

3. NSO debunks Swachh Bharat ODF Claims

Prelims Level: Pollution & Waste Management

Mains Level: GS-III Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Why in News?

- The latest National Statistical Office (NSO) survey on sanitation debunked the claims of an open defecation-free or ODF India made by the Centre's flagship Swachh Bharat scheme.

Swachh Bharat Report:

- The Swachh Bharat Mission declared India open defecation free on October 2, 2019.
- Large States which had been declared ODF – that is, 100% access to toilets and 100% usage – even before the NSO survey began included Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.
- Others which were declared ODF during the survey period included Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- In the first week of October 2018, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Grameen) said 25 States and Union Territories had been declared ODF, while toilet access across the country touched 95%.

NSO Claims:

- According to the NSO, almost 42% of rural households in Jharkhand had no access to a toilet at that time.
- In Tamil Nadu, the gap was 37%, followed by 34% in Rajasthan.
- In Gujarat, which was one of the earliest States declared ODF, back in October 2017, almost a quarter of all rural households had no toilet access.
- The other major States listed also had significant gaps: Karnataka (30%), MP (29%), Andhra Pradesh (22%) and Maharashtra (22%).
- NSO also said 28.7% of rural households had no toilet access at the time.
- With regard to this data “There may be respondent bias in the reporting of access to latrine as question on benefits received by the households from government schemes was asked prior to the question on access of households to latrine.”
- The 71% access to toilets was still a significant improvement over the situation during the last survey period in 2012, when only 40% of rural households had access to toilets.

Contradictory claims

According to the National Statistical Office's (NSO) latest report, in many States varying degrees of rural households lacked toilets. Map depicts the NSO data. The darker the shade, the more houses without toilets

