

Government of India
Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2100
TO BE ANSWERED ON **08-03-2018**

Behaviour Change for Open Defecation Free Country

2100. SHRI G. HARI:

Will the Minister of **DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is true that the sanitation experts laid emphasis on bringing about a sustained behavioural change in the local communities to achieve the target of making the villages, towns and district Open Defecation Free (ODF) in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also true that the sanitation experts have suggested that the harmful impacts of open defecation on people's health and children's nutrition should be brought to their notice and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to make the country Open Defecation Free?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER &
SANITATION**

(SHRI RAMESH CHANDAPPA JIGAJINAGI)

- (a) Yes, Madam. Sanitation is mainly a behavioral issue. It involves change of mindset of people to stop open defecation and to adopt safe sanitation practices.
- (b) Yes, Madam. There is a direct relationship between water, sanitation and health. Consumption of unsafe drinking water, open disposal of human excreta, lack of personal and food hygiene has a direct bearing on the high infant mortality rate, malnutrition and are also the causes of a host of medical problems like Schistosomiasis, Dysentery, Japanese Encephalitis, Malaria, Dengue fever and Trachoma. Indirect loss of working days due to repeated episodes of these diseases results in huge economic loss.
- (c) The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) (SBM (G)) was launched on 2nd October, 2014 with the aim to attain Swachh Bharat by 2nd October 2019. The focus of the scheme is on behavior change and usage of toilets. The following steps are being taken by the Ministry for effective implementation of SBM-G in the country
- Focus on behavior change: Community based collective behavior change has been mentioned as the preferred approach, although the States are free to choose the approach best suited to them. Focus is also on creation of complete open defecation free (ODF) villages, rather than only on construction of individual toilets. This entails triggering the entire village into changing their behavior.
 - The programme provides flexibility to the States in the implementation. This is essential, given the vast socio-cultural diversity of India, and also from the point of view of promoting innovations.

- There is a greater emphasis on capacity building, especially in community approaches and programme management. Lack of knowledge capacities is a major challenge in scaling up the programme. Therefore, various initiatives are being taken to reach out to all the stakeholders. From the Government of India side, the States and select organizations (termed Key Resource Centres) are being trained. These in turn are, carrying out trainings at the sub-State level. The key official at the district level (DC/DM) has been roped in the programme to provide leadership at the district level.
- The programme is being run as a *janandolan* with cooperation from all sections of the society including the NGOs, Corporates, youth etc. The Panchayats are also being actively involved.
- Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks (trained young professionals) are also being engaged for providing technical support to the districts.