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Title : Need to construct toilets in every village under Total Sanitation Scheme of the National Rural Health Mission.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (AURANGABAD, BIHAR): The National Rural health Mission is a laudable concept because it seeks to increase public expenditure on health and correct the imbalance in our health care system. Even though more than seventh per cent of our population lives in the rural areas, only a quarter of that has access to health care system. The 25% of our population that is urban in character has access to 75% of the benefits of our health care system. The UPA Government therefore deserves to be complimented for this concept in the Rural Health Mission.

The Mission includes a Total Sanitation Scheme which, among other things, provides for toilets in individual households. This is indeed a commendable objective as it will be a major step towards providing our rural folk with modern amenities. The lack of this facility poses a big convenience to our womenfolk apart from being a drawback in our sanitation system. But providing these facilities will take time. Even as steps are taken towards achieving this target it is suggested that public toilets should be provided. It will be possible to plan and build them in much less time. For this, suitable public land should be identified for the toilets to be built in every village. They will plug a big gap in our rural sanitation system and form a legitimate part of the Mission.

I request the Minister of Health and Family Welfare to kindly consider this proposal positively.