

**PRESS RELEASE:**

**Genrobotic’s Bandicoot Robot Emerged as the Winner of Swachhata Startup Challenge 2022 by MoHUA**

**Kochi, 30th September 2022:** Genrobotics, the leading Indian robotic company has emerged as the winner of The Swachhata Startup Challenge for their product Bandicoot, as the best innovative solution to eliminate manual scavenging, which also transforms the sanitation workers lives. The program launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MOHUA) and Agence Francaise de Development (AFD), at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi is For Leveraging innovation and technology to eliminate social stigma and challenges. The event was felicitated by Shri. Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon’ble Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs of India, Shri. Kaushal Kishore, Hon’ble Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to India, Roopa Mishra, Joint Secretary and National Mission Director, Swachh Bharat Mission (MOHUA), and Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Genrobotics is addressing the issue of manual scavenging in India with Bandicoot, their flagship robotic product. Lauded by Prime Minister Modi, these robots are designed to completely eliminate manual scavenging and empower manual scavengers by turning them into robot operators along with many other positive social, economic and environmental impacts.

These advanced robots are well-equipped with gas sensing systems to detect hazardous gases thereby eliminating risks of accidents inside manholes. The interactive and user-friendly interface for manual scavengers’ aids in rehabilitation and uplift their life by making them robot operators to help them live a respectful and better life.

*“*Bandicoot is the most scientific and effective solution for removing manual intervention from manhole cleaning compared to any other grabbing and suction machines. It has special attributes including robotic arms, legs, and vision that aid sanitation workers in precise cleaning from outside the manholes. Bandicoots offer a cost-effective solution for the ULBs as well as efficiency and safety for the workers.*"* ***said Nikhil NP, Director of Genrobotics.***

In addition to many social-environment benefits, it brings huge financial advantages for the governments. The robotic scavenging is more efficient as it can cover up to 10 manholes every day against 1 or 2 being covered by manual scavenging. With huge savings on wages and operational costs, a municipal corporation can save approximately Rs 8000 Inr on cleaning 10 manholes a day.

Other cleaning techniques, such as sucking and grabbing machines, are also available, however they are unable to remove solid waste, and the grabbing machine can only clean around 20% of the space inside the manhole. The authorities are required to use human labour in this case, however Bandicoot outperforms other techniques of cleaning manhole blockages by a 100% cleaning efficiency because of its robotic arms that resemble human arms and bigger opening bucket design. For bandicoot to win the Swachhata Startup Challenge 2022, this was a significant turning point.

The initiative has experienced excellent success So far, it has rehabilitated over 1700+ workers across 17 states. It is currently being used by ULBs, smart cities, and refineries. Bandicoot Robot meets 9 out of 17 SDG goals set by the United Nations including good health, clean water and sanitation, good jobs and economic growth, innovation and Infrastructure, reduced inequalities, peace, justice and strong institutions. For its path-breaking efforts, the company has earned the trust of renowned business tycoon Anand Mahindra and Zoho Company as its investors. This technology won the AMRUT Tech Challenge Award as the Most Promising Innovative Solution for Sanitation by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.