

## Letter to the Editor

### Availability of Sanitary Latrines in Karimnagar Mandal - Rural.

Sir,

The Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) is a flagship programme of the Government of India, and has achieved significant success over the last one decade. The coverage has increased significantly from 21 percent in 2001 (Census, 2001) to more than 65 percent, according to the TSC online monitoring system. The TSC can be considered one of the most effective programmes in rural sanitation across the world. The TSC's goal is to eradicate the practice of open defecation in the rural areas of the country, which it plans to achieve in 2012. In addition, India is also committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target.<sup>[1]</sup>

According to a recent report published by the United Nations (UN) – India has more mobile phones than toilets. This means that Indians can attend calls on their mobile phone more easily than attending nature's call, funny but true. "It is a tragic irony to think that in India, a country now wealthy enough that roughly half of the people own phones, about half cannot afford the basic necessity and dignity of a toilet," said Zafar Adeel, Director of United Nations University's Institute for Water, Environment and Health (IWEH).<sup>[2]</sup> Government of India has launched a programme: "Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan" ("Mission for a Clean India") to extend its activity nationwide.<sup>[3]</sup>

The Karimnagar District Collectorate and other NGOs had performed a cross sectional sanitary survey in rural part Karimnagar mandal for presence of Individual Sanitary Latrine (ISL) during July 2012. All houses were covered by the team. Total 20,933 houses were there in the mandal. Total 84.5% houses were having ISLs in their houses and 15.5% houses were not having ISLs. Majority of houses were having availability of ISL in Karimnagar mandal. Datta SS also reported 85.99% houses had a sanitary latrine in rural part of Tamil Nadu.<sup>[4]</sup> It has been estimated that diarrheal morbidity can be reduced by 32 per cent with improvements in sanitation.<sup>[5]</sup>

The District Collectorate had started a intensive campaign for constructing ISL (Rs. 4500 is given per house) and involved various NGOs and educational institutions to sponsor and create awareness in the area so that everyone should have access to ISL resulting in rural populations living in a clean, healthy environment.

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