

# MASS BCC CAMPAIGN AT THE KUMBHA MELA

To Inspire the Masses  
On Menstrual Hygiene Management  
and Sanitation



# CONTENTS

Subject	Page
Background	3
She is the Solution: The Summit of Grace	7
The Gandhian Resurgence Summit with HE the President of India	21
The Menstrual Hygiene Management Lab at the Kumbha Mela	35
The Toilet Café	43

## BACKGROUND

According to a study in the Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, menstruation “has always been surrounded by taboos and myths that exclude women from many aspects of socio-cultural life. In India, the topic has been a taboo until date. Such taboos about menstruation present in many societies impact on girls’ and women's emotional state, mentality and lifestyle and most importantly, health. The challenge, of addressing the socio-cultural taboos and beliefs in menstruation, is further compounded by the low girls’ knowledge levels and understandings of puberty, menstruation, and reproductive health. Thus, there is the need to follow a strategic approach in combating these issues.”

### **Challenges to women and girls in India include:**

- 23% of girls drop out of school when they begin menstruating
- Several studies have determined that girls’ knowledge levels and understandings of puberty, menstruation, and reproductive health are very low in India
- Over 77% of menstruating girls and women in India use an old cloth, which is often reused.
- 88% of women in India sometimes resort to using ashes, newspapers, dried leaves and husk sand to aid absorption.
- Cultural and religious sentiments can lead to stigmas that can result in isolation and feelings of impurity

Proper Menstrual Hygiene Management is achievable in India, which can result in improved health and socio-economic possibilities for millions of women and girls. To enable this, a culture shift is needed, to extinguish harmful stigmas, while enabling the spread of crucial information and the provision of proper facilities.

Access to sanitary toilet facilities also remains a crucial factor in India. While much of the nation is now celebrating ODF status, maintaining that status is already proving difficult in some areas, which are sliding back due to lack of awareness, as well as issues concerning maintenance and operation.

## The Opportunity

The State of Uttar Pradesh recently hosted the Kumbha Mela at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati Rivers at Prayagraj. In 2013, an estimated 12 crore people attended the Maha Kumbha Mela. In early 2019, the Government of India estimates at 220 million people came to the same location, breaking all records as the largest gathering of humanity in history.

The holy Kumbha Mela provided spirituality, hope and solace for men, women and children from across India and around the world, some of whom leave all behind in order to partake in the holy atmosphere.

Understanding the Kumbha Mela presented a tremendous opportunity for compelling the masses for Menstrual Hygiene Management and the promotion of toilets, GIWA, in partnership with WSSCC, provided a 360 Degree Social Impact Approach, which later became widely-recognized for the leading role it played in inspiring, educating and mobilizing at this massive event.

## Objectives

- To provide mass inspiration through faith, government and entertainment leaders on Behaviour Change and Leave No One Behind.
- To create advocacy around Menstrual Hygiene Managements for breaking the silence and stigmas
- To involve women to cover last miles and leave no one behind issues under Swachh Bharat Mission

- To promote the use and maintenance of toilets in order to maintain ODF status

For this campaign, GIWA harnessed the mobilizing and motivating power of faith leaders, political leaders, entertainment leaders and faith-inspired communications to encourage a social movement for a clean and healthy India as a call of faith.

## Campaign Targets

This campaign was targeted towards all festival attendees, paying close geographical attention to the main focal-point of the Kumbha Mela, the Sangam. Our outreach proved a special attraction to semi-urban and rural masses, for whom behaviour change communications regarding the embracing of MHM and toilet usage is crucial.

## Our Events and Outreach Focused on:

1. She is the Solution: The Summit of Grace (**Page 7**)
2. The Gandhian Resurgence Summit (**Page 21**)
3. The Provision of an MHM Lab (**Page 35**)
4. Educational Outreach at the Kumbha Mela's first Toilet Café (**Page 43**)
5. And more

## Our Activities Included

1. Participation by influential Faith Leaders
2. Participation by Key Political Leaders
3. Mass Outreach to Thousands
4. Mass Media Coverage to millions
5. Video Production
6. The breaking of stigmas through education and messaging at a major faith event by esteemed faith leaders, as well as educators and outreach workers
7. And more

# 360 DEGREE INITIATIVES FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Change become manifest through a 360 degree approach to creating Social Impact for Social Change. These special initiatives, planned in accordance with our decades of experience in inspiring, educating and mobilizing the masses at Kumbha Melas and other mass events, encompassed the below themes:



# SHE IS THE SOLUTION: THE SUMMIT OF GRACE

***“Don’t let anyone tell you your monthly periods are dirty  
because without menstruation there can be no creation.”***

*- HH Pujya Swami Ramdev, renowned faith leader,  
at “She is the Solution: The Summit of Grace”*

On 27-29 January, renowned women leaders from different religions, countries, organizations, and fields came together on the banks of the Prayagraj Sangam to discuss and then commit themselves towards playing active and collaborative roles in saving the children and communities of India from death, disease and stunting through improved Menstrual Hygiene Management and WASH through GIWA’s historic Summit of Grace. The historic Summit also placed a special focus on ending child marriage and ensuring all girls stay in school.

## **Why The Summit of Grace?**

Countless women and girls in India are deeply affected by a lack of access to proper Menstrual Hygiene Management, as well as by the stigmas associated with their periods. In addition, issues surrounding access to sanitation continue to prove worrisome, with many people left behind and ODF statuses at risk in many areas. Moreover, the health, well-being and future prospects for millions of women and girls are also placed at risk by the lack of proper school education compounded by the threat of child marriage.

There are numerous adverse health effects associated with a lack of adequate MHM and sanitation in particular. Out of fear, for example, women and girls may choose to ignore their needs, which may increase the likelihood of painful infections, school dropout rates, chronic constipation and mental stress.

In addition, a lack of single-gender sanitation facilities in schools’ results in low levels of attendance among girls, perpetuating cycles of gender inequality and poverty. Girls who have reached puberty and female school staff who are menstruating need gender-specific sanitation facilities. Without the privacy afforded by these facilities, menstruating school girls and staff often do not feel comfortable using school facilities, resulting in absenteeism 10-20% of the time.

Held at the 2019 Kumbha Mela in Parmarth Niketan's renowned encampment on the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati Rivers, the Summit of Grace provided a unique opportunity and platform to address these issues and empower women against the social taboos of the society.

