Decade of Swachh Bharat Mission

Why in News?

Oct 2, 2024 marks the 10th year anniversary of the launch of Swachh Bharat Mission.

What is Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)?

- **SBM** – It is largest behavioural change movement in the world, aiming to end open defecation through awareness campaigns, education, and infrastructure development.
- **Launched in** – October 2, 2014.
- **SBM Phase I Period** – 2014 to 2019.
- **Aim** - To create a Clean India by 2019.
    - Address the issue of WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Health)
    - Eliminating open defecation
    - Improving unsanitary toilets
    - Eradicating manual scavenging
    - Enhancing solid waste management
    - Promoting behavioural change regarding sanitation
- **Components** - The mission will cover all rural and urban areas.
    - **SBM Gramin (SBM G)** - Implemented by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
    - **SBM Urban (SBM U)** - Implemented by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- **Implementation Responsibility** - Entire project is governed and monitored by state agencies.
- **Unique Approach** – SBM combines toilet construction with substantial investments in IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) and community engagement.
    - **Individual Household Latrine (IHHL) Scheme**- It provides financial assistance to eligible households to build toilets.
    - **Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)**- It emphasizing community participation and behavioural change by mobilizing communities to collectively take action to end open defecation.
    - **IEC Campaign** - The mission places a strong emphasis on IEC activities to create awareness about the importance of sanitation, hygiene practices, and the usage of toilets.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission Phase II (2019-2025)**
    - SBM Urban 2.0 launched on October 1, 2021 to achieve Garbage Free Status for all cities.
    - SBM Gramin 2.0 was launched to transform all the villages from ODF to ODF Plus Model.

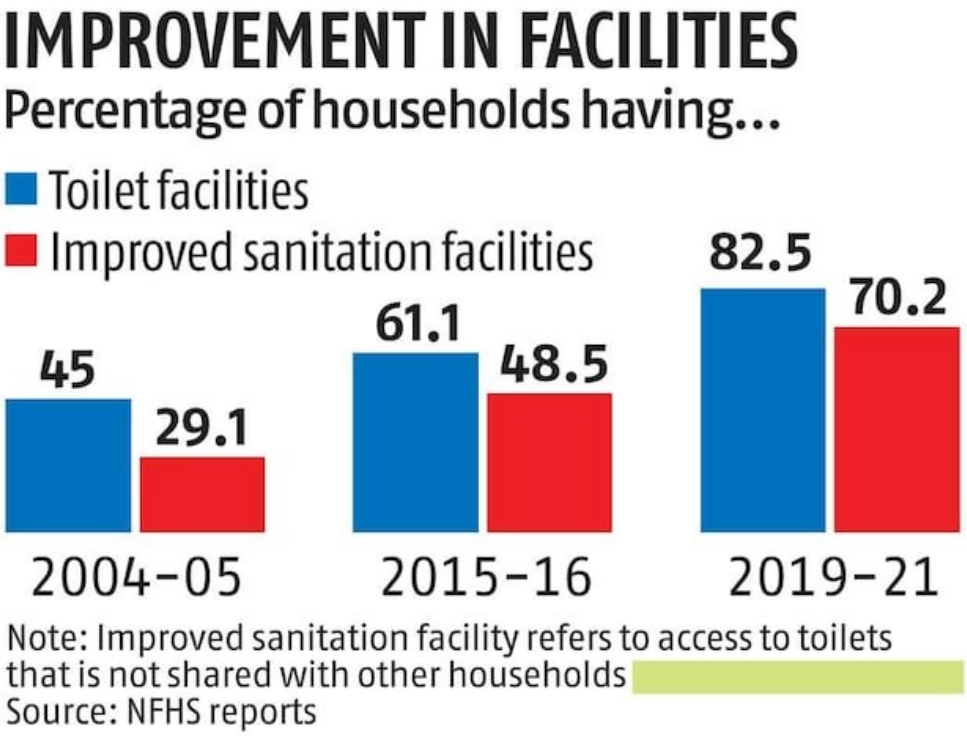


What are the achievements of SBM?

