelled –

Kalidasa – Well, I am a fool then!

Woman – How I wish that could be true! There are only two fools to walk on this earth, and you are not among them. First is a ruler who rules people without any adequate qualification, and second is the people who try to please that ruler only to be in his good books, even it means misguiding the ruler in his judgements.

Kalidasa was awed at the intellect of this woman. He, considered as the greatest Sanskrit poet the world had ever seen could not stand tall before an old illiterate woman who must not even know how to read probably. He accepted his defeat and fell to the feet of the woman,

Kalidasa – O mother! How stupid I was to think that I know myself. Our meeting has shifted my perspective, and I cannot be more ashamed of myself. Pardon my ignorance, and show your mercy. Grant me some water, I beg.

Saying this, Kalidasa lifted his teary eyes to catch the glimpse of the woman. What he saw made him think if he was actually present there, thirsty and defeated, or was it all just a dream? In the place of the old woman stood a magnificent figure that radiated like a moon! She was none other than Maa Saraswati who had graced Kalidasa with her divine presence. She spoke in a voice that was soothing than the water in this scorching heat. She smiled and said,

Maa Saraswati – O Kalidasa! Stand up. While you are indeed a great scholar and your words have the healing power and the ability to transform lives, it is your ego about your abilities that belittles all your achievements. You are surely educated, but with your education, you have also given space to arrogance to fill your heart. Hence, I had to myself come to guide you. The mark of a true scholar is not his knowledge, but his humility. Your education is fruitless if it only feeds your ego. That would be a life wasted. A man like you with such revered intellect must understand and preach about how everything one receives and considers as his achievement, are not his to be proud of. All he must do is keep on learning for one never knows enough. So, you must be nothing but a learner, my child.

Kalidasa immediately stood up and folded his hands. He thanked Maa Saraswati for shattering his ignorance. He exclaimed that he has realized his mistake, and would hold on to these pearls of wisdom for eternity. Maa Saraswati, smiled and finally offered the pot of water to Kalidasa whose thirst had been quenched a while ago. He thankfully accepted the pot with beaming eyes and drank the water that tasted sweeter than the nectar! It wasn't just his thirst for water, but thirst for knowledge also that had been quenched.

**(The writer is an author at Doerlife).*

Source:<http://doerlife.com/mahakavi-kalidasa-old-woman/>

Many Teachers- Sanskrit words for “teacher” based on their unique abilities.

Sanskrit is, perhaps, the only language that has such a refined vocabulary to distinguish the different kinds of teachers based on their unique abilities.



1. The teacher who gives you information is called: **Adhyapak.**
2. The one who imparts knowledge combined with information is called: **Upadhyaya.**
3. The one who imparts skills is called: **Acharya.**
4. The one who is able to give a deep insight into a subject is called: **Pandit.**
5. The one who has a visionary view on a subject and teaches you to think in that manner is called: **Dhrishta.**
6. The one who is able to awaken the wisdom in you, leading you from darkness to light, is called: **Guru**

Source: From Whatsapp

Role Model 1: Assam's Cachar DC refuses to go on leave for wedding as COVID-19 cases spike, instead groom flies in



The deputy commissioner of Assam's Cachar district who is leading the fight against the coronavirus pandemic from the front preferred duty over personal life as she refused to take leave even for a day for her marriage and instead the groom flew in for the ceremony.

Keerthi Jalli, a 2013 batch IAS officer, surprised family and friends when she told them that she could not come home in Hyderabad for her wedding by leaving aside her crucial official responsibilities.

Rather, she told them, she would be happy to get married at her official bungalow in Silchar if the groom comes to her place of posting.

"I just could not think of taking leave for my wedding. I understand it is the most important event of anyone's life, but I could not imagine going away from my district where the average positive cases is about 100 and I am fighting to save lives," Jalli told PTI over phone.

Her family, in-laws, especially the groom, appreciated her decision.

The groom, Aditya Shashikant, who is from Pune, came to Silchar well in advance so that he could remain in mandatory quarantine, following the local COVID-19 protocols.

The wedding took place on Wednesday, an Assam government holiday, with no pandal or decorative lights but only Carnatic music playing in the background.

About 800 family members and friends watched the wedding through Zoom video app from different parts of the country as well as abroad.

"My parents could not come from Hyderabad as they were recuperating from COVID after both of them tested positive. Only my younger sister was on my side at the wedding," Jalli said.