### **The Objectives of the Summit of Grace Were:**

1. To advocate around Menstrual Hygiene Management as a key driver in India for breaking taboos and silence around the issue, to share knowledge on how to manage menstruation hygienically and proper disposal, and to lobby for MHM-friendly sanitation facilities.
2. To inspire and enable a new wave of women leadership for a clean and healthy India where all have equal opportunities.
3. To provide inspirational round table discussions with key influencers
4. To develop roadmaps and follow-up activities that will enable the continuation of the momentum built on this Summit
5. To position both women and men as leaders in the effort

### **FEATURED SPEAKERS**

Renowned leaders from across India and around the world came together for the Summit, including:

#### **Political Leaders**

- **Smt. Sumitra Mahajan**, Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha
- **Hon'ble Shri Satyapal Singh**, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation
- **Hon'ble Meenakshi Lekhan**, MP
- **Smt. Rita Bahuguna Joshi**, Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Development, State of Uttar Pradesh (population 204 million)

#### **Faith Leaders**

- Pujya Swami Ramdevji
- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji



- Anandmurti Gurumaaji
- Amma Sri Karunamayiji
- Sadhvi Shilapiji (Jain Faith)
- BK Sister Sudeshji
- Om Prabha Bhartiji, DJJS
- Dr. Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji
- Respected Smt. Kiranjot Kaurji (Sikh Leader)
- Dr. Binny Sareenji (Brahma Kumaris)
- Mahant Divya Giriji
- Distinguished Representative of Juna Akhara
- Distinguished Representative of the Muslim Faith
- Sadhvi Prachi Kalpanaji,
- Swamini Adityananda Saraswatiji
- Mohan Devi
- And more

### **International Leaders**

- Sue Coates, Deputy Executive Director, WSSCC
- Javier Aguilar Chief Child Protection, UNICEF, ICO
- HE, the Former President and First Lady of Bosnia Haris Silajdžić, and Selma Silajdžić
- And many others

### **The Summit was also attended by**

- Women's Group Leaders
- Faith Group Followers
- Local Community Leaders
- Students and Community Volunteers
- Swachhagrahis
- Staff and Dignitaries from agencies including WSSCC and UNICEF
- Pilgrims to the Kumbha Mela
- Swachhta Heroes

# SUMMIT OF GRACE DETAILS



## OPENING CEREMONIES: 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019

**Opening Ceremonies** were held on the banks of the Sangam as the sun descended over the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati Rivers. The evening included a special Ganga Aarti and speeches by renowned faith and political leaders. The event, which was streamed live, included the participation of India's Hon'ble Minister of State for HRD (Education Minister), as well as esteemed faith leaders from the Sikh, Jain and Hindu traditions. During the evening:

- Key topics concerning MHM, access to WASH and other key issues were discussed in speeches by key influencers
- A group pledge was held for the upliftment of women and girls through WASH/MHM
- Patriotic, live music was performed to set the scene
- GIWA's popular life-size puppet show to promote toilet use amidst the masses
- The following day's activities were outlined
- A cultural programme was held to complete the evening

## DAY TWO: STAGE EVENT AND LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

28TH JANUARY 2019

### ***Leadership Roundtable***

Day Two of the Summit of Grace commenced with a high-profile Leadership Roundtable, which included the participation of foremost faith, political and international leaders to discuss crucial concepts and chart a course ahead. The roundtable included:

- Introduction to key topics by independent facilitators,
- Orientations by sector experts
- Open discussions by faith leaders about MHM, WASH, and childhood education
- Interactions during which planning concepts were shared for a roadmap ahead

#### **Key roundtable suggestions included:**

- Stigmas surrounding MHM and the menstrual cycle must be addressed and erased
- Equal opportunities to enable girls to stay in school must be promoted, including through the provision of pads/disposal facilities, toilets, MHM outreach and an end to child marriage
- Events like this should continue on a regional scale in order to move forward dialogues and facilitate in planning
- A joint campaign should be created with GIWA to provide unified messages and inspiration regionally



- Women faith leaders have an important role to play in the upliftment of women and girls. They should be similarly uplifted



### ***Afternoon Summit of Leaders***

After the completion of a successful roundtable, a mass stage event was held within the Parmarth Niketan Kumbha Mela Amphitheatre. The event featured the participation of esteemed leaders, including the Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, the Hon'ble State Minister of HRD, revered faith leaders, representatives of multinational agencies, community champions and sector leaders. The proceedings included:

- Motivational entertainment, featuring students from local schools and the Women's Rock Band, a collective of women musicians from an impoverished region in Bihar who sang about social issues relevant to the summit
- Speeches by the esteemed Delegates on MHM, Sanitation, Girl's Education and Ending Child Marriage
- Felicitating and awarding 15 Community Champions for MHM, sanitation, and ending child marriage/promoting education
- Screening of motivational films
- A water blessing ceremony with prayers for the end to social stigmas
- A mass pledge

**The proceedings, which were widely covered by the media, urged for:**

- The "normalization" of discussions on MHM and menstrual cycles, so that the topic is no longer stigmatized and "swept under the carpet"
- The stemming of school drop-out rates through MHM, toilets and an end to child marriage

- The recognition and upliftment of community leaders and women faith leaders, so that others can follow their example
- The importance of all faiths coming together to address issues that are threatening the health, dignity and livelihood prospects of women and girls
- Ensuring none are left behind in access to sanitation and hygiene
- The importance of maintaining ODF status
- The upliftment of Swachhagrahis, who are providing invaluable services in ensuring clean toilets and clean surroundings for all
- More festivals like the Kumbha Mela, which this year became a shining global example for its cleanliness and universal toilet access



### ***Day Three: 29th January 2019: The Grand Rally***

On the last day of the Summit, nearly 1,000 people gathered for the Grand Rally for Women and Girls. The Rally, which took place on the sands of the Sangam, brought together celebrated leaders of faith and international experts to combine voices and forces for the upliftment of women and girls through WASH, MHM and Education.

The audience was captivated by the unique vision of many of India's foremost female faith leaders on stage to bring to light pressing issues and inspire great and lasting change. They were joined by foremost male faith leaders, such as Pujya Swami Ramdevji, who similarly raised their voices in support of less-discussed topics such as MHM, saying, "There can be no creation without the menstruation cycle."

Messaging was pointed towards inspiring people across the Kumbh and around the nation to change age-old behaviours that result in stigmas associated with menstruation, as well as the disuse of toilets and inequalities that can lead to increased poverty and isolation.

