

Indian rail is world's largest 'open toilet': minister

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A top Indian minister has proposed projects worth \$130 million project to rid India of the scourge of open defecation and clean up a rail system he described as the world's "largest open toilet", reports said Friday.

[Rural Development](#) Minister Jairam Ramesh told a meeting in New Delhi on Thursday that India, where 130 million households are without a latrine, accounted for 60 percent of the global volume of open defecation.

"This is a matter of great shame, anguish, sorrow, and actually anger," Ramesh, who is also responsible for the Ministry of [Drinking Water](#) and Sanitation, was quoted as saying by the Times of India.

The minister unveiled a proposal to spend 1.5 billion rupees (\$28 million) to provide 100,000 bio-[toilets](#) to villages across India in the next two years.

He also proposed a 5.0 billion rupee project to replace the open-hole toilets on the 50,000 coaches that ply India's vast railway network with bio-toilets over the next five years.

Carrying 11 million passengers a day, Indian Railways "is really the largest open toilet in the world", Ramesh said, adding that his ministry would be willing to pick up half the cost of the toilet re-fit.

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