



Worlds largest Sulabh Toilet Complex at Shirdi, Maharashtra

Inaugural Issue

March - 2003

SulabhENVIS
*Newsletter on Hygiene
Sanitation
Environment and Sewerage (HSES)*



Human Excreta based biogas plant developed by Sulabh



From the Editors Desk:

Environmental awareness has been going in the world at a rapid pace in the recent decades. The problems and opportunities presented by the rapid industrialization, globalization and urbanization are intricately linked to the growing consumption of natural resources and the rising detrimental effects on the environment. This has become all the more focused and evident by the emphasis laid on the environmental problems confronting mankind and raising environmental awareness, by the United Nations Organization. Starting with the 1972 Stockholm conference and followed up by Rio de Janeiro 1992, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) at Johannesburg. Keeping this in view, Government of India launched its own initiative by setting up pollution control boards at the centre and states and enacting and enforcing the Water (prevention and control of pollution) Act, (1974) and Air (prevention and control of pollution) Act, (1981).

The Environmental Information System (ENVIS) is a project funded by the ministry of Environment and Forests of the Government of India to facilitate generation and dissemination of information on various facets of

Environment. Several ENVIS centres have been established all over India and each centre has been allotted specific subject area.

Sulabh Sanitation Movement, which was launched in 1970, has been actively engaged in developing various plans, processes, programmes and policies. Our ENVIS centre has been identified by **MoEF as ENVIS – HSES Node**. The Subject area allotted by ENVIS to Sulabh is **Hygiene, Sanitation, Environment and Sewerage (HSES)**,

All concerned with this programme are requested to contact us, exchange information and technology related to the subject area assigned to Sulabh, so that it can be received, stored and transmitted to all concerned, and for larger dissemination through the website to be launched under the aegis of ENVISULABH, the ENVIS node at Sulabh on HSES.

We welcome your cooperation and concern and interest. This is the first issue of the programme, and it will continue to bring out more information from time to time.

- Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak

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INTRODUCTION

(ENVIS)

Realising the importance of Environmental Information, the Government of India, in December, 1982, established an Environmental Information System (ENVIS) as a planned programme. The focus of ENVIS since inception has been on providing environmental information to decision makers, policy planners, scientists and engineers, research workers, etc. all over the country. A large number of nodes, known as ENVIS Centres, have been established in the network to cover the broad subject areas of environment with a Focal Point in the Ministry of Environment & Forests. ENVIS exists to facilitate the process of sustainable development by disseminating solutions, promoting good practices and strengthening democratic practices through a mechanism of information exchange between NGOs, government and research organisations, business establishments and civil society at large.

The program is designed to give an impetus to local, national, and world environmental information with an aim to:

- Network identified organizations and institutions in academic, private and NGO sector and state government departments, who have a holding on environmental data and information.
- Disseminate of information databases on different environment related subject areas and provide on - line query response.

To achieve this aim **78 ENVIS Nodes** have been set up till date and another **18** are to be established. The Nodes are classified as:

ENVIS Nodes – Out of the **25** ENVIS Centers **23** have consented to serve as ENVIS-Nodes on assigned subject areas.

ENVIS Institutional Nodes – **18** peer Institutes which have expertise on specific subject areas form this segment of the Nodes.

ENVIS NGO Nodes – **9** NGOs are networked together who work on varied subjects related to environment.

ENVIS Government Nodes – **28** Government departments form this segment at present which are to prepare the State of the Environment Report for the State. All the Nodes have also been categorized under **7 heads** to enable networking of Nodes working on related subject areas:

1. Chemical Wastes and Toxicology (CWT)
2. Ecology and Ecosystem (E&E)
3. Environment and Energy Management (E&EM)
4. Flora, Fauna and Conservation (FFC)
5. Media, Environment Education and Sustainable Development (MESD)
6. State of Environment Report (SOER)
7. Trade and Law (T&L)

The mission of ENVIS is to support and facilitate the diverse group of clientele from policy makers, researchers to Industries at national and international level on a possible range of environmental data and information through a nation-wide web enabled network. The on going program of ENVIS, aims to provide a comprehensive environmental information data base under the identified subject areas, local conditions and issues pertaining to the environment of the country.

SULABH: THE IDEA BEHIND THE MOVEMENT

**"Our aim is to provide a human development approach to sanitation" - Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak, Ph.D., D.Litt.,
Founder, Sulabh Sanitation Movement**

- Dr. S. Nath
Sr. Editor.

Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak, founded the Sulabh Shauchalayas Sansthan (now called Sulabh International Social Organisation) in Bihar in 1970. The objective was to provide cost-effective sanitation to the masses and to develop alternative waste disposal techniques. This was mainly to ensure that human beings (scavengers) would not have to clean and handle human excreta manually as was practiced in towns and villages of India.