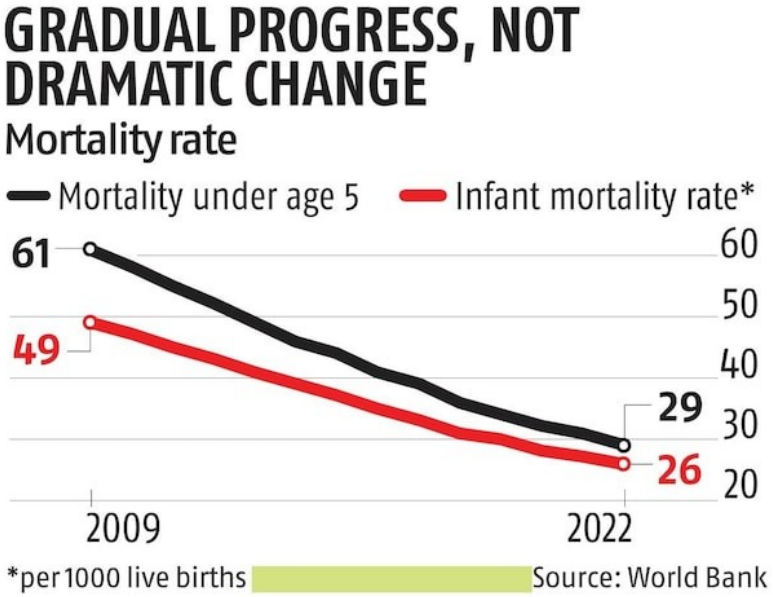
- **ODF Free** - Government declared India “Open Defecation Free” in 2019.
- **Increased Toilet Construction** - More than 12 crore toilets have been built since the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) 10 years ago.



- **Increased Toilet Access** - Over 82% households had toilet access in 2019-21 up from 45 % in 2004-05.



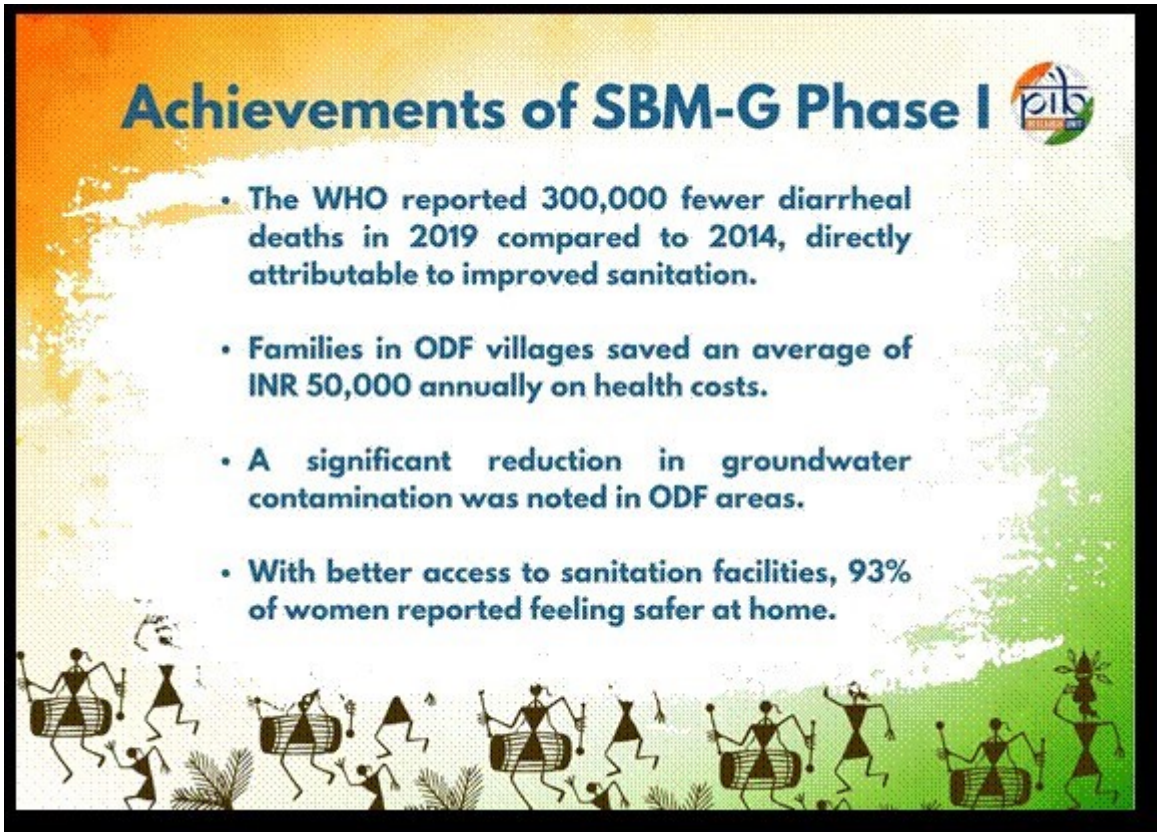
- **ODF Plus Villages** - Currently, 93 % of villages have achieved the ODF Plus status.
- **Waste Management** - 78 % of the waste have been processed.
- **Reduced Mortality** - Improvements in sanitation facilities have led significant reductions in infant and child mortality rates.
- Districts with over 30 % toilet coverage under SBM experienced reductions of 5.3 in the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and 6.8 in the Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) per thousand live births.



