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Status of Basic Amenities in Urban Areas of India

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ABSTRACT

The basic amenities for developed society are Electricity, Road, and Water (Can say Bijli, Sadak, Pani-BSP) in India. Similarly, at household level, these are Electricity, safe drinking water and toilet facilities at present is utmost important amenities. Amenities are thought to be necessary as these make life easier and pleasant. Basically, these are of three types. First, basic amenities which includes running water, electricity etc. Second, social amenities which make the social life pleasant-like schools, parks and infrastructural facilities. Third, civic amenities which refer to those services which are used by everyone like sanitation, burial ground, roads, drains, hospitals etc. In this an attempt is made to study the status of basic amenities in urban areas like source of drinking water, bathing and drainage facilities, toilets, hand washing facilities etc.

INTRODUCTION

Urban local bodies (ULBs) in India are traditionally mandated to undertake certain basic civic functions like water supply, roads, drains, street lighting and sanitation. They also perform certain regulatory functions like issue of trade licences, regulation of land use, issue of building permissions and removal of encroachments etc. The local bodies used to look after the infrastructural services and the social and livelihood aspects of the residents have been left to the residents themselves. The migration of rural people to urban areas during mid-70s and mushrooming of slums made the Governments and ULBs to ponder deeply on the needs of urban poor (including social inputs of health, literacy, livelihood and security) and rehabilitation of slum areas/poorer settlements in the municipal areas.

Status of Basic Facilities in Urban Areas

These variables include decent shelter, improved sanitation and toilet facilities, improved drainage, safe drinking water, and electricity. Table 1 presents the main source of drinking water in urban areas of different states.

Table 1

Urban Households by Main Source of Drinking Water, 2018
(In percentage)

States/UTs	Bottled Water	Tap/Piped water		Tubewell/ handpump	Well (Protected/Unprotected)	Spring (Protected/Unprotected)	Tanker (Public/Private)	Rain water Collection	Tank/pond/ river/canal/ other	Other Sources
		Within Premises	Outside Premises							
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	6.0	93.7	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Andhra Pradesh	28.6	44.6	15.6	10.2	0	0	1.0	0	0.1	0
Arunachal Pradesh	0	82.9	0.8	15.0	1.1	0	0	0	0.4	0
Assam	2.0	30.9	1.8	58.5	5.6	0	0.3	0	0.8	0
Bihar	4.4	18.4	1.5	75.8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	0	97.5	2.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Chhattisgarh	0.1	49.9	16.0	31.3	2.6	0.1	0	0	0	0
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	16.4	34.9	24.8	23.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daman & Diu	40.4	10.0	8.2	41.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Goa	2.9	96.0	0.7	0	0.4	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	13.3	76.4	2.4	7.5	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0
Haryana	8.2	76.6	1.8	12.8	0	0	0.6	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0.9	87.3	4.8	3.5	0.1	2.5	0.7	0	0.2	0
Jammu & Kashmir	0	80.7	2.7	12.5	0.7	3.2	0.3	0	0	0
Jharkhand	3.9	34.3	14.9	37.0	9.9	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	27.6	55.1	5.8	6.3	4.6	0	0.7	0	0	0
Kerala	0.9	24.7	3.1	6.2	65.1	0	0	0	0	0
Lakshadweep	0	0	3.4	1.2	95.3	0	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	2.0	68.3	6.8	19.8	1.3	0	1.8	0	0.2	0
Maharashtra	2.9	87.8	3.9	4.1	0.7	0	0.7	0	0	0
Manipur	2.6	42.6	15.4	0.1	5.7	3.9	10.7	0	6.3	12.8
Meghalaya	0.2	61.5	10.5	2.7	6.9	10.1	8	0	0.2	0
Mizoram	0	95.5	3.6	0	0.1	0.6	0	0	0.2	0
Nagaland	0	43.8	1.3	12.5	30.0	5.8	0	3.6	3.1	0
NCT of Delhi	13.6	72.1	5.1	5.7	0	0	3.2	0	0	0.2
Odisha	0	40.3	9.6	45.3	4.8	0	0	0	0	0
Puducherry	26.5	67.9	4.5	0	1.1	0	0	0	0	0
Punjab	0	76.6	0.5	22.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	3.0	83.8	3.2	5.1	0.3	0	1.7	1.0	0.6	1.2
Sikkim	0	92.7	0	0	0	7.3	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	23.4	42.6	16.4	11.3	0.8	0	5.4	0	0	0
Telangana	31.4	58.2	4.2	4.6	0	0	1.6	0	0	0
Tripura	0	46.8	6.1	43.2	3.4	0	0	0	0.5	0
Uttar Pradesh	13.0	43.5	2.9	40.1	0.2	0	0.4	0	0	0
Uttarakhand	0	78.5	0.3	20.6	0	0.6	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	8.1	38.7	25.9	25.3	0.5	0.1	0.6	0	0.1	0.6
India	12.2	56.9	8.1	17.1	4.1	0.1	1.3	0	0	0.2