All friends and families, who attended the marriage through Zoom app, dressed up like they were at the venue, just to cheer up the couple.

The young DC invited a few colleagues and friends from her district Cachar and Hailakandi, where she was posted earlier till May.

All of the guests were given staggered timing and at no point of time, more than 20 people were present at her bungalow as per the existing COVID protocol.

Interestingly, most of Jalli's colleagues did not know that she was getting married and they were invited to her bungalow on the pretext of a 'Ganesh Puja' and all of them realised about the wedding only after they arrived at her residence.

Jalli attended office on Tuesday and again on Thursday, a day after the marriage, when she visited the Silchar Medical College Hospital to take stock of the hospital infrastructure amid the spike in COVID cases in the Barak valley.

In between, on the wedding day too, she was attending official phone calls and kept giving several administrative instructions.

Ever since she has joined Cachar, Jalli has been working for capacity enhancement of the Silchar Medical College, other hospitals in the district and improving critical health infrastructure.

In her earlier posting in neighbouring Hailakandi, Jalli was known for her commendable work related to healthcare, women welfare and bringing harmony between communities, after a few incidents of communal strife.

"I had received phenomenal love and respect for my work in Hailakandi," she said.

Hailakandi, bordering Bangladesh, was lacking in

different development parameters and considered to be a socially sensitive district.

In her previous posting as the Sub Divisional Officer at Titabor in Jorhat, Jalli had undertaken an innovative scheme, 'Bhoni' (younger sister) to enhance women participation in election for which she was honoured by the then President Pranab Mukherjee in 2016.

Source:

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/assams-cachar-dc-refuses-to-go-on-leave-for-wedding-as-covid-19-cases-spike-instead-groom-flies-in-140718>

Dated: September 13, 2020

Role Model 2: Over 30 years, this man is making the lives of cancer patients easier

-By Binjal Shah



All alone in a big city battling a life-threatening disease with no finances - those who had no one and nothing, had Harakchand Savla.

Harakchand walked five kilometres one way, braving the chill of the morning and the wrath of the afternoon sun, in order to save his bus money and instead, give it to his friend for his school fee so that he wouldn't have to drop out. Surprisingly, he saw that it made him as happy as the friend he helped out.

Just like that, the 11-year-old had found the simple yet all-encompassing commandment of community living - if you possess an excess of something that another direly needs, give. Today, when he garners Rs 2-3 crore for the shelter of cancer patients, their families, and the underprivileged -- the underlying principle has

remained the same -- when the haves share a little with the have-nots -- happiness, infectious as it is, only multiplies.

Always the giver

Fifty-nine-year-old Harakchand Savla was raised in the area around Mumbai's JJ hospital, and started out to help others when he was in the seventh standard, by putting his friend through school for three years.

The young man had a fresh set of eyes for the world, and he wanted to simplify the concept of community service. But the words of a gentleman he encountered after his tenth standard exams, changed his life forever. "The society feeds us, clothes and nurtures us, and we must repay that debt by passing on the favour," he told the young Harakchand.

Choosing not to go to college, he gathered some friends and started "Lower Parel Mitra Mandal," a small outfit that would perform small services to the community like clean-up drives, a collection of donation for various causes, etc, which they sustained for about five years. In the course of their work, they became immensely close to a girl from one of the areas they served, so much so that Harakchand considered her a sister.

It was thus, a bleak day in their lives when they discovered that the girl's mother had cancer. Harakchand helped her in admitting her mother to Sion Hospital unaware of the fact that the Tata Hospital offered subsidised treatment. "I was full of guilt when I made this error, but my sister told me that the family was prepared to take their mother back to their village where she could live out her days, but on my suggestion, they brought her to the hospital instead and she was cured. They said, "to us, you are God." These words stayed with me - I realised it took so little to become 'God' in someone's eyes. This was my inspiration. I left everything else and focused my energies on service, especially the cancer-stricken and their loved ones," Harakchand recalls.

The beginning of beautiful journey

At that point, he ran a small hotel that was doing fairly well - which he decided to rent out and used all the money raised towards community service. "I would simply go to the hospital and spend time

with patients who were alone and had no one around - because a lot of them came from outside Mumbai for treatment, and couldn't afford the expenditure of having a family member with them. I would help them with their errands, collecting reports, sending their relatives letters, etc," he recalls.

