

NO SWEEPING CHANGE: ON SWACHH BHARAT

MISSION

GS 1, MAINS: Population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues, urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

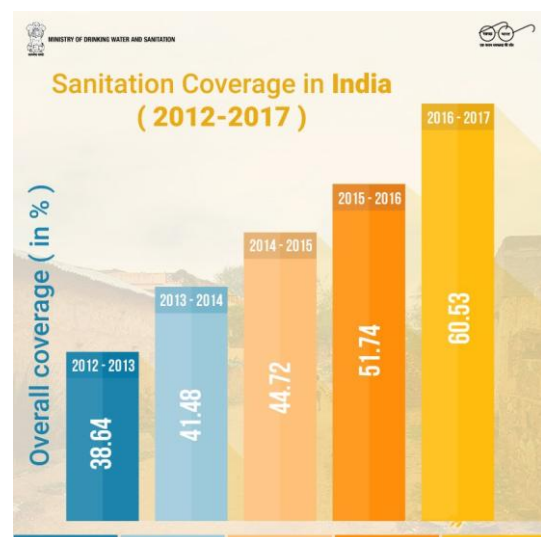
IN NEWS: India's Swachh Bharat Mission is receiving global praise for attempting to close the sanitation gap of nearly 60% of the rural population not having access to a toilet at home in 2014. But there is a need for a close audit of the outcomes. In some States, such as Rajasthan, independent verification shows that the social change that the SBM hopes to achieve remains elusive, and traditionally oppressed communities continue to manually remove filth from dry latrines used by the upper castes.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION:

- Bring about an improvement in the general quality of life by promoting cleanliness, hygiene and eliminating open defecation.
- Accelerate sanitation coverage in rural areas to achieve the vision of Swachh Bharat by 2nd October 2019.
- Motivate communities to adopt sustainable sanitation practices and facilities through awareness creation and health education.
- Develop, wherever required, community managed sanitation systems focusing on scientific Solid & Liquid Waste Management systems for overall cleanliness in the rural areas.
- Create significant positive impact on gender and promote social inclusion by improving sanitation especially in marginalized communities

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SBM:

- Seventeen states and Union Territories (UTs) are now ODF. Of the remaining 16, another three are almost ODF (>90%) and six are more than 85% ODF.
- It has got tremendous response from young generation, corporate's, media and celebrities as well.
- As a result of the scale of this campaign and the government's continuous focus on sanitation, health and hygiene, SBA has received a very high-level of political



commitment and time-bound targets.

CHALLENGES IN FRONT:

- Although the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan lays a lot of emphasis on collecting waste in cities, it does not seem to have given adequate attention to waste management. Most of the solid waste generated in cities is dumped in landfill sites. These are non-scientific and rudimentary practices and pose a serious threat to land and water resources.
- Many of India's big cities are struggling to treat their sewage as well. The waste-management problems of cities do not seem to be reflected in the Swachh Bharat rankings of cities.

CHALLENGES in implementation

- **Poor utilization of funds, delay in the reach of funds and the lack of funds.**
- **Unwillingness to initiate.**
- **Non fixation of roles and responsibilities leading to unclear accountability.**
- **Focus on changing behaviours.**
- **Going beyond toilet construction.**



- Adequate data on the basis of third party surveys and evaluation is not available to assist in performance evaluation. Whatever data has been recorded reveals a lot of inconsistencies. Accuracy of data is lacking since there is duplication of names and false toilet construction has been reported in many cases.
- Even though Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) have a major role to play still there is lack of institutional capacity at the grassroots level to deliver sanitation services. For the success of this programme a lot of investment in terms of administrative capabilities has to be made.

Since the same is lacking, there is inefficiency in the performance and also diversion from the prime objective.

- The laws on municipal solid waste, protection of water sources and pollution control are just not being enforced. The official machinery required to enforce legal provisions vigorously, and the infrastructure to manage waste scientifically are inadequate, making it unlikely that there will be significant public health outcomes flowing from high-profile cleaning campaigns.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Besides making sanitation a movement through the provision of well-designed toilets and behaviour change in rural India, the SBM should have a broader vision of what constitutes cleanliness.
- Besides ending manual scavenging, the Swachh Bharat Mission must ensure that the manual cleaning of septic tanks, which is killing so many workers each year, is stopped and that funds for rehabilitation reach them.
- What is needed is participatory governance seeking commitment from the communities and people as well. The maintenance and management of toilets to make them functional has to be looked upon by people and community.

(Q)In the light of the achievements of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, analyze the progressivity and prospects of the mission.

PREVIOUS YEAR UPSC MAINS QUESTIONS:

- What are the two major legal initiatives by state since Independence, addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (ST) ? (2017)
- With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme'. (2016)
- Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart vilages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural urban integration. (2015)
- Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. (2013)