

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
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Whole of India
can be ODF
by early 2020

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government may be able to declare the whole country open defecation-free (ODF) by early next year, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri said in the Rajya Sabha on Friday.

Rural India had been declared open defecation-free on October 2, but urban India is yet to be given the tag.

According to the Ministry, West Bengal is implementing its own sanitation scheme. Without naming West Bengal, Mr. Puri said "this State" had said it would complete the work, including toilet construction, by December-end. "Rural India is open defecation-free. As for urban India, I am hoping that early next year, we will be able to declare the entire country open defecation-free, based on a third-party verification," he said.

He was speaking on a private member's Bill tabled by Prabhat Jha of the BJP on November 22, seeking a constitutional amendment to add participation in sanitation drives to the list of fundamental duties. Mr. Jha withdrew the Bill after Mr. Puri's reply, which listed the government's efforts at improving sanitation.

He said the Swachh Bharat had become a "people's movement" after it was launched as a government project by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014. He said 10 crore toilets had been built in rural India and 66 lakh individual household toilets in urban areas. Thirty-five States and Union Territories had been declared open defecation-free.