Source: NSS 76th Round on Condition of Drinking Water, Sanitation and Housing, 2018

Based on the 2018 data on urban households' main sources of drinking water, significant disparities in water security and infrastructure are evident across India. At the national level, piped or tap water was the primary source for the majority (56.9%) of urban households, with a significant portion (12.2%) relying on bottled water, indicating concerns over tap water quality or availability. Groundwater, accessed through tubewells or handpumps, was the main source for 17.1% of households, highlighting a continued dependency on this resource.

The data reveals stark regional contrasts. States and Union Territories like Chandigarh (97.5%), Andaman & Nicobar Islands (93.7%), and Himachal Pradesh (87.3%) demonstrated near-universal access to piped water within premises.

Conversely, several states showed a heavy reliance on groundwater. For instance, 75.8% of urban households in Bihar depended on tubewells/handpumps, a trend also seen in Assam (58.5%) and Odisha (45.3%). The reliance on bottled water was exceptionally high in Daman & Diu (40.4%) and notable in southern states like Telangana (31.4%), Andhra Pradesh (28.6%), and Tamil Nadu (23.4%), suggesting issues with public water supply quality in these regions.

Unique regional dependencies were also apparent. Kerala stood out with 65.1% of urban households using protected/unprotected wells, while Lakshadweep was almost entirely dependent (95.3%) on springs. A few northeastern states, such as Manipur and Nagaland, displayed the most diverse mix of water sources, including a small but notable use of tankers, rainwater collection, and tank/pond/river water, reflecting specific geographical challenges and less centralized infrastructure. Overall, the data underscores the uneven progress in providing safe and reliable piped water access to all urban residents in India.

Access to Bathing, Drainage Facilities and Electricity

Table 2 gives the details of urban households with access to bathing, drainage facilities and electricity for domestic use, 2018.

Table 2

Urban Households with Access to Bathing, Drainage Facilities and Electricity for Domestic Use, 2018 (Percentage)