The rally elicited enthusiastic participation from the audience, which later joined in a grand procession to the call of drums, horns and hundreds of flags carrying inspirational messaging.





## ***OUTCOMES:***

- The summit educated and helped focus on the WASH needs and issues of women and girls. It helped underscore the need for changing mindsets, breaking social taboos and cultural influences that inhibit women. It led to a concerted action to openly address sensitive topics of puberty, menstruation and the perils of open defecation that are linked to education for girls and women's health.
- The Summit also led to garnering and leveraging the influential role of faith leaders in bringing about behaviour change, particularly regarding open defecation, leave no one behind and Menstrual Hygiene Management amongst their followers focusing on women's undeniably key role in behaviour norms in any family and community and, focusing on changing behaviours of women leads to change in a community as a whole.
- The subject of menstruation and MHM became more approachable, leading to open discussions and motivational messaging by faith leaders



- The summit led to participants feeling inspired towards promoting improved WASH and opportunities for women and girls everywhere.
- Millions across India were inspired by the messages and participation of the esteemed leaders and community members

## *Media Coverage*

The Summit of Grace received wide-spread media coverage in the television and print media. Coverage included:

- Dainik Jagran, with a readership of 70+ million people
- IANS, which syndicates articles to hundreds of media providers, such as newspapers, across India and around the world
- The Times of India, with a readership of 13 million people
- The Hindustan Times, with a readership of 3.7 million people
- And more

**It is predicted that the media reach for the Summit was thus over 100 million.**

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**  
BENNETT, COLOMBA & CO. LTD. | ESTABLISHED 1858 | TIMESOFINDIA.COM | ALAPPAHNDI | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2017 | PAGE 18 | PRICE: ₹100

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**VIRAT KOHLI IS AN UNBELIEVABLE PLAYER, SAYS ENGLAND PACER TOM CURRAN 15**

# ‘Nothing to be shy about menstruation’

**TIMES NEWS NETWORK**

**Allahabad:** As the controversy over the entry of women of menstruating age into the Sabarimala temple rages on, Yoga guru Ramdev said that the Indian culture respects women and they shouldn't feel that getting a period was anything dirty as it was the basis of all creation. Ramdev was speaking at the conclave 'She Is The Solution: Summit Of Grace' organised at Parmarth Niketan's camp on the Mela ground on Tuesday.

Addressing the audience, Ramdev said, "Our culture respects and reveres women. Why do you feel shy when someone call menstruation 'dirty', it is a fact of life. The excretion by both the sexes is impure, then why such a bias? There can be no creation without the mensuration cycle." He also said that women should take charge of their own protection and shouldn't wait for anyone else to protect them. "You should become strong enough physically, mentally and spiritually so that you can defend yourself," he added.

Citing the example of a young woman from West Bengal who went on to top the IAS examinations, Parmarth Niketan's president, Swami Chidanand Saraswati, said, "The girl's father is a rickshaw driver and her mother died years ago. The girl and many others in this nation are an example of the pain and the struggles women in our country face." He also said that spirituality or religion is of little use unless it is actively used to remove practices like child marriage.

**Yoga guru Ramdev and Parmarth Niketan president Swami Chidanand Saraswati at the conclave on the Mela ground on Tuesday**



YOU ARE AT: Home / India News / Kumbh Mela 2019 / Hundreds march for women's empowerment

## Kumbh Mela 2019: Hundreds march for women's empowerment

The day also featured a historic signature campaign for the Guinness Book of World Records to generate awareness about ending child marriage. The Guinness World Records attempt is for the most signatures on a flag for the message: 'Yes to education, no to child marriage'.

Reported by IANS, New Delhi | Published on January 28, 2019 10:33 IST |



cilory



Kumbh Mela 2019

Hundreds of women marched on Tuesday at the Sangam appealing for women's empowerment, education, access to proper menstrual hygiene management and an end to child marriage.

The rallyists were women and girls who came from nearby villages. Most of them were students, scouts, representatives from many women's organization, sanitation workers and spiritual leaders, including yoga guru, Baba Ramdev, Swami Chidanand Saraswati of the Parmarth Niketan, Mahant Divya Giri from Lucknow and Binny Saxeen of the Brahmakumaris.

The day also featured a historic signature campaign for the Guinness Book of World Records to generate awareness about ending child marriage. The Guinness World Records attempt is for the most signatures on a flag for the message: 'Yes to education, no to child marriage'.

The summit was organized under the auspices of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Parmarth Niketan, with technical support from the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and UNICEF, to support the efforts of the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Speaking at the event, Ramdev said, "Don't wait for someone else to protect you, you should become strong enough physically, mentally and spiritually so that you can defend yourself. Don't let anyone say that your monthly periods are dirty because without menstruation, there can be no creation."

He led the gathering to pledge against child marriage and for education for girl children. He said every young girl should be educated enough for a profession of her choice so that she herself becomes an inspiration for others.

Chidanand Saraswati said for him spirituality had no meaning if it doesn't lead to eradication of social evils.

Sue Coates, WSSCC, said the event was all about the voice of women and girls who seek to improve themselves.

Amrit Mehrotra, UNICEF India, UP Chapter, shared details of the Shakti campaign and the launch of the signature campaign to run throughout the Kumbh Mela.



### TOP NEWS

Lok Sabha Election 2019: I will neither contest upcoming Lok Sabha polls nor assembly bypolls, says Kamal Hassan

Pro at ISIS Young Cells in Delhi under control

# hindustantimes

## Signature drive against child marriage aims to set Guinness world record



The event "She is the Solution: Summit of Grace" underway at banks of Sangam on Tuesday.

Rajeev Malik

www.hindustantimes.com

**LUCKNOW** The Uttar Pradesh government and stakeholders of the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj launched a Guinness world record attempt with a massive signature campaign on Tuesday, aiming to make the state and the rest of India free of child marriage by the next Kumbh.

With a target of obtaining over 1.5 lakh signatures, the campaign was launched on the third and final day of "She is the Solution: Summit of Grace" in the Kumbh Mela area. Yoga guru Baba Ramdev, who was present on the occasion, came out in support of the campaign against child marriage as the stakeholders initiated a Guinness World Record attempt for the most signatures on a sin-

gle flex banner. Ramdev said, "We need to take a pledge to put an end to child marriage, hunger, casteism and all other social evils, not just in UP but also from the entire India by the next Kumbh."

