

## Course correction – No sweeping change — on Swachh Bharat Mission

### The Swachh Bharat Mission needs a broader vision of what constitutes cleanliness

India's Swachh Bharat Mission is receiving global praise for attempting to close the sanitation gap of nearly 60% of the rural population not having access to a toilet at home in 2014. The NDA government invoked Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a clean and healthy country when it launched the ambitious programme. On the eve of Independence, Gandhi saw the lack of a "sense of national or social sanitation" as the root of all diseases among Indians. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a Swachh movement in 2014 to change that, and four years later the outcomes show that achieving social change is far from easy. For the BJP-led government at the Centre, the SBM enjoys arguably the highest priority, and a Rs. 16,400-crore fund was raised for it during 2015-17 when a special cess was in force. On Gandhi Jayanti this year, the SBM's Gramin wing declared it has constructed 86.7 million Individual Household Latrines and raised sanitation access to 94% in rural areas; 5,07,369 villages are now 'open defecation free'. On the face of it, this is big advance. But there is a need for a close audit of the outcomes. In some States, such as Rajasthan, independent verification shows that the social change that the SBM hopes to achieve remains elusive, and traditionally oppressed communities continue to manually remove filth from dry latrines used by the upper castes. There are reports of a similar situation prevailing in some parts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh too. What this shows is that the very evil that Gandhi wanted to see changed — of some castes condemned to do such work by others — persists. Besides making sanitation a movement through the provision of well-designed toilets and behaviour change in rural India, the SBM should have a broader vision of what constitutes cleanliness. The Centre asserts that urban toilet coverage is now 87% of the target, and nearly three-fourths of the wards in the country have door-to-door collection of municipal waste, but the lived experience of the city-dweller, especially in the bigger metros, is different. Waste volumes continue to grow as economic growth spurs consumption. The laws on municipal solid waste, protection of water sources and pollution control are just not being enforced. The official machinery required to enforce legal provisions vigorously, and the infrastructure to manage waste scientifically are inadequate, making it unlikely that there will be significant public health outcomes flowing from high-profile cleaning campaigns. Without full commitment to these aspects of development, there is little chance of meaningfully achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on water and sanitation anytime soon. Besides ending manual scavenging, the Swachh Bharat Mission must ensure that the manual cleaning of septic tanks, which is killing so many workers each year, is stopped and that funds for rehabilitation reach them.

### Meanings of Difficult Words

- **Sweeping change** - a sweeping change or development has a major effect
- **Broad** - very wide
- **Sanitation** - conditions and processes relating to people's health, especially the systems that supply water and deal with human waste
- **Rural** - relating to the countryside, or in the countryside
- **Invoke** - to use a law or rule in order to achieve something
- **Ambitious** - an ambitious plan, aim, or attempt is difficult and will need a lot of effort to succeed
- **On the eve of something** - on the day before an important event, or during the period of time just before it
- **Outcome** - the final result of a process, meeting, activity etc
- **Far from** - used for saying that the real situation is the opposite of what you mention
- **Arguably** - used for stating your opinion or belief, especially when you think other people may disagree
- **Cess** - a tax

- **Wing** - a part of an organization or political party that has its own responsibilities and opinions that are separate from the rest of the group
- **Household** - the people who live in a house or flat when they are considered as a single unit
- **Defecation** - the act of passing the contents of the bowels out of the body
- **On the face of it** - used for saying that something appears to be true but might not be true when you have examined it in more detail
- **Audit** - a careful examination of something, especially one done to find the amount, size, or effectiveness of something
- **Elusive** - difficult or impossible to achieve
- **Oppressed** - suffering from unfair and cruel treatment by a more powerful person or government
- **Filth** - dirt that is especially unpleasant, usually because there is a lot of it
- **Prevailing** - existing at a particular time or in a particular place
- **Condemn** - to say publicly that you think someone or something is bad or wrong
- **Persist** - to continue to do or say something in a determined way
- **Assert** - to state firmly that something is true
- **Urban** - relating to towns and cities, or happening there
- **Ward** - a small district that a city, town, or other area
- **Municipal** - of or belonging to a town or city
- **Dweller** - someone who lives in a particular type of place
- **Metro** - a city with a population of over one million
- **Spur** - something that encourages someone to do something
- **Consumption** - the process of buying or using goods, or the amount that people buy or use
- **Enforce** - to make sure that a law or rule is obeyed by people
- **Vigorous** - full of energy, enthusiasm, or determination
- **Infrastructure** - the set of systems within a place or organization that affect how well it operates, for example the telephone and transport systems in a country
- **Inadequate** - not enough, or not good enough for a particular purpose
- **Significant** - very large or noticeable
- **High-profile** - often seen in public, mentioned in newspapers, or appearing on television
- **Campaign** - a series of actions intended to produce political or social change
- **Sustainable** - capable of continuing for a long time at the same level
- **Scavenging** - to search through things that other people have thrown away in order to see if there is anything that you want
- **Ensure** - to make certain that something happens or is done
- **Septic tank** - a large container buried under the ground and used for collecting waste from toilets
- **Rehabilitation** - the process of returning to a healthy or good way of life, or the process of helping someone to do this

## **Course correction – A populist haze – on Brazil polls**

### **Brazil votes this week in an election charged by an anti-establishment campaign**

The campaign for Sunday's elections in Brazil is beset by an anti-establishment mood, as in several democracies. Legislators at the state and national levels are being elected, but it is the contest for the President's post that has really polarised the campaign. The personalised nature of the contest owes to the lingering shadow of Operation Car Wash, a buzzword for the anti-corruption campaign that underpins the confrontation between the legislature and the judiciary. At the centre of the investigations into the multi-billion dollar distribution of patronage to political and bureaucratic bigwigs is Petrobras, the state-owned oil firm. The anti-graft developments have removed established leaders from the fray, including Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the former President from the left-wing Workers' Party

(PT) now serving a 12-year jail sentence. His bid to run for a third term was quashed by the electoral court, following the dismissal of an appeal against his 2017 conviction. Under the watch of Mr. Lula's successor, Dilma Rousseff, Brazil plunged into its worst recession in a century. She was impeached, but more on technical grounds linked to fiscal mismanagement than any egregious violations. The outgoing President, Michel Temer, also came under the prosecution's scanner but he survived, thanks to Congressional intervention to prevent any ripple effects. The overall atmosphere in the run-up to the elections has thus got more murky.

Surging in several opinion polls in the five-corner presidential contest for the first round is the far-right frontrunner, Jair Bolsonaro, an ex-army captain often compared with autocratic leaders elsewhere. A stabbing incident at an election rally has forced Mr. Bolsonaro to campaign from his hospital bed, a sign of the sharp and often violent polarisation between political extremes. The firebrand politician's homophobic and misogynistic views triggered protests over the weekend by thousands of women. Mr. Bolsonaro's main challenger is the PT's Fernando Haddad, a former mayor of São Paulo, whose nomination was deferred until the verdict on Mr. Lula's candidacy. Mr. Haddad's prospects may have improved had the PT reconciled itself to the overturning of Mr. Lula's appeal in January. The party's best hope now is that the economist will convert the former President's popularity into votes for himself. There is concern among investors that the election of a populist may impede long overdue reforms to break the dominance of sectional interests in Brazil's economic policies. Such intervention is seen as crucial to restore investor confidence, stimulate infrastructure growth and reverse Brazil's recession. The expectation is that Sunday's vote will result in a run-off. That, many hope, will set the stage for a more sober lead-up to the final vote.

### **Meanings of Difficult Words**

- **Populist** - representing the interests and opinions of ordinary people
- **Haze** - a situation or condition which makes it difficult for you to think clearly
- **Establishment** - the important and powerful people who control a country or an organization, especially those who support the existing situation
- **Campaign** - a series of actions intended to produce political or social change
- **Beset** - to cause someone difficulty or danger over a period of time
- **Legislator** - someone who has the power and authority to create new laws
- **Contest** - a competition, especially one in which people's skill in a particular activity or sport is tested
- **Polarise** - to form two very different groups, opinions, or situations that are completely opposite to each other, or to cause this to happen
- **Lingering** - lasting for a long time, especially when this is unpleasant or not necessary
- **Buzzword** - a word that has become very popular, especially a word relating to a particular activity or subject
- **Underpin** - to be an important basic part of something, allowing it to succeed or continue to exist
- **Confrontation** - a situation in which people or groups are arguing angrily or are fighting
- **Legislature** - the part of government that makes and changes laws
- **Judiciary** - the part of government that consists of all the judges and courts in a country
- **Patronage** - help or money that is given to a person or organization
- **Bureaucratic** - involving a lot of complicated rules, details, and processes
- **Bigwig** - an important and powerful person in an organization
- **State-owned** - owned by the government
- **Graft** - dishonest or illegal activities in politics or business that involve giving people money or advantages in exchange for their help or support

