

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1581
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.03.2020**

PREVALENCE OF MANUAL SCAVENGING

1581. DR. L. HANUMANTHAIAH:

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

- (a) whether despite the stringent provisions in the law, manual scavenging is still prevalent unabated in our country;
- (b) the reaction of Government on this and steps taken to eradicate this most unhumanitarian service;
- (c) whether according to a national survey conducted in 18 States, a total of 48,345 manual scavengers have been identified till January 31, 2020, why Government is not prohibiting employment as manual scavengers, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether several mechanized systems have been introduced for sewage cleaning, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a): The reports regarding existence of manual scavengers are verified in consultation with the concerned State Government. However, the State Government have denied existence of manual scavenging.
- (b): The main reason for manual scavenging is the existence of insanitary latrines which require manual cleaning. Under Swachh Bharat Mission implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation the insanitary latrines have been identified and converted into sanitary latrines to eliminate the need for manual cleaning of toilets. In addition, the Act also provides stringent penalties of imprisonment upto 2 years or fine upto Rs. 1 lakh or both if any person or agency engages any person for manual scavenging.
- (c): Manual scavenging is prohibited under Section 5 of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act 2013)" with effect from 06.12.2013. No person, local authority or any agency shall engage or employ either directly and indirectly a manual scavenger and every person so engaged or employed shall stand discharged immediately from any obligation, express or employed to do manual scavenging with effect from the above date. National survey has been undertaken to identify all those persons who were engaged as manual scavenger as on 06.12.2013 to provide rehabilitation benefits which include onetime cash assistance, skill development training, loans at concessional rate of interest and subsidy to take up alternative employment.
- (d): Sanitation being a State subject, the local authorities identify and adopt mechanized solution suitable to the local conditions. No data in this regard is maintained by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.