

Demand to re-assess India's Open Defecation Free (ODF) status

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE (WEST BENGAL): On October 2, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, our country was declared to be open defecation free or ODF amid much fanfare this year.

As per data recently released by the National Statistical Office, only 71 per cent of rural households have access to toilets. The survey was carried out between July and October, 2018. It found that States which had been declared 100 per cent ODF before the survey began showed significant gaps in actual access to household toilets.

Almost 42 per cent of rural households in Jharkhand had no access to a toilet. In Tamil Nadu, the gap was 37 per cent, while Rajasthan had a gap of 34 per cent. In Gujarat, one of the earliest States to be declared ODF, nearly 25 per cent of all rural households had no toilet access. The other major States listed also had significant gaps: Karnataka 30 per cent; Madhya Pradesh 29 per cent; Andhra Pradesh 22 per cent; and Maharashtra 22 per cent.

Another cause for concern is that more than 50 per cent of rural Indian households with toilets have septic tanks, while another 21 per cent use single pits. In most cases, manual scavengers are employed to clean these tanks, which have resulted in their deaths. Only 10 per cent of toilets were built with the twin leach pit system, which safely composts waste on its own without any need for cleaning or disposal.

Sir, I would urge the Government to look into this and ensure that our country achieves 100 per cent ODF status in reality.

Demand to upgrade the Veer Surendra Sai University, Burla, Odisha as an Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Odisha): Sir, no nation can achieve spectacular growth in economy without sound base in science and technology which are directly linked to economic development. When our nation is poised for a revolution in manufacturing and infra, we need to move to create new research centres on science and technology in the form of IESTs, that is, Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology. There are plenty of opportunities in my State, Odisha, for industrial and technological growth. Hence more number of IESTs are required to be established in Odisha. The Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology established in 1956 as an Engineering College at Burla in Odisha satisfies all conditions to be upgraded as an