



Swatch Bharat- Gandhi's idea on cleanliness

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Abstract: We can say that cleanliness is important in our life as well as for the nation. It is well known that the Mahatma Gandhi personally took the effort to achieve the change that he wanted to see. It is of course too much to expect our present day leaders to go around the cities with their rising number of slums, and initiate a genuine drive to clean-up the surrounding. It is even less probable that they will pull themselves away from their market-focused pursuits and ineffectual, exclusive pursuit of GDP growth, to focus on the task of nation-building.

Key words: Cleanliness, pursuits, ineffectual, exclusive pursuit

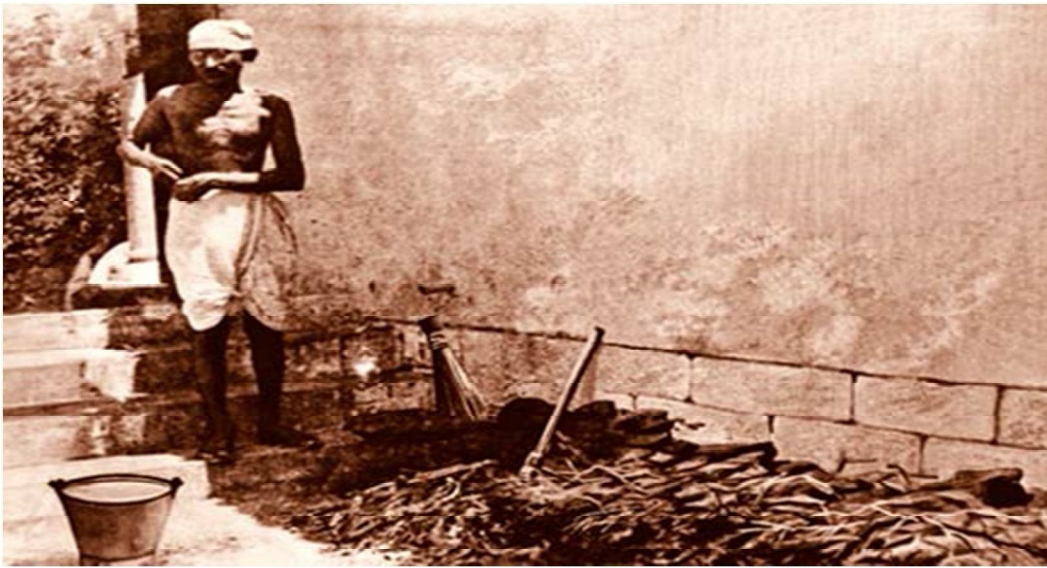
Introduction

**There is a very old saying that
“cleanliness is next to godliness”. -John
Wesley.**

Cleanliness is very important in our life from all the aspects. Cleanliness is important for healthy mind, body and spirit. We should take care of it all through the life. Practice of cleanliness starts from the home and school from the very little age. It affects us very badly when we do not maintain cleanliness. Cleanliness is any day a paramount responsibility of every citizen in the country. It is very important to keep our area hygienic as well as of others.

No need of scavengers if every household maintain their house clean and store at specified place. In the words of Gandhi, everyone must be his own scavenger. Gandhi learnt scavenging in South Africa. In South Africa the whites despised the Indians for their slovenly habits. Gandhi inspected their quarters and asked them to keep their homes and surroundings clean. His friends there lovingly called him the great scavenger.

After a three-years stay in South Africa, he returned to India to fetch his wife and sons. Plague had broken out in the Bombay Presidency at that time. There was a chance of it spreading to Rajkot. Gandhi immediately offered his service for improving the sanitation of Rajkot. He inspected every home and stressed the need of keeping the latrines clean. The dark, filthy, stinking pits infected with vermin horrified him. In some houses belonging to the upper class, gutters were used as a privy and the stench was unbearable. The residents were a pathetic. Poor untouchables lived in cleaner homes and responded to Gandhi's pleadings. Gandhi suggested the use of two separate buckets for urine and night-soil and that improved the sanitation. To him the test of a people's standard of cleanliness was the condition of their latrines. He described himself as a *bhangi* and said he would be content if he could die as a sweeper. He even asked orthodox Hindus to make him suffer social boycott along with the untouchables.



