

The Challenge

Building a cleaner Orissa

Orissa State
Water &
Sanitation
Mission



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BHARAT NIRMAN

Today, our system remains woefully inadequate to meet the demand for safe and guaranteed water supply. An important criticism leveled against our water infrastructure is that its growth has not been accompanied by an improvement in governance of water services. Development analysts have criticized our water sector policy as one of "build-neglect-rebuild." We have also ignored the management of environmental resources within which the security of safe and assured water supply is embedded. This requires comprehensive reforms in governance. In other words, we must "not merely fix pipes, but also fix institutions that fix pipes."

Sanitation is the link between water policy and health. No less a person than Mahatma Gandhi emphasized this as a key goal for our society. Therefore, it is a shame that our mothers and sisters in much of rural India still lack basic privacy in this day and age. This national disgrace must be addressed urgently. It is not merely an issue of operating a Centrally Sponsored Programme, for which in any case, allocations have nearly doubled over the past year. Fund allocations and your Total Sanitation Campaign are important, but they are not enough. This must become a people's movement.

In tandem with this, we must ensure that Government's supportive programmes are as flexible as possible.

Sanitation is not a civil engineering activity. It is about changing attitudes and mindsets. In the absence of the latter, merely



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh

spending money is of limited utility. There is no country in the world where sanitation has been provided mainly through government investment. Most often, sanitation is based on people's investment in changing attitudes and perceptions of hygiene. It is, therefore, as much a battle for the mind, and battle to change social attitudes.

I conclude by urging all of you once again to personally lead the movement in your state for meeting this vital goal of Bharat Nirman. I also request you to lead the Total Sanitation Campaign by making it a collective agenda. Both of these are targets which can be achieved by you in your political tenures. These are programmes backed by Central funds. It calls for leadership and commitment. I am confident you have both and that you will take up this responsibility energetically.

(Adopted from the speech delivered by the Prime Minister at the Conference of Ministers of different States and Union Territories, who are in charge of Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, 31st January 2006.)

"As a nation, we have to keep our environment clean and tidy and it has to start from the home."

Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam