

Sanitation coverage in India almost doubled, says Modi

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said the sanitation coverage in the country has increased from 38 per cent to nearly 80 per cent and asserted that the Swachh Bharat Mission is playing a central role in creating a healthy India.

Interacting with the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) and affordable cardiac stents and knee implants through video bridge, the PM said that more than 3.5 lakh villages in the country have declared themselves open defecation free.

“Cleanliness is considered to be first necessity for a healthy life. We initiated the campaign to construct toilets at home. This campaign for cleanliness is being taken forward successfully by 125 crore people of the country.

Sanitation coverage has gone up from 38 per cent to around 80%. More than 3.5 lakh villages have declared themselves open defecation free in India. Referring to a UNICEF study, he said those villages which are open defecation free, Rs 50,000 which would have otherwise been used for other works, is being saved on an average per family

“Look at its results. Sanitation coverage has gone up from 38 per cent to around 80 per cent. So if it was 40 per cent it has (it means) doubled. More than 3.5 lakh villages have declared themselves open defecation free in India,” he said.

“The scheme is playing a central role in creating a healthy India,” Modi said.

Referring to a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) study, he said that those villages which are open defecation free, Rs 50,000 which would have otherwise been used for other works, is being saved on an average per family. Otherwise the same amount would have gone into treatment of various diseases and commuting to and fro to the hospital, among others. Interacting with the prime minister, the beneficiaries explained how the 'Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana' brought down the cost of the medicines and made it affordable.

The beneficiaries also talked about how reduced prices of heart stent and knee transplants have changed their life.