

'URBAN INDIA DECLARED ODF, EXCEPT BENGAL LOCAL BODIES'

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry on Monday said the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban had achieved its goal of making urban India free of open defecation, though urban local bodies in West Bengal had not been declared open defecation free (ODF).

"The Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban has achieved its target of creating urban India ODF. Urban areas of 35 States and Union Territories have become ODF. In all, 4,320 cities [out of 4,372] have declared themselves ODF, of which 4,167 cities have been certified through third-party verification," a statement from the Ministry said, adding that 52 ULBs of West Bengal were not included.

Deadline pushed

Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, which was launched on October 2, 2014, the government had declared rural India ODF on October 2, while the deadline for urban India had been pushed while third-party audits and compliance from West Bengal were awaited, according to officials.

The Ministry's statement said 65.81 lakh individual household toilets had been constructed while the target had been 59 lakh, and 5.96 lakh community or public toilet seats had been added against the target of 5.08 lakh.

It said 819 cities and 312 cities had been declared ODF+ and ODF++, which set targets for maintaining public toilets and proper management of sludge toilets respectively.

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