

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO -290
ANSWERED ON - 27/11/2024

PROTECTION OF SAFAI KARAMCHARIS

290. SHRI S SELVAGANABATHY

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

- (a) whether Government maintains data on the number of safai karamcharis who have died due to health and safety hazards related to cleaning sewers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken to conduct a study in this regard;
- (d) the measures in place to protect the health and safety of safai karamcharis cleaning sewers;
- (e) the details of the State/UTs that implement safety procedures for safai karamcharis; and
- (f) the directives issued by Government to the State/UTs that do not implement safety procedures for safai karamcharis?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)

- (a) and (b): State-wise details of persons who have lost their lives due to hazardous cleaning of sewer/septic tanks is at **Annexure-I**.
- (c): A study was carried out in 2023.
- (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.
- iv. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has also been organising Safaimitra Suraksha Shivirs nationwide through ULBs to provide health checkups and linkage to social welfare schemes.

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.

(e) and (f): The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has issued comprehensive advisories and guidelines to all States and UTs from time to time on safety procedures for maintaining sewers and septic tanks, ERSU set up, and machinery requirements. These advisories have been further reinforced through regular video conferences and workshops.

Under the SBM-U 2.0, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has sanctioned INR 371 Crores to 26 States/UTs for procuring desludging vehicles till date. 2,585 desludging vehicles have been sanctioned as reported by the States/UTs. Details are at **Annexure-II**.

Annexure-I

Annexure-I referred in reply to parts (a) and (b) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 290 for answer on 27.11.2024 regarding Protection of Safai Karamcharis.

**State-wise details of death of persons in sewer and septic tanks from 1993
(as on 31.10.2024)**

S No	Name of State/UT	Total Number of sewer death
1	Andhra Pradesh	28
2	Bihar	8
3	Chhatisgarh	1
4	Chandigarh	6
5	Dadar& Nagar Haveli	3
6	Delhi	116
7	Goa	7
8	Gujarat	183
9	Haryana	115
10	Jharkhand	4
11	Karnataka	93
12	Kerala	13
13	Maharashtra	87
14	Madhya Pradesh	23
15	Odisha	2
16	Puducherry	8
17	Punjab	47
18	Rajasthan	55
19	Tamil Nadu	253
20	Telangana	25
21	Tripura	2
22	Uttarakhand	9
23	Uttar Pradesh	133
24	West Bengal	27
	Total	1248

Annexure-II

Annexure-II referred in reply to parts (e) and (f) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 290 for answer on 27.11.2024 regarding Protection of Safai Karamcharis.

Name of States/UTs which provided desludging Vehicles under SBM-U 2.0

S.NO.	Name of State/UT
1.	Arunachal Pradesh
2.	Andhra Pradesh
3.	Andman & Nicobar Island
4.	Bihar
5.	Daman, Diu & Nagar Haveli
6.	Gujarat
7.	Haryana
8.	Himachal Pradesh
9.	Jammu & Kashmir
10.	Jharkhand
11.	Karnataka
12.	Kerala
13.	Madhya Pradesh
14.	Maharashtra
15.	Meghalaya
16.	Mizoram
17.	Nagaland
18.	Odisha
19.	Punjab
20.	Puducherry
21.	Rajasthan
22.	Sikkim
23.	Tamil Nadu
24.	Tripura
25.	Uttar Pradesh
26.	West Bengal
