

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1710
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.12.2018**

WORKING CONDITION OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS

1710. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE:

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

- (a) whether the death of sanitation workers is a grim reminder of the hostile conditions that confront manual scavenging across the country;
- (b) if so, whether manual scavenging has been prohibited by law;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the details of action taken against the authorities to take the manual scavenging work from sanitation workers;
- (d) whether the socio-economic and caste census of 2011 had identified 1,80,657 households of manual scavengers across the country;
- (e) if so, whether the working conditions of these sanitation workers have remained virtually unchanged over the years; and
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

- (a): There has been no report of death of sanitation workers engaged in manual scavenging. However, there have been reports of death of persons while cleaning sewers and septic tanks.
- (b): Yes Sir, it is prohibited under "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013" (MS Act, 2013).
- (c): Under Section 5 of the MS Act, 2013 no person, local authority or any agency shall with effect from 06.12.2013 engage or employ either directly or indirectly, a manual scavenger, every person so engaged or employed shall stand discharged immediately from any obligation, express or implied, to do manual scavenging. Whosoever contravenes these provisions shall be punishable with fine upto Rs.1 lakh or imprisonment upto 2 years or both. Under Section 7 of the MS Act, 2013 no person, local authority or any agency shall, from such date as the State Government may notify, which shall not be later than one year from the date of commencement of this Act, engage or employ, either directly or indirectly, any person for hazardous cleaning of a sewer or a septic tank'. Whoever contravenes the provisions of

Section 7 shall be punishable with fine upto Rs. 5 lakhs or imprisonment upto five years or both.

(d): Ministry of Rural Development have informed that as per the Socio-Economic and Caste Census-2011 conducted by it 1,68,066 households have declared manual scavenging as their occupation.

(e) and (f): the Ministry of Social Justice has been implementing Self Employment Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers and their dependents to improve their working conditions. The Number of beneficiaries who have been provided the above Rehabilitation benefits upto 23.12.2018 are as under:

- (i) Onetime cash assistance to 25,944.
- (ii) Skill Development Training to 13,587.
- (iii) Capital Subsidy to 955 beneficiaries who have availed bank loans for self employment projects.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is also implementing a Scheme titled "Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards". Children of manual scavengers are also eligible for this scholarship.

In addition, the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation is also implementing various schemes for the welfare of safai karamchairs and their dependents.