- **Fray** - a fight or argument, esp. one in which several people take part
- **Former** - used for describing someone or something that had a particular job, title, status etc in the past, but not now
- **Left-wing** - someone who is left-wing is considered to have socialist aims and ideas, for example that property, money, and power should be shared more equally
- **Sentence** - a punishment given by a judge, usually involving a period of time that a person must spend in prison
- **Term** - a period of time during which a politician or other official holds their job
- **Quash** - to stop something from continuing
- **Dismissal** - a refusal to accept that something might be true or important
- **Conviction** - a decision by a court of law that someone is guilty of a crime
- **Successor** - someone who has an important position after someone else
- **Plunge into** - to suddenly start doing something with energy and enthusiasm, but sometimes without thinking about it first
- **Recession** - a period when trade and industry are not successful and there is a lot of unemployment
- **Impeach** - to formally accuse a public official of a serious crime relating to their job
- **Fiscal** - relating to money and financial matters
- **Mismanagement** - the process of organizing or controlling something badly
- **Egregious** - extremely bad
- **Violation** - an action that is in opposition to a law, agreement, principle etc
- **Outgoing** - soon to leave a position of authority or power
- **Survive** - to manage to deal with something difficult or unpleasant
- **Thanks to** - used for saying that someone or something is responsible for something that happened
- **Intervention** - a situation in which someone becomes involved in a particular issue, problem etc in order to influence what happens
- **Ripple effect** - a situation in which one thing causes a series of other things to happen
- **Run-up** - to make something very quickly
- **Murky** - involving activities that are not clearly known and that people think are dishonest or morally wrong
- **Opinion poll** - an attempt to find out what people in general think about a subject by asking some people questions about it
- **Frontrunner** - the person or thing considered the most likely to win a competition, game, election etc
- **Autocratic** - ruling with complete power
- **Elsewhere** - in or to another place or other places
- **Stabbing** - an attack in which someone is stabbed
- **Stab** - to kill or hurt someone by pushing a knife or other sharp object into their body
- **Polarisation** - the act of dividing something, especially something that contains different people or opinions, into two completely separate groups
- **Extreme** - an opinion or way of behaving that is as different from another as it is possible to be
- **Firebrand** - someone who has strong feelings, especially about politics, and wants to change things or encourage other people to feel the same
- **Homophobic** - a fear or dislike of gay people
- **Misogynistic** - showing feelings of hating women or a belief that men are better than women
- **Trigger** - to make something happen

- **Protest** - a strong complaint or disagreement
- **Former** - used for describing someone or something that had a particular job, title, status etc in the past, but not now
- **Deferred** - delayed until a later time
- **Verdict** - an official judgment made in a court
- **Candidacy** - the fact that someone is a candidate in an election
- **Prospect** - the possibility that something will happen, especially something good
- **Reconcile** - to find a way to make ideas, beliefs, needs etc that are opposed to each other capable of existing together
- **Overturn** - to change a legal decision
- **Concern** - a feeling of worry about something, especially one that a lot of people have about an important issue
- **Populist** - representing the interests and opinions of ordinary people
- **Impede** - to make it more difficult for someone to do something or more difficult for something to happen
- **Overdue** - if something is overdue, it should have been done before now
- **Reform** - a change that is intended to correct a situation that is wrong or unfair, or make a system work more effectively
- **Dominance** - a situation in which one person or thing has more influence or power than any other
- **Stimulate** - to encourage something to happen, develop, or improve
- **Recession** - a period when trade and industry are not successful and there is a lot of unemployment
- **Run-off** - to force someone to leave a place
- **Set the stage for something** - to create the conditions in which something is likely to happen
- **Sober** - with a serious attitude
- **Lead-up** - the period that comes before an important event

### **SOME IMPORTANT IDIOMS AND PHRASES**

#### **1. bury your head in the sand**

**Meaning:** To (try to) avoid a particular situation by pretending that it doesn't exist.

**Example:** "Stop burying your head in the sand. You haven't been happy with him for years, why are you staying together?"

#### **2. a storm is brewing**

**Meaning:** There will be trouble or emotional upset in the near future.

**Example:** "She decided to go ahead with their wedding, even though all they've been doing lately is arguing. I can sense a storm is brewing."

#### **3. calm before the storm**

**Meaning:** An unusually quiet period before a period of upheaval (problems, chaos).

**Example:** "The strange quietness in town made her feel peaceful. Little did she know, it was just the calm before the storm."

#### **4. weather a storm**

**Meaning:** To survive a dangerous event or effectively deal with a difficult situation.

**Example:** "Last year, they had some financial difficulties when her husband was fired. Together, they weathered the storm and figured out how to keep going."

**5. when it rains, it pours**

**Meaning:** Bad things occur in large numbers; many big things happen all at once.

**Example:** "First he was made redundant, then his wife got into a car accident. When it rains, it pours."

**6. chasing rainbows**

**Meaning:** Following dreams, trying to do something that can't be achieved.

**Example:** "His paintings have neither style nor imagination, but he insists on being a professional painter. He's always chasing rainbows."

**7. rain or shine**

**Meaning:** No matter what happens.

**Example:** "I'll see you at the airport, rain or shine."

**8. under the sun**

**Meaning:** In existence.

**Example:** "Gili Trawangan must be one of the most beautiful islands under the sun."

**9. once in a blue moon**

**Meaning:** Very rarely.

**Example:** "He used to call his grandma once in a blue moon. Now that she has passed away, he regrets not making more of an effort to keep in touch."

