



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalsivier Kamarajar"

Health and sanitation as the pillars of a healthy India

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Context

- On this **World Health Day (April 7)**, as nations reflect on the foundations of human well being, India stands tall with a transformative lesson: health and sanitation are not separate pursuits, but are two sides of a coin.
- The story of modern India cannot be told without acknowledging the contribution of the **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Grameen and the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**.
- When the Prime Minister launched the SBM from the ramparts of the Red Fort in **2014**, he ignited a movement that has touched every Indian household, making it a people's movement — a Jan Andolan that was anchored in behavioural change and inter generational equity.
- By **2019, India had declared itself Open Defecation Free (ODF)** and taken significant steps towards achieving SDG 6.2 (it focuses on achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030) and also ending open defecation, **11 years ahead of time**.
- The SBM has been a powerful public health intervention. A World Health Organization (WHO) report estimated from 2014 to 2019, through the sanitation mission, **over three lakh diarrhoeal deaths were averted**.
- The SBM has improved environmental outcomes. **Groundwater contamination in ODF villages is 12.7 times less likely**, ensuring long-term health resilience in rural communities. A (2024)
- In **2019, the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched** to ensure every rural household receives clean drinking water through a **tap connection**.
- Today, **more than 80% of India's rural households have tap water connections. Over 96% villages have been declared as ODF Plus**, more than 5.07 lakh villages have solid waste management systems, and 5.23 lakh villages have liquid waste management systems in place