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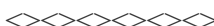
**States to get all required funds for Swachh Bharat Mission-Birender Singh**

The Union Minister for Rural Development and Drinking Water and Sanitation Shri Birender Singh today said that to achieve the goals of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), funds will not be a constraint. Speaking at the closing ceremony of Rural Sanitation and Water Supply Week at Raipur in Chhattisgarh, he said that under SBM (Grameen) and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), funds will be allocated to the states as per their demand. He expressed satisfaction that the pace of construction of toilets in rural India has gathered momentum and the States like West Bengal, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Maharashtra have taken the lead in construction of Individual Household Latrines and community toilets. He also informed that many of the States may achieve the target of Open-Defecation Free status in 2017 or 2018, well before the target of 2nd October, 2019. Sikkim and Kerala are now Open Defecation Free, ODF States.

Shri Singh said that merely achieving the target of toilet construction will defeat the very purpose of swachhta mission and added that more importance should be attached to the sustainability of the programme and change in the mindset. The Minister informed that 8 to 10 percent of the Ministry's budget will be spent on various campaign strategies in future. Shri Singh also underlined that the participation of the citizen and ownership to the programme is the key to success.

Shri Singh gave awards to 24 sanitation champions from the state and along with the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh Shri Raman Singh. They also declared 110 Gram panchayats and 154 villages of the state as Open Defecation Free (ODF). Shri Raman Singh announced that his state will become ODF by December 2018.

Rural Sanitation and Water Supply week was inaugurated at Mohali in Punjab on 16th March by Minister of State for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav. This has become an annual feature after Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on 2nd October 2014 to realise its vision of 'Clean India' by October 2, 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.



SNC