Once a patient's relative fell seriously ill. Harakchand took him to his family doctor and they discovered that the man had been living on vada pav (a simple Maharashtrian snack consisting of a potato patty placed between a sliced bun) since he had arrived because he could not afford anything else. "The doctor told me that this person was ruining his own health to take care of someone else's," Harakchand recounts.

The very next day, on an impulse he started packing food for 10-15 people from home. This simple act of kindness is what has flourished into the mammoth Jeevan Jyot Cancer Relief and Care Trust that operates on a Rs 2-3 crore budget.

He then formalised this activity by setting up camp on the pavement right opposite the Tata Cancer Hospital's Kondaji Building, where he would distribute not only basic food but also medicines and other articles of utility. He even conducted a newspapers and clothes collection drive to raise funds through which has collected Rs 40 lakh. "For 12 years, I used my own savings and pocket money, but since the number of people in need was rising sharply while the size of my pocket remained the same, I decided to establish a formal trust," he says.

By then, tales of his good work had already spread far and wide, and on the power of donations made by well-wishers, Harakchand established a mega-kitchen that today, feeds over 700 relatives of cancer patients, as well as patients who have more severe forms of cancer and cannot even digest hospital food. The food is simple, says Harakchand, yet wholesome and balanced - consisting of roti, dal, vegetables and rice. For people with special needs due to health problems, the kitchen also has provisions for making turmeric milk or food with minimal or no salt. While the inmates of Tata Hospital visit the area attached to the kitchen for their meals, massive packages are sent over to people at JJ Hospital and Cama Hospital.

A humanitarian landmark

Today, it has 60 activities running in parallel - of which 20 are cancer-related, and the remaining are general, surrounding organ donation, animal welfare, blood donation, etc. An ongoing initiative is creating a bank of unexpired, leftover medicines from former cancer patients for those still undergoing treatment.

A toy bank has also been created for children suffering from cancer. Picnics and camps are also arranged for them. "I have derived inspiration from various incidents - like a man being unable to donate blood to his son because he was past the legal age inspired me to start blood donation camps regularly in Mumbai. Whenever I spot a gap or a problem that resonates with me, I try to alleviate it through the platform I have created," he says.

His activities now span three cities, namely Mumbai, Kolkata, and Jalgaon - and the organisation runs on a colossal Rs 2.5-3 crore budget. In fact, the cost incurred on the food alone every day is roughly Rs 12000. "Funding is a challenge. But we have one funda, we only conduct campaigns depending on the funding at our disposal. We never go out and ask," he states. Harakchand felicitates all benefactors in a local Jain journal and hopes more people will emulate them. Harakchand, in turn, was recognized by Mumbai-based Startup Cheep for their Diwali contest lauding local heroes.

"Our visit to Mr. Harakchand's Ashram made us realize the magnitude of his work.

He runs 60 different social services including cancer patient's well-being, medicines at cheaper rates, ashram facility, an old age home and many more, and just wants people to be made aware about the availability of these services," says Dr Diwan Rahul Nanda, Founder and Chairman at Cheep.

Now in its 32nd year, the trust has 12 offices, an army of 150 volunteers and has served millions. "You do not need to run a trust to change lives - you can start right away. People who need help are all around you - all you have to do is extend a helping hand," he says, signing off.

Source: <https://yourstory.com/2017/11/cancer-patients-lives-better-harakchand-savla>

Dated : 9 November, 2017

News & Events

❑ Due to the global COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic situation, FRNV governing body has no choice but to make the necessary decision to cancel the Corporate Workshop to be held this year. Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of our members and attendees is paramount to us.

❑ **NPE 2020**

•FRNV has observed that majority of the states has given their favourable response towards NEP 2020.

•It is expected that there will be more discussions in the parliament regarding the policy to bring a legislature to bind the states to implement NEP 2020 in their respective states.

•The PM in his speech on NPE 2020 said that the new education policy aims at bringing our lives in harmony with all the existence. PM Modi said that through NEP, India will transform its students into global citizens who are rooted in their values.

•FRNV has also analysed the new policy in the light of our recommendations sent to the Kasturirangan committee. The policy has emphasised some important aspects like setting up National Commission on Education and emphasis on value education. It would have been better if a more robust framework would have been laid down, as suggested by FRNV, to realise the same more effectively.

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.

Chief Editor: Shri Gopal Ganesh