"India will take huge strides only when illiteracy is eradicated from the entire country and we all have to work with full synergy to achieve this task," he said.

Ramdev said it will be possible by bringing all sections of the society together to end child marriage. The signature campaign will continue till the end of the Kumbh Mela. Tuesday's event was followed by a march of 2,000 volunteers, faith leaders, Mahila Samakhya members, National Cadet Corps cadets, boy scouts and girl guides in support of the cause.

## Dehradun

Dehradun, 29 Jan, 2019

www.garhwalpost.in



# "She is the Solution: Summit of Grace" held at

By OUR STAFF REPORTER

RISHIKESH, 28 Jan: Eminent

Religious Leaders of various faiths joined together with Speaker of the Lok Sabha Sumitra Mahajan, Union Minister of State, HRD, Satyapal Singh, Member of Parliament Meenakshi Lohia at the "She is the Solution: The Summit of Grace" conference during the 2019 Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj to speak on various topics concerning women empowerment, education and sanitation with a special focus on ending child marriage and improving menstrual hygiene. Over 500 spiritual and political leaders, students and sanitation workers from across the country took a pledge for the safety and security of women and girls in the future when they would not only survive but also thrive.

The morning started with an in-depth round table high level discussion and commitments and was followed after lunch by the main inaugural session of the Summit, which was organised under the auspices of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Parmarth Niketan, with technical support from the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and UNICEF to support the efforts of the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

At the inaugural session, Speaker Sumitra Mahajan declared that child marriage was a dangerous burden: "A girl who is



not physically or mentally ready, is not mature. She does not understand the world and must not be burdened with marriage. I come from a humble background but I was inculcated with values that we must not do onto others what we would not like to be done unto us. Hence, let us ensure proper nutrition, education and sanitation of all women and girls. Our Shakti doesn't need empowerment from someone else; they need to recognise that they themselves see the power."

Speaking on the occasion, Swami Chidanand Saraswati, President of the Parmarth Niketan and Co-founder of GIWA, said, "We are at the Sangam to come

together to address issues troubling our world. Kumbh is a great. It should become a Mela with a Message. Today we are here to break our silence and to stand together against child marriage and say yes to education and sanitation of our girl child. She is the change; so, let us become the change and bring the change."

Sodhi Bhagwati Saraswati, Secretary General for Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, shared, "We celebrated Republic of India on the 25th but today we commemorate and remember the Republic of Women of our Mothers. As India became free of colonization, so our women and girls need to be free from violence,

inequality, even childhoods and lack of sanitation."

During the summit, ten female Kumbh Mela sanitation workers were honoured with sash and fifteen community champions were lauded with certificates and a shawl.

Dr Rita Bahuguna Joshi, Minister of Women and Child Development, Government of UP urged women and girls across the state to seize the initiative.

Sue Coates, Deputy Executive Director, WSSCC, gave the summation of the discussion. Minister Satyapal Singh lauded GIWA for raising the issue of child marriage through faith leaders who are spiritual guides to

participants taking a pledge to take the message of ending gender-based discrimination and child marriage back to their followers in the community.

NATIONAL

# Hundreds of women carry out march for women's empowerment at Kumbh Mela

Hundreds of women and girls marched at the Sangam appealing for women's empowerment, education, access to proper menstrual hygiene management and an end to child marriage



Photo Courtesy: Social Media

Published: 29 Jan 2019, 9:00 PM Engagement: 0

Hundreds of women marched on Tuesday, January 29, at the Sangam appealing for women's empowerment, education, access to proper menstrual hygiene management and an end to child marriage.

The rallyists were women and girls who came from nearby villages. Most of them were students, scouts, representatives from many women's organizations, sanitation workers and spiritual leaders, including yoga guru Baba Ramdev, Swami Chidanand Saraswati of the Parmarth Niketan, Mahant Divya Giri from Lucknow and Binny Sareen of the Brahmakumaris.

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# अमर उजाला

24 जनवरी 2019 गतिमान देश में सुनील के अतीव शक्ति... 13

## बेटियों, इतनी योग्य बनो कि लड़के वाले दहेज दें

राजित कुंभ शी ग्लोबल समिट के समापन में पहुंचे योगगुरु रामदेव

बेटी। जब नरसी पूजने, रानी जब देना अति वहां नारी को पूजा लेते हैं, नरों देना बला बने है। हम अतीवकाल से नारी पूजने आ रहे हैं। मनु अतिन का संशोधन इसका जीव जगत उदाहरण है। हम भारत में का दिन देना चाहते हैं, जहां पर महिला नारी, पुरुष शक्तिस्वरूप को मान ले। बेटियों का आदर करने हुए कहा कि आज ऐसी योग्य नारी को बिना दहेज दिए लड़कों को शादी न हो सके, आसानी से पाला पर दहेज देना पड़े। सेवा और बेटी में श्रेष्ठ न करे।

जब बारी बारा दहेज देना समाप्त में समाप्त कर के राजित कुंभ शी ग्लोबल समिट के समापन आयोजन करने संयोजन में करी। यह सोच परामर्श निकाले रहिए, जैसा कर में हुए। जिसमें सुनील कुंभ उपासक, सती, किरा लियेन लोडन, डब्ल्यूएनएसएलवीके सुनिके के उच्चाधिकारिचे, अतिवकी, अतिवकी आदि ने सहभाग किया। स्वामी विद्यमन ने कहा कि कुंभ में बारा लिये के प्रति जागरूक करने हेतु शिव के सबसे बड़ी मुक्ति 14,33,428 अक्षर पेट बड़े बड़े पर आज में इलाहा अतिवकाले। हम अतिवकाल के अतिव



अनुभव लिये रिपोर्ट बनाने को योग्य है। योग्य को अतीवकाले महारत्नय साधु भवकी ने कहा कि आज प्रजा की भारी पर नो रोग है। एक नरिये का और दूसरा शक्ति का संगम। उद्योगपुरमस्मीमी की उपकाले करी निरेक मू कोदरुस ने कहा कि हम लड़कियों को और सतका बनने को रिता में अगे बढ़ रहे हैं। सुनील को अतिवकाले कर, लोकातरन का, रिता का अतिवकाले करिए। स्वामी विद्यमन स्वस्वती, योगगुरु स्वामी रामदेव और अन्य सभी विरहित अतिवकाले में बारी अतिवकाले योग्य को समापन निकेतन लिये अतिवकाले में भला लेने निकाले गे।

# 'Dangerous burden': Lok Sabha speaker speaks out against child marriage at Kumbh summit

The summit was organized under the joint auspices of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Parmarth Niketan, with technical support from the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and UNICEF.

