

# ₹36,000cr boost for sanitation

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** In a boost to making rural India free from open defecation, the Centre has increased the grant for construction of a toilet under the Total Sanitation Campaign from Rs 4,600 to Rs 10,000.

The increase is in line with realistic estimates of construction, with many states having complained that the grants were inadequate.

The Cabinet Committee on

Economic Affairs (CCEA) cleared the rural development ministry's proposal, though with PM Manmohan Singh weighing in with directions for strict monitoring of use of funds.

Rural development minister Jairam Ramesh said, "You can construct a toilet in Rs 10,000. Those made earlier (with lesser funds) have turned into storerooms." The campaign has kept a target of 10 years for making the country

free of open defecation.

The sanitation campaign, rechristened Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, aims to promote use of toilets in the countryside to bring down open defecation that is linked to lack of hygiene. About 65% of Indians defecate in the open.

Ramesh said, "The Planning Commission is likely to increase the allocation for sanitation campaign from Rs 7,800 crore in 11th five-year plan to Rs 36,000 crore in 12th plan."