**10. every cloud has a silver lining**

**Meaning:** There's a good aspect to every bad situation.

**Example:** "Don't worry about losing your job. It will be okay. Every cloud has a silver lining!"

**11. a rising tide lifts all boats**

**Meaning:** When an economy is performing well, all of the people involved will benefit from it.

**Example:** "When the economy showed the first signs of recovering, everyone started investing and spending more. A rising tide lifts all boats."

**12. get into deep water**

**Meaning:** To be in trouble.

**Example:** "He got into deep water when he borrowed a lot of money from a loan shark."

**13. pour oil on troubled waters**

**Meaning:** To try to make people feel better and become friendly again after an argument.

**Example:** "She hated seeing her two best friends arguing, so she got them together and poured oil on troubled waters."

**14. make waves**

**Meaning:** To cause trouble, to change things in a dramatic way.

[This expression comes from the calming effect that oil has on waves](#) as it spreads over the surface of the sea. With the ecological disasters following big oil spillage in recent years, some people might now think of this phrase rather differently compared to its original meaning—but it's still interesting to know about.

**Example:** "She likes to make waves with her creative marketing campaigns. They get a lot of attention from customers."

### 15. go with the flow

**Meaning:** To relax and go along with whatever is happening.

**Example:** "Quite often in life, good things happen when you don't make plans. Just go with the flow and see what happens!"

### 16. lost at sea

**Meaning:** To be confused about something, to feel unsure about what to do.

**Example:** "I am lost at sea with this new system at work. I just can't understand it."

### 17. sail close to the wind

**Meaning:** To act just within the limits of what's legal or socially acceptable, to push boundaries.

**Example:** "They fired their accountant because he sailed too close to the wind."

### 18. make a mountain out of a molehill

**Meaning:** To exaggerate the severity of a situation.

**Example:** "She shouted at him angrily for being five minutes late, but it really didn't matter that much. She really made a mountain out of a molehill."

### 19. gain ground

**Meaning:** To become popular, to make progress, to advance.

**Example:** "As Airbnb gains ground in many cities all over the world, many locals complain that they can no longer find a place to live. Landlords would rather rent their places out to tourists and earn more money."

### 20. walking on air

**Meaning:** Very excited or happy.

"Over the moon," "on cloud nine," "in seventh heaven" and "in good spirits" are a few more [advanced English phrases you can use to talk about happiness](#).

**Example:** "She's been walking on air since she found out that she's pregnant."

### 21. many moons ago

**Meaning:** A long time ago.

**Example:** "Many moons ago, we used to be two very close friends. Now we've gone separate ways and lost contact."

### 22. castle in the sky

**Meaning:** A daydream, a hope, especially for one's life, that's unlikely to come true.

**Example:** "World traveling used to be a castle in the sky for most people a few decades ago, but with cheap flight tickets and the global use of English, many youngsters are living that dream."

### 23. down to earth

**Meaning:** To be practical and sensible.

**Example:** "It's a stereotype, but Dutch people are known for being down to earth."

**24. salt of the earth**

**Meaning:** Being honest and good.

**Example:** "My father is the salt of the earth. He works hard and always helps people who are in need."

**25. the tip of the iceberg**

**Meaning:** Just a small part of something much bigger.

**Example:** "Exceptionally long drought periods are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the global impact of climate change."

**26. break the ice**

**Meaning:** To attempt to become friends with someone.

**Example:** "He made a weather joke to break the ice."

**27. sell ice to Eskimos**

**Meaning:** To be able to sell anything to anyone; to persuade people to go against their best interests or to accept something unnecessary or preposterous.

Eskimos are indigenous people who live in very cold, snowy regions—they don't need any ice! If you can sell ice to them, you can sell anything to anyone.

**Example:** "He's a gifted salesman, he could sell ice to Eskimos."

**28. bury your head in the sand**

**Meaning:** To (try to) avoid a particular situation by pretending that it doesn't exist.

**Example:** "Stop burying your head in the sand. You haven't been happy with him for years, why are you staying together?"

**29. let the dust settle**

**Meaning:** To allow a situation to become calm or normal again after something exciting or unusual has happened.

**Example:** "You just had big news yesterday, let the dust settle and don't make any decisions yet."

**30. clear as mud**

**Meaning:** Not clear at all, not easy to understand.

**Example:** "He's a great scientist, but I find his explanation of bacteria and microbes as clear as mud."

☞ **SUCCESSFUL** and **UNSUCCESSFUL** people do not vary greatly in their *abilities*.

They vary in their **DESIRES** to **REACH THEIR POTENTIAL** ☞