

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT  
RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO -1096  
ANSWERED ON - 31/07/2024

**DEATHS OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS**

1096. SMT RANJEET RANJAN  
SMT PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI

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

- (a) the details of total number of people engaged in manual scavenging, with State/UT-wise data;
- (b) the number of people died while cleaning septic tanks in the last five years;
- (c) the details of steps Government has taken to implement the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013; and
- (d) the details of safety measures which are in place for workers entering septic tanks?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)

- (a) There is no report of practice of manual scavenging currently in the country. However, two surveys were conducted in 2013 and 2018 to identify erstwhile manual scavengers, State-wise number of identified manual scavengers is at **Annexure**.
- (b) 377 persons have died in State/UTs, during last five years from 2019 to 2023 due to hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.
- (c) The following steps have been taken for effective implementation of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013):-
  - (i) State Governments and Union Territories have been requested to implement the provisions of the Act.
  - (ii) Regular meeting of Central Monitoring Committee (CMC) is convened to monitor implementation of the Act.
- (d) As per "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013 (MS Rules, 2013)" it is mandatory for the employer to provide the safety gear, devices and ensure safety precautions as prescribed in the Rules.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has issued the following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/Advisory for cleaning of sewer and septic tanks:-

- i. SOP for cleaning of Sewer/Septic tank.
- ii. Advisory for technical and managerial interventions for ensuring safety during sewer and septic tank cleaning through Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU).
- iii. Ready Reckoner for Urban Local Bodies for ensuring safety of sanitation workers.

In addition, NAMASTE scheme is being implemented in all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the country to ensure the following:-

- Zero fatalities in sanitation work in India
- All sanitation work to be performed by skilled workers
- No sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter
- Increased awareness amongst sanitation services seekers (individuals and institutions) to seek services from registered and skilled sanitation workers
- Strengthening and capacitating Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs) to ensure safe delivery of mechanized sanitation services.
- Empowering of Sanitation workers to run sanitation enterprises and promote mechanization of cleaning operation through availability of machines.

The scheme also formalizes sewer septic tank workers by profiling them, providing occupational safety training, safety gears and extension of health insurance to ensure safe cleaning with mechanized equipment and enhancing their dignity.

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Annexure

Annexure referred in reply to part (a) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1096 for answer on 31.07.2024 regarding Deaths of manual scavengers

State-wise number of identified manual scavengers

S.NO.	State/UT	Number of identified manual scavengers
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1793
2.	Assam	3921
3.	Bihar	131
4.	Chhattisgarh	3
5.	Gujarat	105
6.	Jharkhand	192
7.	Karnataka	2927
8.	Kerala	518
9.	Madhya Pradesh	510
10.	Maharashtra	6325
11.	Odisha	230
12.	Punjab	231
13.	Rajasthan	2673
14.	Tamil Nadu	398
15.	Uttar Pradesh	32473
16.	Uttarakhand	4988
17.	West Bengal	680
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58098</b>

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