De-coding the Success of Swachh Bharat Mission

Why in news?

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According to official estimates Rural India is poised to become open defecation free by October 2, 2019.

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What is the status of open defecation in India?

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- Until 2014, 600 million people (approximately 60 per cent of the world's open defecators) were practicing open defecation across the country, of these, 550 million were in rural India.
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- This has changed quite dramatically, the open defecation number has dwindled to 100 million.
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- As many as 5,20,000 villages, 530 Districts and 25 States and Union Territories are open defecation free (ODF).
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- Rural India is poised to become open defecation free by October 2, 2019.
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- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has released a study that shows significant improvements in diarrhea prevalence and stunting among children in ODF districts, compared to otherwise similar non-ODF districts.
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How Swachh Bharat Mission helped to attain ODF states?

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- Swachch Bharat made an effort to influence the mind and behaviour of the beneficiary.
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- There was a lot of emphasis with regard to action on the ground under

Swachch Bharat. ‘
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- Swachh Bharat scheme had the desired political support, and apart from this it was driven by the Prime Minister himself.
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- There has been significant impact of Swachh Bharat Mission at the grassroots level, both in the context of health parameters as well as economic indicators.
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- A WHO study released in August 2018 reported that Swachh Bharat would have led to a saving of around 3,00,000 lives by 2019 and around 1,50,000 lives would be saved annually thereafter.
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- UNICEF in its report, “The Financial and Economic Impact of SBM in India (2017)” has estimated that an ODF village in rural India makes substantial savings every year.
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How the participation of stake holders helped the scheme?

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- **C0-Working Model -**The PM-CM-DM-VM (Prime Minister-Chief Minister-District Magistrate-Village Motivator) model worked.
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- The State governments were taken into confidence, which happened through massive engagement with the States.
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- The top bureaucracy went to the villages to understand the ground realities.
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- The visits were not limited to the State headquarters but entailed going down to the villages to get a better understanding of ground realities that constituted very useful input in formulating policies.
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- **Participation of stake holders -**The intensity of engagement and the passion that went with it helped “buy-in” from various stakeholders.
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- Organizing workshops at the national and regional levels helped the field level functionaries to understand the nuances of implementing such a scheme where behavioral change was the key to success.
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- Mere setting up of toilets would not have helped, the focus needed to be on their usage.

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- These workshops also provided an opportunity for feedback from the field.
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- **Hygiene competitivemodel-**The District Magistrates were incentivized through interactions in Delhi and other capacity building workshops.
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- Swachh SurvekshanGrameen 2018 was constituted to provide healthy competition amongst the Districts.
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- This yielded significant increase in momentum on the ground.
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- **Channelized Communication -**An effective communication strategy was evolved to bring about behavioral change at the ground level.
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- This was supplemented with mass media at the national level. Well known personalities were roped in to convey messages that had the desired impact in the context of usage of toilets and twin pit toilets.
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- The SBM foot soldiers and "Swachhagrahis" participated in triggering community behavior change and sustaining it through inter-personal communication.
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- **Multi-dimensional Approach -**SBM had a clarity of thought and articulation at each level.
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- The commitment and the passion of the team are quite remarkable.
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- Roll out plans have been meticulously chalked out and critical input is welcomed.
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Source: Business Line

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