



**GOVERNANCE  
AWARDS  
2019**  
12-12-2019

**SPECIAL JURY  
AWARD**

*Shri Parameswaran Iyer, IAS (Retd.)*

(Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti)

For his role in making India an Open Defecation Free country

*A* 1981-batch Uttar Pradesh cadre IAS officer, Parameswaran Iyer is the torch bearer of India's fight to make itself an Open Defecation Free (ODF) country. He is an illustrious bureaucrat, who played a path-breaking role during his tenure in the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

He received global recognition for his eight-year stint with the United Nations World Food Program (1998-2006), where he worked as a senior water and sanitation specialist. During his tenure at the World Bank, he worked in Vietnam, China, Egypt and Lebanon, and implemented the Swajal Programme, among other initiatives.

He changed the age-old habits of millions of people. It was through his efforts to make this programme a jan andolan that more than 100 million toilets have been constructed in rural areas and the national rural sanitation coverage, which was 38.7 percent in October 2014, increased to 100 percent in October 2019, thus making India a role model for nations aspiring to ODF status.

According to World Health Organisation estimates, this mission has averted more than 300,000 deaths (from diarrhoea and protein-energy malnutrition) between October 2014 and October 2019. In an ODF village in India, each family saves up to Rs 50,000 per year on account of avoided medical expenses. Also, the UNICEF assessment report of SBM on faecal contamination of water, soil and food found that ODF villages are 11.25 times less likely to have their groundwater sources contaminated.

After achieving Mahatma Gandhi's long unfulfilled dream of making India an ODF country, he now aims to provide potable piped water to every household in the country.



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THE  
JURY

**Prabhat Kumar**  
Former Cabinet  
Secretary

**Anil Razdan**  
Former Secretary,  
Power

**Vishnu Bhagwan**  
Former Chief  
Secretary, Haryana

**M B Kaushal**  
Former Secretary,  
Internal Security