State/UTs	HH having access to the bathroom	HH by Type of Drainage			HHs having electricity for domestic use
		Covered	Open	No drainage	
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	100	30.2	63.0	6.9	100
Andhra Pradesh	96.5	73.6	17.3	9.0	99.9
Arunachal Pradesh	98.4	14.9	72.5	12.6	98.9
Assam	88.2	25.0	53.5	21.5	98.8
Bihar	85.6	67.6	25.7	6.6	99.6
Chandigarh	98.4	98.4	0.5	1.1	100
Chhattisgarh	80.4	55.4	35.0	9.5	99.3
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	55.1	75.0	11.2	13.8	100
Daman & Diu	73.6	65.6	32.9	1.5	100
Goa	89.6	91.6	6.5	1.9	100
Gujarat	98.7	87.8	6.9	5.3	98.2
Haryana	95.8	73.2	26.8	0.1	99.9
Himachal Pradesh	97.1	70.8	28.1	1.0	98.5
Jammu & Kashmir	77.6	78.6	18.6	2.8	99.8
Jharkhand	97.5	38.7	48.9	12.5	98.1
Karnataka	99.4	79.8	16.5	3.8	99.6
Kerala	100	65.8	16.7	17.5	99.9
Lakshadweep	90.8	35.4	14.7	49.9	100
Madhya Pradesh	91.3	65.5	29.0	5.5	99.6
Maharashtra	76.0	86.2	11.4	2.3	99.4
Manipur	99.5	3.2	77.8	19.1	99.6
Meghalaya	99.7	23.0	67.3	9.7	98.1
Mizoram	99.7	12.3	75.5	12.3	100
Nagaland	97.3	12.2	82.1	5.7	100
NCT of Delhi	92.3	80.7	18.0	1.3	99.3
Odisha	71.5	45.1	24.7	30.2	97
Puducherry	96.9	47.2	47.1	5.8	100
Punjab	99.5	90.2	8.5	1.3	100
Rajasthan	94.0	62.8	31.8	5.4	99.7
Sikkim	100	49.8	49.6	0.6	100
Tamil Nadu	95.4	63.8	26.3	9.8	99
Telangana	98.7	88.4	8.9	2.7	100
Tripura	54.3	9.9	50.2	39.9	99.5
Uttar Pradesh	84.5	70.2	26.2	3.6	96.9
Uttarakhand	99.8	69.5	29.2	1.4	99.5
West Bengal	79.8	37.2	38.2	24.7	99.2
India	91.3	69.7	22.3	8.0	99.1

Source: NSS 76th Round on Condition of Drinking Water, Sanitation and Housing, 2018

Based on the 2018 data, the access to basic amenities across Indian urban households reveals significant inter-state disparities alongside notable national achievements. Near-universal electricity access for domestic use is a key success story, with the national average at 99.1%. Several states and union territories, including Chandigarh, Goa, and Punjab, have achieved 100% coverage, while Odisha (97%) and Uttar Pradesh (96.9%) lag slightly behind yet still maintain high penetration.

Access to bathing facilities (bathrooms) is also high nationally at 91.3%, though this masks considerable regional variation. States like Kerala, Sikkim, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands report universal access (100%), while others struggle significantly. Tripura (54.3%) and Dadra & Nagar Haveli (55.1%) show the lowest access, indicating substantial gaps in basic infrastructure within their urban areas.

The type of drainage facility presents the most varied picture of urban infrastructure. While a promising 69.7% of urban households nationally are connected to covered drainage, a further 22.3% rely on open drains, which pose public health risks, and 8% have no drainage at all. The quality of drainage infrastructure varies dramatically. States like Chandigarh (98.4%), Maharashtra (86.2%), and Gujarat (87.8%) demonstrate highly developed covered drainage systems. In stark contrast, several northeastern states, such as Manipur (3.2% covered), Nagaland (12.2%), and Mizoram (12.3%), rely overwhelmingly on open drains. This indicates a clear divide in the quality of sanitation and waste management infrastructure between more developed states and those in the northeastern region.

Access and Types of Latrine Facilities

Table 3 presents the urban households with access and types of latrine facilities.