By Anand Bhatnagar

Updated on: 29 Jan 2019, 11:00 AM



Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan on Monday described child marriage as a dangerous burden for girls that inhibits their development while participating in a summit on women issues in the Kumbh Mela area. (Anand Bhatnagar)

Lok Sabha speaker Sumitra Mahajan on Monday described child marriage as a dangerous burden for girls.

"A girl who is not physically or mentally ready, is not mature and does not understand the world must not be burdened with marriage," she said on the second day of a three-day meet "She is the Solution: Summit of Gesso" at the Parmarth Niketan Camp in the Kumbh Mela area.

The main focus should be on ensuring proper nutrition, education and sanitation for women and girls, she added.

"Our 'Shakti' doesn't need empowerment from someone else, they need to recognize that they themselves are the power," Mahajan said.

The summit was organized under the joint auspices of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Parmarth Niketan, with technical support from the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and UNICEF.

Union Minister of women and child development minister Rita Bahuguna Joshi urged women and girls across the state to seize the initiative.

"Women and girl must take pride in themselves. Only then will society change," she said.

Union minister of state for human resource development Arjun Singh lauded GIWA for raising the issue of child marriage through faith leaders who are spiritual guides to millions.

"Women empowerment is the secret (key) that will cleanse our society of ill such as child marriage and gender inequality," he said.

Over 500 faith leaders and followers of various religions came together at the summit, calling for an end to gender discrimination and child marriage.

Swami Chidanand Saraswati, president of Parmarth Niketan and co-founder of GIWA, said, "This is a very historic coming together. We are at the Sangam to address issues troubling our world. Today, we are here to break our silence and to stand together against child marriage and say yes to education and sanitation of the girl child."

Swami Bhagwanat Saraswati, secretary general of GIWA, said, "Our women and girls need to be free from violence, inequality, stunted childhoods and lack of sanitation."

"The power of faith changes how people think and how people act," she said.

During the summit, 10 women Kumbh Mela sanitation workers were honoured with awards and 15 community change-makers were followed with certificates and a shawl.

Sao Castro, deputy executive director, WSSCC, said: "I don't wear the robes of the distinguished women and men around the table. I know in my heart the message cannot be stopped. No matter how you arrive at the Kumbh, you see children along the road, and often a little girl. Until we reach into the heart of that little girl, then she can't take responsibility for her life."

During the summit, a signature campaign will be launched to bring hundreds of thousands of Kumbh pilgrims on board the fight to end child marriage, with a view to set a world record in the process.

UP has made significant improvements in reducing child marriage over the past decade.

"No other state in India has reduced child marriage faster than UP," said Janice Agallan, chief, Child Protection, at UNICEF India. Between 2005-06 and 2012-13, the incidence of child marriage in UP reduced from 20% to 11.1%, while the national average dropped from 47% to 24.6% over the same period.

However, with one in every five girls in UP married before 18, child marriage continues to affect hundreds of thousands of children in the state. Twenty districts in UP have a higher incidence of child marriage than the national average of 17%. Sherwan, a district in UP's Terai region has the highest incidence of child marriage in the country, at 48.1%.



# EVENT: GANDHIAN RESURGENCE SUMMIT: THE SUMMIT OF GANDHIAN AND MINORITY LEADERS

***“The Kumbh is the biggest congregation of humanity of the world and this provides for a great platform to spread the messages of Cleanliness.”***

- HE The President of India, Shri Ramnath Kovind

- At the Gandhian Resurgence Summit

-

## **Background:**

Narendra Modi stood at the ramparts of the Red Fort and made a clarion call to the country for a *Swachh* and Open Defecation Free *Bharat* by 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This milestone announcement set India on an incredible journey. At its inception, nearly 600 million people were not using toilets. Today, the sanitation level of India has shown significant changes, with nearly every state in the Nation declared Open Defecation Free.

The success of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan undoubtedly has a significant impact on the global achievement of SDG-2, i.e., achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by the year 2030. The strides have been great, even miraculous, yet populations still remain left behind, while others are returning back to their old habits of open defecation. Other pressing issues such as manual scavenging, dwindling water, poor health and hygiene, and the stunted growth of children remain widely prevalent. For such reasons, the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, in partnership with Harijan Sewak Sangh, WSSCC, and other partners, hosted the high-level Gandhian Resurgence Summit. The event, for the first time in history, brought together India's foremost Gandhian, Minority, Tribal, Political, Faith and other leaders on a single platform at the enormous Kumbha Mela in Prayagraj. .

The event Summit, held on 16-18 January, 2019, drew forth from the successes of GIWA's and Harijan Sewak Sangh's highly-successful Summit of Gandhian Leaders, held about a year previously, which included the participation of HE the President of India and the Hon'ble Vice President of India alongside thousands of Gandhian leaders and youth.

Since the prior Summit, Gandhian leadership has been growing, and momentum can be seen for the shaping of a resurgence of the great and powerful thought that we all can be the Change We Wish to See for a clean and healthy India. To build on the momentum, the historic Gandhian Resurgence Summit was held at the Kumbha Mela-- the world' largest gathering of

humanity—to capture the imagination of countless souls converging at the *Sangam* of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati Rivers. Here, the great quote of Mahatma Gandhiji rang in all ears: “If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity.”

### ***Why a Gandhian Resurgence?***

Mahatma Gandhiji is known to have brought together and united tens of millions of people in the mass movement of Independence. His intense and heartfelt work for the upliftment of society resulted in a free nation and the opening of hearts and minds to the philosophy of people-led leadership towards conquering that which seemed unconquerable. Today, as our nation becomes overwhelmed with pollution, the loss of natural resources such as water, and threats to the sustainability of SBM achievements, the time emerges once again for people to come together, learn together and stay together to gain independence from such glaring problems. Results for this can come in part from inspiring a Gandhian Resurgence that can rejuvenate and rekindle the excitement in people for becoming the solution for a more sustainable tomorrow.