- **Public Movement** – The efforts of Sanitation workers, religious leaders, athletes, celebrities, and Non-Governmental Organisations and the general public have transformed the SBM into a huge public movement.

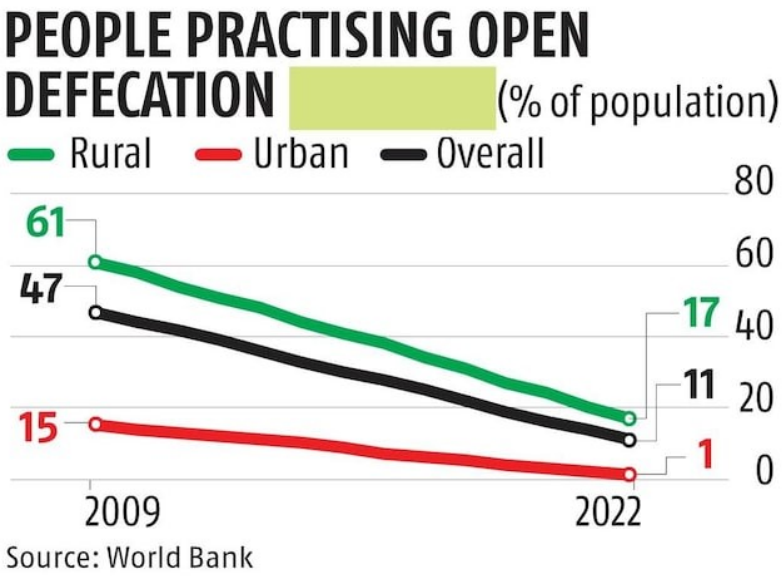


- **Environmental Improvement** – Significant reduction in ground water contamination and improvement in landscape are observed in open defecation areas.
- **Women Safety** - With better access to sanitation facilities, 93% of women reported feeling safer at home.



What are the issues?

- **Continuing Open Defecation** - Although there has been a decrease in open defecation, 11 % of the population still practised it in 2022, mostly in rural areas.



- **Rural Urban Divide** - Urban centres have 95.6 % access to toilets compared to 76 % in rural India.
- **Caste in Waste Management** - Sanitation and waste management in India are associated with the wide prevalence of caste and the same old caste practices is still prevailing despite the efforts.
- **Manual Scavenging** - Only 66% districts in country free of manual scavenging.
- **Poor Quality and Maintenance** – The quality of toilets and lack of adequate water infrastructure discourage the continued used of the facilities.
- **Inequality** – The reach of SBM facilities in communities in slums and other marginalized is far less than developed areas of the cities.
- **Waste Handling** - In rural India, toilet construction has not been linked to waste treatment and in peri-urban areas, the faecal sludge generated is discharged into the environment without treatment.
- **Insufficient Funds** – Village panchayats do not have enough financial resources to get road sweeping machines, more vehicles to transport the waste.
- **Decline in Budget Allocation** - SBM urban had a massive downward revision in Revised Estimates of 2023-24 from the Budget Estimates by around 49 %.

What lies ahead?

- Implement cleanliness initiatives at the district, block, village, and local levels.
- Promote bio toilets to address manual scavenging and increase fund allocation for their rehabilitation.
- Improve the administrative and technical capacity of local governments for the effective implementation of diverse objectives of the mission.
- Increase the technological solutions in handling the solid waste from generation to disposal.
- Encourage the use of waste-to-energy plants and biological methanation at the local and regional level.

References

1. Business Standard | 10 years of Swachh Bharat

2. The Hindu | SBM
3. The Hindu | The reality of the Swachh Bharat Mission
4. PIB | SBM