Table 3

Urban Households with Access and Types of Latrine Facilities, 2018
(In Percentage)

State/UTs	HH with latrine facilities	Types of Latrines		
		Water Closet	Pit	Others
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	99.9	85.8	0	14.2
Andhra Pradesh	96.8	99.8	0.2	0
Arunachal Pradesh	100	95.6	3.4	0.9
Assam	99.3	87	12.7	0.2
Bihar	95	98.5	0.7	0.1
Chandigarh	100	100	0	0
Chhattisgarh	97.1	96.5	3.5	0
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	100	97	0	3
Daman & Diu	100	100	0	0
Goa	100	100	0	0
Gujarat	96.3	99.8	0.1	0
Haryana	99.8	98.6	1.3	0
Himachal Pradesh	97.5	100	0	0
Jammu & Kashmir	97.8	98.4	1.1	0.4
Jharkhand	91.8	95.2	3.5	0
Karnataka	95.7	96.9	2.7	0.3
Kerala	100.1	95.3	4.6	0
Lakshadweep	100	92.7	7.3	0
Madhya Pradesh	94.3	99.3	0.7	0.1
Maharashtra	98.6	99.5	0.5	0.1
Manipur	100	78.8	21.3	0

Meghalaya	100	92.1	7.2	0.7
Mizoram	100	93.2	4.8	0
Nagaland	100.1	97.1	2.1	0.8
NCT of Delhi	99.5	99.8	0.3	0
Odisha	80.9	88.8	11.1	0
Puducherry	96.9	98.5	0.9	0.6
Punjab	99.9	95.6	4.4	0
Rajasthan	95.5	99.3	0.1	0
Sikkim	100	98.2	1.9	0
Tamil Nadu	93.9	98.9	0.9	0
Telangana	98.5	99.7	0.2	0
Tripura	100	73.7	25.9	0.4
Uttar Pradesh	93.4	99	0.8	0
Uttarakhand	99.8	100	0	0
West Bengal	97	88.7	10.8	0.3
India	96.3	97.3	2.4	0.1

Note: In water closet, all categories related to toilets with flush system provided in NSS are included in pit latrines, all categories related to pit latrines provided in NSS are included in other latrines, composting toilet and others are included

Source: NSS 76th Round on Condition of Drinking Water, Sanitation and Housing, 2018

Based on the 2018 data, access to latrine facilities in urban Indian households was nearly universal at the national level, with 96.3% of households reporting having a facility. However, significant disparities existed between states and union territories. While many regions like Chandigarh, Goa, and all states in the Northeast reported near-total or complete (100%) coverage, Odisha lagged considerably behind with only 80.9% of its urban households having access to a latrine.

Hand-washing Facilities

Table 4 furnishes the details of households with Hand-washing Facilities in Urban India in different states and union territories.

Table 4

Households with Hand-washing Facilities in Urban India, 2018
(In percentage)

States/UTs	Percentage of Households with		
	Availability of water with soap and detergent in or around the latrine used	Practice of hand washing before meal with water and soap/detergent	Practice of hand washing after defecation with water and soap/detergent
Andaman & Nicobar	99.4	82.2	99.0
Andhra Pradesh	78.3	51.8	73.0
Arunachal Pradesh	80.5	69.1	92.7
Assam	88.6	44.7	94.3
Bihar	87.1	30.8	91.0
Chandigarh	95.5	80.0	97.3
Chhattisgarh	95.0	56.9	98.2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	99.0	36.2	90.6

Daman & Diu	61.1	5.9	97.2
Goa	94.6	69.9	100
Gujarat	85.9	60.7	89.5
Haryana	94.3	76.8	95.8
Himachal Pradesh	90.6	77.6	99.2
Jammu & Kashmir	89.3	60.1	90.7
Jharkhand	85.0	32.8	86.5
Karnataka	84.6	67.3	83.8
Kerala	92.3	56.0	93.1
Lakshadweep	97.0	34.2	97.0
Madhya Pradesh	93.4	57.4	95.8
Maharashtra	85.3	73.2	96.6
Manipur	57.3	54.7	61.4
Meghalaya	55.6	60.7	75.0
Mizoram	84.8	59.5	75.4
Nagaland	66.8	55.1	68.8
NCT of Delhi	87.3	73.9	97.5
Odisha	87.7	42.2	83.4
Puducherry	85.6	78.6	87.1
Punjab	93.4	81.8	99.4
Rajasthan	92.0	53.4	93.3
Sikkim	93.4	90.6	98.5
Tamil Nadu	67.3	41.3	61.5
Telangana	87.1	52.4	86.8
Tripura	68.8	44.0	82.1
Uttar Pradesh	90.5	44.8	96.1
Uttarakhand	98.8	71.4	99.3
West Bengal	79.3	47.7	93.2
India	84.8	56.0	88.3