### **Objectives of the Summit**

- To spark a resurgence of the Gandhian inspiration for a Swachh and Swasth Bharat (Clean and Healthy India)
- To motivate a transformation of community members into community change leaders
- To re-energize the base of Gandhian leaders for a clean and healthy India where none is left behind for WASH
- To train and enable participants to be the change they wish to See in the World
- To provide opportunities for group planning and exploration of possible activities, activations and follow-up plans

*The agents of change leading the way:*

The Gandhian Resurgence Summit emphasized the fact that people young and old need to come together and be the agents of change, through a three- pronged approach of

- *Inspiration:* eminent faith leaders, Gandhian leaders and minority leaders came together on the same platform to motivate people from the grand to the ground level, to awaken, enlighten and inspire the spirits of crores of people and to trigger them to be the agents of agents
- *Education:* discussions and targeted training breakout sessions inspired informed discourse and enable participants to be educated and empowered towards enacting effective impact on society while becoming potential leaders for a *Swachh* and sustainable India.
- *Activation:* The summit focused on charging people with waves of energy to carry forth the spirit of Mahatma Gandhiji, who is famously known to have said, *Sanitation is More Important than Independence.*

## **Featured Speakers**

- HE the President of India, Sri Ramnath Kovind
- HE the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ram Naik
- HE the Governor of West Bengal, Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi
- the Honourable Chief Minister Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanathji
- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji,
- Acharya M.M. Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj
- Mahant Narendra Giriji Maharaj
- Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Secretary-General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance
- Dr. Shankar Sanyal, President, Harijan Sevak Sangh
- Shri Raju Bhai Parmar, Member, National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
- Gandhian Leaders from Across the Nation
- Minority and Tribal Leaders from Across the Nation

## **Participants**

This summit also included the participation of

- Influential Political Leaders
- Gandhian leaders from across India
- Tribal and Minority Leaders
- Faith Leaders
- Students and Community Volunteers
- Swachhta Grahis
- Partners from agencies including WSSCC and UNICEF
- Participants through social and traditional media channels
- Pilgrims to the Kumbha Mela
- Swachhta Heroes
- And others



## PROGRAM DETAILS

### ***Day One: 16th January 2019: Opening Events***

Day one of the Gandhian Resurgence Summit began with a mass clean-up which brought together hundreds in support of a clean and healthy Kumbha Mela. The event led to a grand opening ceremony with HE Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi of West Bengal, as well as faith, minority and Gandhian leaders. The ceremony included:

- Inspired speeches calling for a resurgence of Gandhian thought and volunteerism towards ensuring India realizes a clean and healthy future
- A Special Ganga Aarti ceremony on the banks of the Sangam
- Live entertainment with inspirational messaging by Gandhian and minority community members under the HSS UTTARAN wing
- A mass pledge for Sanitation

### ***Day Two: 17th January 2019:***

#### ***Part One: His Excellency, the President of India and Distinguished Dignitaries Inspire***

Day two saw the historic presence HE the President of India and the First Lady, as well as other renowned leaders, in support of a Gandhian Resurgence for a Clean and Healthy India. Gracing the stage were:

- HE the President of India, Sri Ramnath Kovind
- The First Lady of India, Smt. Savita Kovind
- HE the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ram Naik
- the Honourable Chief Minister Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanathji
- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Founder/Chair, GIWA
- Acharya M.M. Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj
- Mahant Narendra Giriji Maharaj
- Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Secretary-General, GIWA
- Dr. Shankar Sanyal, President, Harijan Sevak Sangh

The event, which was broadcast on Satellite Television to viewers across the world brought to the forefront crucial points, including:

- Reminding the nation that Mahatma Gandhiji said, “Sanitation is more important than independence”
- The importance of reaching and maintaining ODF status
- Celebrating sanitation workers
- Leaving none behind
- The importance that all festivals, events and municipalities build on the example of the Prayagraj Kumbha Mela, which provided ample toilets and a swachh experience for everyone

During the event, women sanitation workers were called to the stage, where they were given saris by First Lady, Smt. Savita Kovind, in recognition of their tireless commitments for a clean and healthy India. All attendees were also collectively bequeathed with hats bearing the image of Mahatma Gandhiji and the important message, “Sanitation is More Important than Independence.”

The event ended with a mass pledge for a clean, green and sustainable world.

### ***Part Two: Proceedings, Discussions and Interactions by Gandhian and Minority Leaders***

The second half of the day saw the deliberations of Gandhian and Minority leaders from across the nation, as they discussed topics concerning sustainable development, including:

- Sustainable Sanitation
- Preservation of Water Resources
- The Sustainable Development Goals
- Educating and inspiring this and future generations for a sustainable world

The day concluded with an educational cultural programme

## ***Day Three: 18th January 2019:***

### ***Proceedings, Discussions and Leadership Trainings***

The third day of the Gandhian Resurgence Summit began with proactive Plenary Sessions, which included panel discussions and open discussions:

- **Plenary Session One:** Role of Youth & Constructive Work in Sanitation, Skill Development and Self Employment
- **Plenary Session Two:** Women's Empowerment

The morning sessions were followed by sanitation leadership training for all participants, led by Knowledge Links Foundation in synergy with WSSCC, GIWA and UNICEF. The interactive training involved:

- Problems and solutions surrounding fully reaching and sustaining SBM goals
- Discussions as to how leadership and roadmaps can be created for a clean and sustainably ODF nation
- Skills towards reaching out to and inspiring others, so that a Gandhian Resurgence for a clean and sustainable nation may be realized

The training was well-received by all participants, who actively took part in discussions, and offered their insights and commitments towards working individually and collectively for swachh goals.

### ***Summit Outcomes***

- People across India and around the world were inspired by messages from the President, the Governors of two states, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, faith leaders and Gandhian/minority leaders for a resurgence of Gandhian thought and action for a clean and healthy nation where none are left behind
- The Summit inspired, educated and activated Gandhian and Minority leaders to be the agents of change for the creation and maintenance of a clean and healthy society
- Minority Leaders and Swachhagrahis were upheld for their importance in society
- The leadership of youth and women was promoted
- Participants received new leadership skills towards promoting and sustaining SBM goals

## *Media Coverage*

The Gandhian Resurgence Summit received wide-spread media coverage in the television and print media. Coverage included:

- Live satellite broadcast, which was shown on 49 channels across the nation
- Dainik Jagran, with a readership of 70+ million people
- Amar Ujala, with a readership of 46.5 million people
- The Hindustan, with a readership of 12 million people
- And more

**It is predicted that the media reach for the Summit was thus approximately 250 million.**







# NEWS INDIA<sup>®</sup>

Published Weekly By Parkh Worldwide Media LLC, New York. Vol. 1, No. 4 60 Cents. January 25, 2019

**TIMES**

January 25, 2019 News India Times

**Cover Story**

## President Of India Visits Gandhian Resurgence Summit At Kumbh Mela

By Stuart Wierma

India's President Ram Nath Kovind went to the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, where he visited Parmarth Niketan, Ganga Action Parivar & Global Interfaith WASH Alliance eco-friendly camp, where he inaugurated the Gandhian Resurgence Summit. The theme of the event was "Gandhi for Now, Gandhi for Youth, and Gandhi for All".

