

Behavior change begins at home

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New Delhi, The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation held a two-day national consultative workshop on Solid and Liquid Resource Management on 22nd February and 23rd February 2018 in the national capital. The workshop was organized in association with the Tata Trusts, and covered topics ranging from Gobar-dhan, Biodegradable Waste Management, Menstrual Health Management, Faecal Sludge Management, Plastics and Liquid Waste Management. The workshop marked a shift in national sanitation policy from "Solid and Liquid Waste Management" to "Solid and Liquid Resource Management", i.e. treating waste as a resource. Sushri Uma Bharti, Union Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation inaugurated the workshop in the capital by offering jalanjali (divine offering of water to a plant). Speaking about the two-day workshop, she reiterated that turning waste to resource is of acute importance and imbibing the learning of the workshop will not just help in processing waste but will also help in beautification of the village. She also spoke about Menstrual Health Management, the need to provide rural girls and women with a choice of affordable products for it, and the need to de-stigmatize menstruation as a subject of open conversation in families, schools and communities. She added, "Turning waste to wealth is another facet of the workshop that will improve skill development and empower women by providing them with employment." Shri S.S. Ahluwalia, Minister of State for Drinking Water & Sanitation, addressed the workshop and launched a special webpage for Solid and Liquid Resource Management (SLRM) on the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) {SBM(G)} website. Speaking at the launch, he said, "Behavior change begins at home, and by adopting the 4Rs (refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle), each one of us can help realize our collective dream of a Swachh Bharat." Shri Parameswaran Iyer, Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, highlighted the importance of solid and liquid resource management in rural India and how it can contribute to a sustainable open defecation free (ODF) India. He said, "Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) has, doubled the rural sanitation coverage from 39% in 2014 to over 78% today. It is now important to also focus on ODF sustainability and Swachh Villages by implementing SLRM." The workshop was a "Swachh Event", a green workshop. As part of the event, the dignitaries were welcomed with plant pots instead of flower bouquets. The pencils used at the event were made of biodegradable material and each pencil held a seed which could be used to plant a sapling by the participant after the workshop ended. The Ministry made use of several eco-friendly products such as biodegradable bags, file folders, name badges, etc. to advocate the cause of sustainability. The event was attended by industry experts, dignitaries from various States, as well as ODF champions who brought about significant change in their respective villages and districts.

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