



**Ministry of Housing  
and Urban Affairs**  
Government of India



**Official Release of film “Halkaa” by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)**

**August 6, 2018:** The Hon’ble Minister of State (I/C) for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri today launched the official trailer, music and poster of Bollywood film “Halkaa” under the aegis of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), in partnership with the New Delhi Municipal Council. The launch event, held at the NDMC Convention Centre, New Delhi was attended by school children and teachers from government schools in Delhi, Municipal Commissioners of NCR region, officials from the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, and the cast and crew of the film. On this occasion, Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary-HUA, Shri Naresh Kumar, Chairman, NDMC, Shri V K Jindal, Joint Secretary and National Mission Director, SBM Urban, Shri Nila Madhab Panda-director of the film, Shankar Mahadevan –singer cum music director, child actor Pichku, lead actors Ranvir Shorey and Paoli Dam, and Ms Roshni Nadar Malhotra of Shiv Nadar Foundation, the producer of the film were also present. A highlight of the launch event included a live performance by Shankar Mahadevan of the film’s music track. The event – held between 5.30 – 6.30 pm - was screened simultaneously through webcast across the country, enabling school children from various states to view the live launch..

“Halkaa” (*Relief*) is the story of an 8-year-old boy Pichku who aspires for a better quality of life. The film is a unique take on the child (Pichku)’s heroism: the boy refuses to be part of the age-old practice of open defecation and decides to make a change for his betterment. It is his dream to make a toilet of his own. “Halkaa” poignantly captures the journey of this simple and under privileged child’s dedication, struggle, and aspiration for achieving the goal of owning a personal toilet for his family despite resistance from his father. In turn, he becomes a hero in his slum community.

Film director Nila Madhab Panda is a Padma Shri awardee whose earlier films include the highly-acclaimed “I Am Kalam”, "Jalpari-the desert Mermaid", "Kaun Kitney Paani Mein" and ‘Kadvi Hawa’.



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Speaking on the occasion, Shri Puri pointed out that given the stated objective of the flagship programme of the Government of India, Swachh Bharat Mission, to achieve open defecation free status for all cities and towns by 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, it is expected that the film can contribute to the aim of achieving an Open Defecation Free India and accelerate the pace of achieving the Swachh Bharat Mission's targets, through its powerful messaging.

While Halkaa is slated for release on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in India, the film has already won numerous awards and accolades in the international arena including two prestigious Grand Prix – Best Feature Film awards at Montreal International Children's Film Festival and KINOLUB Film Festival for Children and Youth in Poland.

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