The Summit is a celebration in honor of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, organized by Parmarth Niketan, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and the Harijan Sevak Sangh, India's oldest Gandhian organization founded by Gandhi in 1932, a press release from organizers said.

"The auspiciousness of these events at the Kumbh Mela 2019 after Makar Sankranti and after the first shajj snan serve to highlight the timelessness of Gandhiji's teachings and his message for not only the tens of millions of pilgrims visiting the Kumbh, but also for all of India and all of the world, watching this event," organizers said.

They believe that at this time of the Swachh Kumbh and Swachh Bharat programs, the necessity for a resurgence in Gandhian thought is especially important as Gandhiji had emphasized the crucial importance of sanitation and hygiene.

Swami Chidanand Saraswati, president of Parmarth Niketan and co-founder of Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, in his speech at the event said, "Gandhiji said, 'Sanitation is more important than independence.' Today is a historic day in which for the first time since Hon'ble Shri Rajendra Prasad, our President after Independence, a President of India is coming to the Kumbh Mela! From the banks of the Sangam today there is a message going - the Sangam ka Satish. It is a message of unity, of peace, of cleanliness, environmental protection and upliftment for all. In fact, today, we have a trinity sangam of our Hon'ble President, Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Chief Minister working for a clean India, green India, healthy, united, peaceful and prosperous India together!"

President Kovind performed the final offering (pujara) in the world peace vigra (fire ceremony), at the event and joined others on the dais, including the Governor of Uttar Pradesh Ram Nisk, Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Pooja Sarani Chidambaram Saraswati, Acharya M.M. Swami Arudhanand Giri Mahant, Mahant Narayan Giri Mahant, Sachin Bhagwanit Saraswati, secretary general, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, and Dr. Shankar Sangal, president, Harijan Sevak Sangh.

"I feel so honored that after the first president of India, Shri Rajendra Prasadji, I have the opportunity to come to



India's President Ram Nath Kovind, left from left, lights the lamp at Parmarth Niketan's Ganga Action Parivar & Global Interfaith WASH Alliance eco-friendly camp, during the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. He inaugurated the Gandhian Resurgence Summit, led by Swami Chidananda Saraswati, right.

the Kumbh Mela. The Kumbh is the largest gathering of humanity in the world! The Kumbh gives the vision and hope for a world of oneness. It is a magnet that attracts and pulls people from around the world. It is a magnet of faith attracting not only human pilgrims but also birds from Siberia come just at this special and auspicious time," President Kovind said in his speech.

According to organizers, "Patriotism was palpable as moving speeches led the crowd towards collectively pledging for taking Mahatma Gandhi's vision for a clean India into mission mode," the press release said. "The Swachh Bharat Mission, which was launched on Gandhi Jayanti 2014, completes this year, making sanitation the need of the day if our nation is to achieve its historic targets of toilets and sanitation for all," organizers maintained.

"Yogi Adityanath speaks about the vision and work of the 'Green Kumbh Clean Kumbh' and said that this year there is more water in the sangam than any year since Independence. Additionally, 1,22,500 eco-friendly toilets have been built and provided to the pilgrims, he said. Gandhi was committed to cleanliness and committed to

people's movements. Adityanath said, which made the ground level work of the Swachh Bharat Mission "truly the greatest shodhrajaj that can be given to Gandhiji," the press release quoted him saying.

Sachin Bhagawanit Saraswati highlighted the historic significance of the President's visit, saying, "He is a leader who models Gandhian principles of simplicity, integrity, nobility of thought AND action. Gandhiji said 'without action we are not going anywhere' and our Hon'ble President is a man of great action and great direction. His life and work are a sangam (confluence) of dedication to culture, nature and future."

Dr. Saranjit thanked the President, Governor and Chief Minister for coming and thanked Swami Chidananda Saraswati for guiding and leading the event. He said there more than 320 members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh from seventeen states of India attended this event.

President Kovind also visited an exhibition of paintings dedicated to Gandhi and his wife Kasturba.



Right photo: High profile attendees come for the inauguration of the Gandhian Resurgence Summit in Prayagraj where everyone took a pledge - commitment to a clean India. Other VIPs included Governor of Uttar Pradesh Ram Nisk, Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Pooja Sarani Chidambaram Saraswati, Acharya M.M. Swami Arudhanand Giri Mahant, Mahant Narayan Giri Mahant, Sachin Bhagwanit Saraswati, secretary general, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, and Dr. Shankar Sangal, president, Harijan Sevak Sangh.



Left photo: India's President Ram Nath Kovind addresses the gathering at the inauguration of the Gandhian Resurgence Summit held in Prayagraj.







## THE MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT TENT AT THE KUMBHA MELA

From the Grand Level of our Summits, the provision of an MHM Lab at the Kumbh took the topic to the Ground Level. The lab took the form of WSSCC's attractive tent, which travelled with GIWA's team and WASH on Wheels Truck to well-populated areas of the Kumbha Mela. The tent was also set up on the Sangam and on the road during busier days, in order to attract pilgrims as they traversed the Kumbha Mela area. In addition, tabling was provided at the front entrance of Parmarth Niketan's encampment during highly-attended events, to capture the eyes of all who came and subtly promote MHM as a "new normal," in order to open discourse and remove stigma. This was a historic first at a high-level spiritual event and at the Kumbha Mela.

The objectives were to break the silence around menstruation and inspire people to talk about menstruation in their homes and communities so that adolescent girls and women can observe safe practices and stigmas may be eliminated.

### **MHM Lab overview**

The idea of MHM Lab is to provide a safe and private space where girls and women can freely ask questions, understand the changes that occur in boys and girls during adolescence and learn about the menstrual cycle. They were also introduced to different products that are available in the market so that women and girls can make an informed decision. They also learnt about hygiene practices, reuse and disposal of menstrual waste. In addition, men were invited to discuss and learn about MHM.