Source: NSS 76th Round on Condition of Drinking Water, Sanitation and Housing, 2018

Table 4 examines a 2018 dataset detailing the percentage of urban households across Indian states and union territories (UTs) that engage in key hygiene practices. The data reveals significant disparities between the availability of hand-washing facilities and the actual practice of hand-washing at critical times.

1. Key National Overview

At the all-India level, the data presents a mixed picture of hygiene awareness: - After defecation hygiene is strong: 88.3% of urban households practice hand-washing with soap and water after defecation, indicating a high level of awareness regarding post-sanitation hygiene. - Facility availability is good, but not universal: 84.8% of households have the necessary facilities (water with soap/detergent in or around the latrine), suggesting that infrastructure is not the primary barrier for the remaining population. - Pre-meal hygiene is a major concern: Only 56.0% of households practice hand-washing with soap before meals. This significant gap highlights a critical public health vulnerability, as this practice is crucial for preventing the spread of foodborne illnesses.

2. Notable Disparities and Outliers

The state-wise data reveals striking variations: - Top Performers: States and UTs such as Andaman & Nicobar Islands (99.4%), Uttarakhand (98.8%), and Punjab (99.4%) exhibit near-universal practice of hand-washing after defecation. Sikkim (90.6%) stands out for its exceptionally high rate of hand-washing before meals, far exceeding the national average. - Concerning Performers: - Daman & Diu presents a puzzling case: while 97.2% wash their hands after defecation, only a remarkably low 5.9% do so before meals. This indicates a severe cultural or educational gap specifically regarding mealtime hygiene. - Bihar (30.8%), Jharkhand (32.8%), and Dadra & Nagar Haveli (36.2%) also report alarmingly low rates of pre-meal hand-washing. - Manipur (57.3%), Meghalaya (55.6%), and Nagaland (66.8%) have the lowest availability of hand-washing facilities near latrines, which correlates with their lower rates of hand-washing after defecation. - The "Practice vs. Availability" Gap: Some states with excellent facility availability show a lag in practice, particularly before meals. For example: - Chhattisgarh has 95.0% availability but only 56.9% practice

before meals. - Lakshadweep has 97.0% availability but only 34.2% practice before meals. This suggests that infrastructure alone is insufficient; urgent behavioral change communication is needed.

3. Critical Observations and Implications

The Pre-Meal Hand-Washing Gap: The most consistent finding across states is the low percentage of hand-washing before meals compared to after defecation. This suggests that public health campaigns have been more successful in linking hygiene with sanitation than with food safety. Regional Patterns: While not absolute, certain clusters emerge. Northeastern states (e.g., Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura) generally show lower figures across all three categories. In contrast, northern states (e.g., Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh) and certain UTs tend to perform better. ublic Health Priority: The data clearly identifies which states require targeted interventions. States like Bihar and Jharkhand need comprehensive hygiene education, while campaigns in states like Daman & Diu and Chhattisgarh should specifically address the importance of mealtime hygiene.

CONCLUSION

The 2018 data illustrate that urban India has largely adopted the practice of hand-washing after defecation, reflecting the positive outcomes of sanitation-focused health initiatives. However, the analysis uncovers a significant weakness in pre-meal hand-washing practices nationwide. The considerable state-level variations indicate that a uniform national policy is inadequate. Future public health strategies must be tailored to address specific regional gaps, moving beyond infrastructure provision to focus on behavioural change, especially in promoting hand-washing as an essential practice before eating to reduce diarrheal diseases and improve overall community health.

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