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Point for discussion this month Failure of SWM – is it because of poor civil governance?

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Eternal Words

Richard Bach in his book "Illusions" writes –

Every person, all the events of your life are there because you have drawn there. What you choose to do with them is up to you!

The mark of your ignorance is the depth of your belief in injustice and tragedy. What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly!

Your conscience is the measure of the honesty of your selfishness. Listen to it carefully!

The truth you speak has no past and no future. It is, and that's all it needs to be!.....

Dear Readers,

When we are opting for soothing environment as shown in the cover photo, the civil governance is failing to provide minimal urban environmental quality for the citizens. It is gross violation of their natural and constitutional rights by the city administration. These are not just the woes of residents of cities but the villagers face the brunt of inefficiencies, apathy, ineptness of some civil officials and it happened in Pune – the most acclaimed knowledge city of India.

Villagers near the unscientific solid waste dumping site accelerated their agitation against the filthy impacts of Pune's huge piles of stinking waste. That waste liquefies anaerobically giving rise to highly toxic leachates and when it rains generates a flow of poisons through the streams reaching the river creating problems for the villagers at a distance for more than 50 – 100 km. When all these deteriorations will be understood by the local, state and central government?

When all these officials will take appropriate steps and measures instead of making facelift to improve the conditions not only for the residents of cities but for the victims 50 – 100 km from the epicentre of waste generation. SERI suggested an institutional mechanism to Planning Commission of India 2 years back regarding containing urban pollution and making healthy places for citizens and the reply is still awaited. Meanwhile, in association with concerned citizens and organisations like Shrama Seva Nyasa, Indian Development Council SERI started working on City Environment Plan (CEP).

Generally, civil governments take up City Development Plan considering future development of the urbanisation giving little or no attention to environmental quality and waste management. These local self governments needed revolutionary approaches in minimizing the time required for policy and decision making by politicians and administration that control the city finances. It's their legitimate responsibility to make city liveable and not to victimize the population in surrounding areas due to their uncanny habits of throwing wastes unattended.

When citizens are paying all sorts of taxes including surcharges for water, wastewater and solid waste management then why such issues are not resolved on war footing? Citizens expect better living and not being suffocated due to inefficiencies of city managers.

Thank you,
Chief Editor

Shrishti Eco-Research Institute, Pune

Newsviews

Burning Issue

The solid waste management has become a burning issue in Pune city. MSW is the main headache of Pune Municipal corporation as the citizen's of the Urali Devachi and Phursungi where Pune cities solid waste is being dumped from 1997, have warned the PMC that they will not allow to dump non-segregated waste rather Municipal Solid Waste from Pune city at present dumping sites. Till date at least 2.7 million tones of garbage dumped!

Villagers suffering due to unscientific dumping of Pune's 1200 tons waste at Urali Devachi and Fursungi agitated vigorously against the deterioration of their environment and living at the behest of insensitive city administration and regulatory agencies. Here are some glimpses of the garbaged Pune City due to agitation.







SERI team has done survey of the dumping site and the results are alarming. The leachate from this waste dumping site is entering in to fresh water body, Catchment: Approximately 2.0 sq. km Rainfall: about 600 mm. Estimated leachate volume 60000 cu m / day (max.) on rainy days. Total leachate drain length 1 km (0.5 km leachate drain 1 + 0.5 km leachate drain 2).

SERI team contacted and discussed with agitators and the civic administration and Pune's awakened citizens regarding the short term approaches and long term activities to mitigate the problem of solid waste management. The suggestions involved **Control of** – odour, colour, toxicity, mosquito & flies, nuisance microorganisms using **technological solutions** – Green Bridges, Green Lake Ecosystem, Stream bio-cleaning, Lining to control groundwater pollution and Benthos treatment in leachate ponds.

As usual, Pollution Control Board has issued stringent directions to Pune's Municipal Corporation allowing one year taking control measures leaving agitators in agony! So, administration is gearing to issue fresh tenders and garner whatever they can at the cost of environment & health of poor people!

- Photographs & text by Sandeep Joshi

At Doorstep!

Around 400 households in Manikampalayam Housing Unit In Erode district of Tamilnadu, are suffering without water as the borewells on which they were dependent for water supply are polluted by coloured water of textile industries. Effluent from the textile factories entered the bore wells and polluted the water being used for bathing, washing, cooking and drinking also. These households get Municipality water only once in eight days that's why they are mainly dependent on the bore well water. Now they don't have any alternative but to drink polluted water.

Solution to Pollution by Goans!

Margoa Municipal council issued strict instructions to the four housing complexes for discharging sewage in to the Xelpem Lake. These societies had a meeting with the MMC Chairperson wherein they discussed ways and means to plug the discharge of waste into the water body. Chairperson Coutinho pointed out that they were the only culprits for the pathetic state of the Xelpem Lake.

Coutinho further said that there couldnot be a solution to the problem until the underground sewage line is put in place at the earliest. The representatives of the housing societies, however, drew attention of the Chairperson that the septic tanks and soak pits overflow due to the poor absorption capacity of the soil and the high water table. They kept fighting whose is that dirty job!

Now a day's septic tanks and soak pits can not be considered as solution for the sewage pollution. So, its mandatory for every housing society to have its own STP and the pollution of fresh water bodies can be controlled. The decentralized waste treatment systems are the only answer for prevention of fresh water bodies' pollution.

- Priyamvada

TransNVtech a SERI's subsidiary provides solutions with packaged sewage treatment plants which can be installed anywhere!