

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1229
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2018**

SEWAGE CLEANING WITHOUT SAFETY EQUIPMENTS

1229. SHRI P.L. PUNIA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that even today cleaning of sewage, septic tanks and chemical tanks of industrial units is being carried out by workers by going inside the tanks without safety equipments; and

(b) if so, the steps being proposed to be taken by Government to effectively enforce the existing law in this regard?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)**

(a): Yes Sir,

(b): Hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks is prohibited under section 7 of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013). Chapter II of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013 (MS Rules, 2013) prescribes the obligation of the employer towards employees engaged in the cleaning of sewer or septic tank. Any person, employer or agency who violates the provisions of the MS Act, 2013 in this regard is punishable with fine upto Rs. 5 lakh or imprisonment upto 5 years or both. National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation also organizes workshops in municipalities for engineers, sanitary inspectors, sanitary workers and contractors on safe cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and also create awareness about the provisions of "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013" (MS Act, 2013) and "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013" (MS Rules, 2013) regarding employer's obligations to provide safety gear/equipment and ensure safety precautions.

As regards cleaning of chemical tanks in the industrial units, the Ministry of Labour and Employment has informed that the provision of Section 7 A of the Factories Act, 1948 lay down the duties of the occupier (i.e. the person who has ultimate control over the affairs of the factory) to ensure safety and health of the workers employed in the factory. The provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 and the Rules made thereunder are enforced by the concerned State Governments/Union Territories through their Factory Inspectors.