Everyone must be his own scavenger. "So long as you do not take the broom and the bucket in your hands, you cannot make your towns and cities clean." - **M. K. Gandhi**

Mass Contact Programme:

Gandhi's group launched a mass contact programme in the villages. "At the end of the morning's march," writes Tendulkar, "a batch of men and women from his party visited the *Harijan* quarters of the village near the camp, taking with them brooms and spades." They talked about the "necessity of sanitation, about keeping their yards clean, of burying rubbish, instead of leaving it to blow here and there. While Gandhi was engaged in talks, people who had accompanied him would begin cleaning up the *basti* themselves. They highlighted the need to prevent excrement lying in the open, as it attracted flies and spread disease.

Even when talking about health and pointing out that disease could sometimes be traced to overeating or eating the wrong food, and therefore called for self-restraint, he did not fail to emphasise the need to educate villagers on hygiene and

sanitation. The true function of the Ashram, he said, was to show people how they could avoid disease. On February 4, 1916, almost a century ago, he spoke at the inauguration of the Banaras Hindu University, at the invitation of Madan Mohan Malaviya. At one point, Gandhi said he wanted to 'think audibly' and proceeded to recall his visit to the Vishwanath temple. Apparently disappointed at the dirty state of this house of God, Gandhi said, "Is not this great temple a reflection of our own character?" The houses around had been built without regard to any norms, the lanes were tortuous and narrow and of course, dirty. "I speak feelingly, as a Hindu," he added to emphasise his pain, asking whether the temples would be clean once the British had left the country, bag and baggage. wo years before his death, Gandhi stayed in the sweepers' colony in Bombay and Delhi for some days. He wished to share the same lodging and partake of their food



but then he was too old for the experiment.

The redesigned programme of Swachh Bharat on 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi

On 2nd October, 2014, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, launched a nation-wide cleanliness campaign on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary. The concept of Swachh Bharat is to provide sanitation facilities to every family, including toilets, solid and liquid waste disposal systems, village cleanliness, and safe and adequate drinking water supply. We have to achieve this by 2019 as a befitting tribute to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, on his 150th birth anniversary. Modi said that the Swachh Bharat mission is beyond

politics, inspired by patriotism and not politics. He also asked people to pledge '*na main gandagi karoonga, na main gandagi karne doonga*' (I shall not litter and won't allow anyone to do so). He further flagged off a walkathon as part of the Swachh Bharat Campaign, which is not just a slogan, but our responsibility. This turned the people's thoughts to Gandhi's idea of cleanliness. By inviting people to participate in the drive, the Swachhta Abhiyan has turned into a National Movement. A sense of responsibility has been evoked among the people through the Clean India Movement. With citizens now becoming active participants in cleanliness activities across the nation, the dream of a 'Clean India' once seen by Mahatma Gandhi has begun to get a shape.





The Prime Minister has helped spread the message of Swachh Bharat by urging people through his words & action. He carried out a cleanliness drive in Varanasi as well. He wielded a spade near River Ganga at Assi Ghat in Varanasi under the Clean India Mission. He was joined by a large group of local people who cooperated in the Swachhta Abhiyan. Understanding the significance of sanitation, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has simultaneously addressed the health problems that Indians families have to deal with due to lack of proper toilets in their homes.

People from different sections of the society have come forward and joined this mass movement of cleanliness. From government officials to jawans, bollywood actors to the sportspersons, industrialists to spiritual leaders, all have lined up for the noble work. Millions of people across the country have been day after day joining the cleanliness initiatives of the government departments, NGOs and local community centres to make India clean. Organising frequent cleanliness campaigns to spreading awareness about hygiene through plays and music is also being widely carried out across the nation.

Conclusion

Teachers and students' role is very important to create awareness on cleanliness. In today's world the role of social media is important to create awareness among the people and inculcate a feeling of nationality among them. Cleanliness is not only the responsibility of the 'safaai kaamgar' (sanitation worker) or local government. It is the responsibility of all Indians. It is the responsibility of the Government officers, NGOs and the local

community to make India completely clean. It is a need of the present; all the people should actively participate to clean India to fulfill the dream of Mahatma Gandhi for the protection of the environment, for our safety, and for a healthy future. It is the responsibility of the Government officers, NGOs and the local community to make India completely clean. It is a need of the present; all the people should actively participate to clean India to fulfill the dream of Mahatma Gandhi for the protection of the environment, for our safety, and for a healthy future.

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