



Press Release

Dollar Industries Joins Hand With SEED For Improving The Hygiene Of The Girl Child

- Introduces The Campaign #BeFreeBeYou
- To Install 100 Sanitary Vending Machines In Schools Across the State In phase-1

Kolkata, 7th August, 2019: Dollar Industries as a part of their CSR initiative, in association with SEED (Society for Socio Economic and Ecological Development) has launched a campaign #BeFreeBeYou. The campaign aims to improve the menstrual hygiene of the underprivileged girls, where sanitary napkin vending machines will be installed in Government schools across West Bengal. In the first phase 100 sanitary napkin vending machines will be installed around Kolkata & Sub-urban areas. These machines will provide good quality sanitary napkins at a nominal cost.

The #BeFreeBeYou campaign was launched today by popular actress **Ms. Debadrita Basu**, who portrays the character of **Joyee**, in the much hyped Bengali mega serial **Joyee** in the presence of **Ms. Vedika Gupta**, Vice President, Dollar Industries Ltd & **Dr. Somenath Bhattacharyya**, Executive Director, SEED.

The motto of the campaign is to decrease the school dropout rate of underprivileged girls due to lack of proper menstrual hygiene management facilities. According to a study report, **23 million girls drop out of school annually in India and the reason includes unavailability of sanitary napkins and logical awareness of menstruation.** As per UNICEF study, **51% women in West Bengal are unaware about menstruation before Menarche.** Through this initiative, we want to educate the girls about the taboos, myths and restrictions related to menstruation, wrong cultural practices and hygiene routines. This initiative focuses to enlighten the girls about the proper use of sanitary napkins and impart proper knowledge and create awareness related to the physiology of menstruation.

"#BeFreeBeYou is a passion project for us at Dollar. A comparative study on menstrual hygiene for West Bengal undertaken in the recent past revealed that only a limited percentage of adolescent girls are aware of menstruation prior to attainment of menarche. While menstrual hygiene is lowest in Eastern India, with 83% women saying their families cannot afford sanitary napkins. Thus, we decided to tie up with SEED for this initiative. We have plans to install - 100 sanitary napkin vending machines across schools in Kolkata & Sub-Urban areas as a first phase of this initiative", said **Ms. Vedika Gupta, Vice President, Dollar Industries Ltd.**

Schools have been identified on the basis of having maximum underprivileged girl children and workshops will be conducted in each of the schools to create mass awareness on this issue.

"#BeFreeBeYou is a great initiative which will benefit scores of school children from the underprivileged strata of the society with regards to improved hygienic practices. This would help in taking a step forward to break the barrier of whispering about menstruation and would motivate the girls to share and care about healthy and hygienic practices. And above all, it will decrease the dropout percentage of the adolescent girls, which is very high due to inability of handling menstruating days properly. We are extremely thankful to Dollar Team, who are equally enthusiastic to bring in a change in the lives of these girls", said **Dr. Somenath Bhattacharyya, Executive Director, SEED.**

According to a research conducted by National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) to compare the perceptions of different aspects of menstrual hygiene between adolescent girls of rural and urban areas, only 36% in the urban and 54.88% reused the same sanitary pad later. Further proper cleaning of external genitalia was practiced by only 47.63% of the urban and 37.96% of the rural girls.



Unhygienic menstrual practices also lead to several health issues, cervical cancer being one of the deadly health issues in women. Thus, more such projects are the need of the hour for improving menstrual hygiene in both rural and urban areas.

The first lot of schools where the Sanitary Napkin Vending Machines will be installed as a pilot project are **Taki House Govt. Sponsored Girls' High School (H.S.), Victoria Institution School, Kendua Mahendranath Girls High School, Sanghamitra Vidyalaya, Khidirpur Muslim High School, Lajpat Balika Vidyalaya, Jawahar Lal Nehru Balika Vidhyapith, Fatepur Hindi Nagari Pracharak Vidyalaya, Bansdrone Chakdah Vidyamandir, Dum Dum Road Govt. Sponsored High School for Girls, Sri Ramkrishna Sarada Sangha Balika Vidyalaya, Giribala Sircar Balika Vidyalaya School, Alipore Multipurpose Government Girls School, Badartala Madhyamik Balika Vidyamandir and The Oriental Seminary School.**

About Dollar Industries Ltd

Dollar Industries Ltd, listed in both NSE & BSE, is today amongst the top three hosiery brands in India. The Company has four manufacturing units in Kolkata, Tirupur (TN), Delhi and Ludhiana. Dollar Industries enjoys a 15% market share in the branded hosiery segment in India. Dollar Industries has recently started business in African market with Nigeria to enhance export revenue.

About SEED

SEED (Society for Socio-Economic & Ecological Development) is a non-profit ISO-9001 Organisation. It has been working on "Menstrual Hygiene Management" Programmes with underprivileged adolescent girls and women across West Bengal and Jharkhand, to break age-old taboos concerning a normal physiological phenomenon for empowerment of women. This has helped in restricting dropouts of school girls and thereby is a bold step in building the nation.

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