

# Modi presents Swachh Bharat as tribute to Gandhi

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STATING THAT over 1.88 lakh villages across 130 districts in the country have been declared as Open Defecation Free since the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission two and half years ago, PM Narendra Modi said cleanliness was the only way to live by the principles of Mahatma Gandhi in the 21st century.

Modi was speaking at 'Swachhagraha: Bapu Ko Karyanjali' at the National Archives of India. The event was held to mark the 100th anniversary of the Champaran

Satyagraha, the first non-violent movement led by Gandhi to protest against the British policy of forcing farmers in Bihar's Champaran district to cultivate indigo instead of food crops.

Taking off from the issue of the Satyagraha, Modi said Gandhi is fundamentally a swachhagrahi (one who insists on cleanliness) and one who said cleanliness is more important than political freedom. Pointing out that apart from a change in the system, Gandhi also wanted change in the value system, Modi said, "The success of this mission (Swachh Bharat) is the true tribute (*shraddhanjali*) to Bapu and true endeavour

(*karyanjali*)".

At another event to mark the Champaran Satyagraha, reported by PTI, Information and Broadcasting Minister M Venkaiah Naidu released three old and seminal publications on Mahatma Gandhi that were "restored" to mark 100 years of his Satyagraha movement.

Naidu, while releasing the books, emphasised on the values of compassion and non-violence espoused by the Father of the Nation.

"Gandhiji's life is a valuable lesson of humanity, compassion, determination to achieve desired goals through non-violence and inclusion," he said.