Today, Sulabh, a non-governmental organisation has built 12,00,000 toilets and 5,500 community public toilet complexes which are used by approximately 10 million people everyday throughout the country. This success has led to the liberation and rehabilitation of 60,000 scavengers in India. Besides, the organisation has also successfully researched and developed alternative bio-energy sources generated from wastes.

Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1991 for his distinguished social service and has received several other awards recognising his contribution like the National Citizen's Award in 1992 from the then President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the International St. Francis Prize for Environment in 1992

from Pope John Paul II, the Priyadarshani Award in 1994, Limca Book of Records, Man of the Year in 1995 and many others.

The low-cost sanitation technology pioneered by Dr. Pathak has also been recognised and won many accolades for Sulabh from both national and international bodies including the World Health Organisation, United Nations Economic and Social Council, Dubai Municipality and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements among others.

Dr. Pathak has an impressive list of achievements to his credit. Some of these are :

- ❑ evolving a system of rehabilitating,
- ❑ educating and training of scavengers and their adoption by elite members of the society;
- ❑ entry of scavengers into temples;
- ❑ and setting up of public toilets and baths,
- ❑ biogas plants for generating energy from human excreta.

Recognizing his yeoman services, he has been awarded several national and international awards, including the Padma Bhushan, K. P. Goenka Award and the International Saint Francis Prize.

SULABH SANITATION MOVEMENT - TOWARDS A SOCIAL REVOLUTION

In 1970, Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak founded the *Sulabh Shauchalaya Sansthan*, later named Sulabh International. The primary objective of this organization is to prevent environmental pollution by promoting low-cost sanitation facilities. Equally important, this movement has freed lakhs of people from the humiliating scavenging job imposed on them by a cruel societal order. *Sulabh* is a complete movement, radical in its approach. While trying to solve the problem of sanitation in the country, it also seeks to rehabilitate scavengers and their family members into the mainstream. This is done by providing them with education and training for several types of jobs.

Technologies first developed at SULABH:

- ❑ Bio-Gas from human excreta.
- ❑ Duckweed Based Waste Water Treatment System.
- ❑ Biogas from Dried Water-Hyacinth and Other Mixed Feeds
- ❑ Sulabh Thermophilic Aerobic Composter (STAC).
- ❑ Low-Maintenance Waste-water Treatment System (LOMWATS).
- ❑ Manure from Human Excreta.
- ❑ Use of digester effluent as hydroponics.

ACHIEVEMENTS AT A GLANCE:

- Scavengers liberated and rehabilitated - 60,000
- Sulabh household toilets constructed - 1.2 million
- Sulabh community toilet blocks - > 5,500
- Human excreta based biogas plants - 104
- Towns made scavenging free - 240
- Scavengers trained and resettled - 6,000
- Towns where Sulabh is working - 1075
- Districts where Sulabh works - 455
- States/Union Territories - 26/3

ONE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

An International Workshop is being organized on Toilets ,
hosted by Sulabh international Social Service Organisation
in December 2003

ENVIS HSES NODE AT SULABH INTERNATIONAL:

This node setup at Sulabh International Social Service Organization, under the ENVIS-CEP programme, through the Ministry of Environment and Forest will act as store house for compilation, processing, analysis and dissemination of data/information pertaining to latest research in the field of HSES. The NODE will develop a Website and will feed the relevant data on the assigned subject area for wider dissemination to all concerned.

Objectives:

- a) Creation of Website on Health, Sanitation & Environment.
- b) Monthly compilation of News items on health, sanitation and environment.
- c) Identification of information
- d) Creation of website on Health, Sanitation & Environment.
- e) Monthly compilation of News Items on Health, Sanitation & Environment.
- f) Identification of information/data gaps in the specified subject areas and action taken to fill these gaps.
- g) Database creation on Health, Sanitation & Environment to be put on website.
- h) Contribution of news items for ENVIS newsletter on monthly basis.
- i) To establish and operate a distributed clearing house to answer and channel queries related to the allocated subject.
- j) To establish linkages with information users, carriers and providers from among Govt., academia, Business and Non Governmental Organisations including that with ENVIS.

Components of activities will include: -

- 1) To develop information: includes both descriptive and numerical data to distribute data.
- 2) A. Descriptive: Publication reports reprint and attract on covered subjects.
B. Numerical: Numerical data to be collected compiled, processed and analyzed.
- 3) To develop a website that will fill the relevant data related to science area for wider dissemination

Node will cover:-

- 1) Hygiene
- 2) Sanitation
- 3) Environment
- 4) Sewerage treatment and Technology.

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