

Ajmer launches installation of Automated Sanitary Napkin Vending Machines and Incinerator in a big way. Menstruation is a subject that has socially been considered a taboo and is ingrained with misconceptions and indifference, with little awareness of the hazards of inadequate menstrual protection. No wonder about 68 percent rural women cannot afford sanitary napkins available in the market.

According to gynecologists, use of alternative sanitary care measures such as unsterilized cloths, sand and ash make women susceptible to infections and diseases. On the issue of affordability of quality sanitary care, a survey found that 81 per cent rural women use unsterilized cloths since they are cheaper and 68 per cent said they cannot afford to buy sanitary napkins.

Adolescent girls in rural India are unable to attend up to 50 days of schooling in a year due to inadequate menstrual care, the report said. In fact, data suggests that more than 33% of the disease burden and almost 60% of premature deaths among adults can be associated with behaviors or conditions that began or occurred during adolescence. Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable biologically to reproductive tract infections (RTI) and sexually transmitted infections (STI). Menstrual hygiene & Sanitation education alone may not be sufficient to induce behavior change. It has to be complemented with facilities such as providing each adolescent girl in schools with sustained supply of safe and hygienic sanitary napkins during her entire period of schooling.

**Sanitary Napkin Vending Machines** is an innovative use of technology for enhancing access to sanitary pads in rural schools. Ajmer district launched these machines at 'Zanana hospital' on Wednesday. About 70 such machines will come up at various places including jails, bus stand, polytechnic colleges, schools and other areas in the coming days. Ajmer district became first in the country to have these machines in that quantity. In view of the stigma and social taboo associated with sanitary napkins, majority of the females feel embarrassed and hesitate to go to the commonly known, manned and often crowded conventional/medicine outlets for sanitary napkins, resulting in unsafe practices and use of unhygienic materials during menstrual periods. On other hand, Disposal of the used Sanitary Napkins has been a very common problem everywhere. In order to tackle these problems, and to provide round the clock quality sanitary napkins, this innovation is a novel way & solution by installing state of the art Automated Sanitary Napkin Vending Machines & Sanitary Napkin Incinerators to dispose the used Sanitary Napkin Pads

The purpose of this initiative is to promote healthy practices among Indian population by way of Women Hygiene and safe disposal of used napkin pads. Ensuring easy availability of Sanitary Napkin Pads for the target girls / women shall promote safe and hygienic sanitation practices and ensure safe and environment friendly disposal of used napkin pads.

***Sanitary napkin vending machines—great concept of bringing health, hygiene & empowerment together through technology — Smt Vasundhara Raje, honorable CM Rajasthan*** June 14, 2016

Chief Minister of Rajasthan Smt. Vasundhara Raje's vision is to empower the women of this patriarchal state. Immediately after she came into power in 2013, CM Raje launched the Bhamashah direct benefit scheme making it clear that the woman is going to be a leader in every household of Rajasthan. The Chief Minister has also launched Rajshree Scheme under which every girl in the state shall receive a financial assistance of Rs. 50,000 during the course of her education. CM Raje has often said that the learning of the women leads to the learning of her family, and thereafter the learning of the whole society. The first woman Chief Minister of Rajasthan has consistently worked towards making the women of the state strong – physically, mentally and socially. Let's hope these efforts lead to the dream of a gender-balanced Rajasthan turn into reality.

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भारत में ज्यादातर महिलाएं अपने 'पीरियड्स' से संबंधित समस्याओं को साझा करने में कतराती हैं। खासकर छोटे शहरों या ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों की महिलाओं, जो इस समस्याओं पर खुल कर बात नहीं कर पाती या पीरियड्स के दौरान इन्तेमाल होने वाली नैपकिन को भी सार्वजनिक तौर पर खरीदने में हिचक महसूस करती हैं।

महिलाओं की इसी समस्या को देखते हुए राजस्थान सरकार ने एक अनोखा कदम उठाया है। जिससे अब महिलाओं को सैनिटरी पैड खरीदने के लिए दुकान जाने की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी। बल्कि ये मशीन एटीएम मशीन की तरह काम करेगी और मात्र 10 रुपए में महिलाओं को नैपकिन देगी। यह मशीन अजमेर जिले के 'राजकीय जनाना अस्पताल' में लगाई गई है। जिसका उद्घाटन बुधवार कलक्टर श्री गौरव गोयल की उपस्थिति में किया गया।

कलक्टर श्री गौरव गोयल का कहना है कि लड़कियों में स्वास्थ्य के प्रति जागरूकता लाने और झिझक को मिटाने के लिए इस प्रक्रिया को अंजाम दिया गया है। अजमेर प्रशासन द्वारा इस तरह की कुल 70 मशीनें पूरे अजमेर जिले में लगायी जायेगी। यह मशीनें स्कूल, कॉलेज, अस्पताल, रेलवे स्टेशन और बस स्टैंड जैसी जगहों पर यह मशीन लगाई जाएगी। इन सैनिटरी नैपकिन को भारत सरकार के 'वेंचर एचएलएल लाइफ केयर लिमिटेड' ने तैयार किया है।

आपकी जानकारी के लिए बता दें एक पैकट में तीन नैपकिन होंगे। इनका दाम मात्र कुल दस रुपये रखा गया है, जो बाजार में उपलब्ध नैपकिन की अपेक्षा सस्ते है। इस पैड का कोई साइड इफेक्ट भी नहीं होगा। साथ ही मशीन के पास इंसीनेटर भी लगाया जा रहा है ताकि इन्तेमाल किए गए नैपकिन उसमें डाल सकें।

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The city plans to install 70 more machines at various places including jails, bus stands, polytechnic colleges, schools and other areas around.

“In view of the stigma and social taboo associated with sanitary napkins, a majority of the girls/women, feel embarrassed and hesitate to go to the commonly known outlets for sanitary napkins, manned and often crowded by men, resulting in unsafe practices, and use of unhygienic materials during menstruation. Thus, vending machines would be a good solution,” said District collector Sh. Gaurav Goyal.

“We have ordered for 70 such machines in total which would be installed at girls colleges, schools, Women Polytechnic College, Jail and other parts of the district. More such machines would be installed at Beawar, Kishangarh and Naseerabad areas,” he added.