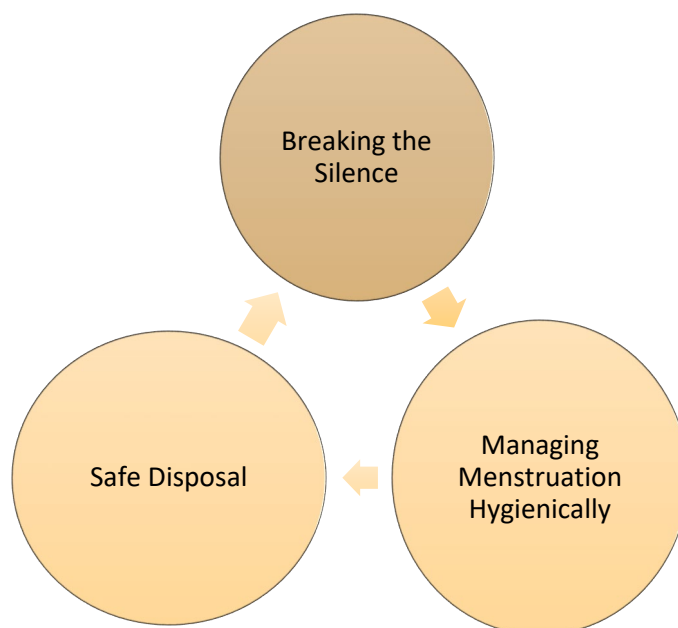
### **The MHM Educators Aimed to:**

- Explain the biological process of menstruation.
- List facts to counter myths around menstruation.

- Explain the negative impact of social taboos on women's and girl's health, education and self-esteem.
- Describe safe practices that menstruating girls and women should adopt to manage menstruation, including safe disposal
- Provide participants with MHM bracelets, so that they could remember their experiences and new-found knowledge

### **WSSCC's Three-Pronged Approach to MHM**

WSSCC's three-pronged approach to MHM viz. breaking the silence, safe management and safe disposal was used as the conceptual framework for this outreach at the Kumbha Mela.



### **Expectations**

Participants were asked about their expectations regarding the MHM lab. They shared the following:

1. What is the objective of this tent?

2. How will it help them?
3. To know about the process of menstruation and how to manage menstrual hygiene
4. What are we supposed to do after they get this knowledge?
5. How do we initiate conversation on menstruation?
6. Even two women hesitate to discuss menstruation, how can men talk about it?
7. How can misconceptions and taboos be overcome

### **Personal Experience Sharing by Women**

In the Lab, people were asked to share their first menstrual experience.

1. “I was getting ready to go to school when I was studying in class VIII and my sister noticed a spot on my dress and told me about it. I already knew about menstrual process through my sister and was not surprised. My sister now helped me to wash up, use pad and change clothes and attended the school like any other day” - Rashmi
2. “I was playing cricket with my friends. Someone hit the ball for a four and while retrieving the cricket ball, I noticed a lot of cloth pieces soaked in blood in the field as well as blood along with faeces. My first thought was that this was hospital waste but then my friend corrected me that this was used menstrual waste and explained the menstrual process” – Aditya
3. “In class VIII, while coming out of classroom, I noticed blood on a bench. My friends and I thought someone is injured and called the school peon. He saw the blood and explained that some girl must have started menstruating, as girls have bleeding every month. We all then went to the biology teacher who explained that this is normal biological process and girls start menstrual cycles at the age of 9-10 years when bleeding occurs for 3-5 days.” – Harish Chand
4. “I started having abdominal pain at the age of 11 years. I told my grandmother about it who asked me to rest. I went to lie on bed and noticed blood stain on the bed sheet which scared me. I again went to grandmother who told me that I was now grown up

and all grown-up women have monthly bleeding. She gave me a cotton cloth for managing the menstrual blood.” – Santosh Devi

5. “I started my menstrual periods at the age of 14 and had prior knowledge about it from my mother and biology class. I used to pray that her first period should not start at school and thankfully, it started only when i was at home. I told my mother who taught me how to use menstrual cloth and its reuse.” – Anjali

### **Participation By Men**

1. One of men who came said “As a man I had never thought that I will ever be able to talk about menstruation, but today my silence broke when I spoke to a group of a 31 women without hesitation”.
2. Another male participant said “I went home and told my family about my experience, they were happy to know about MHM. I feel more bold and confident coming today”.
3. A male school teacher remarked “MHM can be made mainstream by communicating about it face to face and also by linking it other ongoing programmes”.

### **Taboos**

People were asked to tell their social taboos or restrictions associated with menstruation in the family or region. A long list of taboos or restrictions emerged from this exercise. Some of these are:

- Do not light diyas
- Sports prohibited
- Do not touch pickles/pious things
- Do not put sindoor for 5 days to ensure welfare of husband
- Do not pray or participate in religious activity

- Do not enter kitchen
- Women have to sleep on separate bed in few places
- Bedding is washed after 5 days
- No bath during menstruation
- Hair wash after 3 days; washing not to be done on sunday, tuesday, Thursday
- Fish, pickles intake banned
- Heavy weight lifting prohibited
- If unmarried girl applies makeup during menstruation, she will become transgender in next birth
- Box with new clothes is not to be opened
- Cycling, going up stairs is prohibited

## **Introduction of WSSCC Tools – Flipbook and Menstrual Wheel**

The tools were introduced to participants, such as the WSSCC Flipbook and Menstrual Wheel, to teach about the physical and emotional changes in boys and girls during adolescence, menarche, semenarche and menstruation.

## **Disposal**

The objective was to explain the variety of disposal options to the people. People were given a task to calculate the amount of menstrual waste generated in India every month by providing the date that 336 million women menstruate in India. Out of them, 121 million use disposable sanitary products. Assuming on an average 8 pads are used by women or girl every month the total waste generated came out to be nearly **1.02 billion pads monthly**. After this various options of sanitary pads disposal with their pros and cons were discussed:

- Open Dumping
- Deep burial

- Incinerators
- Landfills
- Burning

People have explained the benefits of *Reducing, Reusing and Recycling* the sanitary waste by switching to reusable absorbents to manage menstruation.







## THE TOILET CAFÉ AT THE KUMBHA MELA

During the Kumbha Mela, a beautiful and historic Toilet Café was launched in Parmarth Niketan's camp in association with WSSCC and other partners. The Toilet Café provided participants with knowledge on different toilet models and details on the importance of obtaining and sustaining ODF status over cups of hot tea. It became an instant attraction at the Kumbha Mela, providing a center point for the sharing of information and the kindling of inspiration.

