



Maharashtra to become Open Defecation Free by March 2018

Posted On: 06 FEB 2017 11:07AM by PIB Delhi

The Chief Secretary of Maharashtra, Shri Swadhin Kshatriya has conveyed to the Centre that the State will be declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) by March 2018. He said this in a meeting with the Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, in Mumbai, and mentioned that Maharashtra is on track to achieve this goal.

The Secretary was further informed that the Government of Maharashtra has a strong third party verification system for ODF declarations in the State, with three levels of verification. The Chief Secretary said that Maharashtra is not only aiming for ODF achievement, but also aiming to include handwashing, menstrual hygiene, community toilets etc. as part of Swachh Bharat implementation in the State. Multiple cleanliness campaigns – such as Clean Offices, Clean GPs, Clean Schools – are also underway in the State.

The Secretary, in turn, assured the State of full support from the Ministry in their efforts. Under the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak initiative, a Prerak will be provided at district-level in the State to support SBM(G) activities by the Ministry, in association with the Tata Trusts. The Secretary made a presentation to Chief Managing Directors of all Western Region PSUs in presence of Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises, to encourage them to contribute to the Swachh Bharat Mission. The presentation was well-received, with many PSUs mentioning initiatives currently undertaken by them, including school sanitation, toilets along highways etc. The Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises, stressed at the meeting that the PSUs must train their workers and management trainees as sanitation champions and agents of change.

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(Release ID: 1481824) Visitor Counter : 49

