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Swachhata Initiatives of Ministry of Human Resource Development

The Ministry of Human Resource Development observed Swachhata Pakhwada from 1st September to 15th September, 2016. The Department of School Education & Literacy has made all efforts for effective observance of the Swachhata Pakhwada.

The Swachh Vidyalaya initiative to have separate toilets for boys and girls was launched by the Department of School Education and Literacy in August, 2014. In a record period of one year from 15th August, 2014 to 14th August, 2015, 4,17,796 toilets were constructed in 2,61,400 schools. Thus 100% access to provide functional toilets in all government schools across the country was achieved.

Swachhata Pakhwada was celebrated in various schools/ institutes of Government, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodaya Vidyalayas, NIOS, NCERT & JSS and also in the premises of the Ministry.

School/Institutes have undertaken following activities during Swachhata Pakhwada:

- Teachers to hold sensitization meeting with parents on cleanliness and sanitation.
- Teachers to inspect sanitary facilities in every institution and plan for repairs.
- Cleanliness drive in the Schools (Premises, toilets etc.)
- Various competitions on Swachhata like essay, painting, debate etc.
- Displaying banners and slogan writing on Swachhata.
- Other cultural programmes on Swachhata.
- Swachhata Shapath (pledge).
- Weeding out old files, removal and repair of broken furniture, equipments etc.
- Awareness creation to school children and public through audio-visual programmes.
- Students visited nearby public place and cleaned the area with Community participation.

All Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas apart from large number of Government schools in the country celebrated Swachhata Pakhwada by taking up above activities.

Construction and maintenance of toilets is a continuous process and the basic purpose of this Initiative is to promote a behavioral change in school children with regard to sanitation practices, hand-washing, general hygiene and maintenance.

To step forward towards maintenance of existing school toilets to make them sustainable and durable, M/o Human Resource Development along with M/o Panchayati Raj and M/o Drinking Water & Sanitation issued a joint letter regarding prioritizing the funds from devolution of 14th Finance commission to the local bodies on maintenance and up-keep of toilets.

Department of School Education and Literacy has initiated **Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar** to recognize, inspire and celebrate excellence in Sanitation and hygiene practice in schools. These are categorized under water, sanitation, hand washing with soap, operations and maintenance, behavior changes and capacity building sub-categories. The awards will be given at district level, state and national level. The process for selection of schools for state level is in progress. By the end of November, 2016, schools for national level awards would be selected.

During this initiative, it was noticed that the role of children as “change agents” in the society can be highly useful and is centered around the belief that once school children imbibe good sanitation and hygiene practices, they could motivate their parents, family and others in the neighborhood ultimately promoting community participation to adopt good sanitation and hygiene practices, which would ultimately lead to the “**Swachh Bharat**”.
