

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 2216
ANSWERED ON – 11/03/2026

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SAFAI KARAMCHARIS

2216. DR. K. LAXMAN

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

- (a) the number of safai karamcharis identified and rehabilitated under the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme and its impact on their socioeconomic upliftment;
- (b) the status and outcomes of one-time cash assistance and skill training provided to safai karamcharis and their dependents for alternative livelihoods;
- (c) whether surveys have been conducted in the last two years to identify and support manual scavengers in urban and rural Telangana; and
- (d) measures taken to ensure complete mechanisation of sewer and septic tank cleaning across municipalities in Telangana?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)

- (a) 89,248 Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and 2,21,954 Waste Pickers (WPs) have been identified and validated, as on 05.03.2026, under the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme whose objective is to formalise them and to provide social security benefits like Ayushman Cards, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits and to provide upfront capital subsidy for procurement of mechanised equipment to enable them to have sustainable livelihoods.
- (b) During two surveys conducted in 2013 and 2018 for identification of Manual Scavengers, 58,098 eligible Manual Scavengers have been identified. Steps taken for rehabilitation and alternative livelihood opportunities for identified manual scavengers under Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) is as under:-
 - i. One Time Cash Assistance (OTCA) of Rs. 40,000/- per family has been provided to all identified 58,098 manual scavengers.

- ii. Skill Development Training has been provided to 27,928 manual scavengers and their dependents with stipend @ Rs. 3,000/- per month during the training period. The successfully trained candidates are also provided Government recognized training certificates and assistance for sustainable employments.
- iii. Capital Subsidy upto Rs. 5,00,000/- has been provided to 2,674 manual scavengers and their dependents to take up alternate self-employment projects.

(c) A fresh survey of manual scavengers, as per the provisions of the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” has been conducted in all districts of the country including the State of Telangana under which no manual scavenger has been found.

(d) Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-U) 2.0 launched on 1st October, 2021 includes a new component i.e. Used Water management (UWM) with one of the objectives as eradication of hazardous entry into sewers and septic tanks and sustaining elimination of manual cleaning, through mechanization of sewer and septic tank cleaning operations. Central share funds for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) with population less than 1 lakh are released for procuring adequate number of septic tank de-sludging equipment, etc. Projects worth of Rs. 934 crore having central share of Rs. 463 crore have been approved for the State of Telangana under Used Water Management (UWM) component.

In the State of Telangana, 37 Safety Device Kits have been provided to Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs) under the NAMASTE Scheme. Further, under the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) component of NAMASTE/ SRMS scheme, upfront capital subsidy of Rs. 2.45 crore has been released for procurement of 26 units of mechanized cleaning equipment / vehicles by 71 beneficiaries under 5 Urban Local Bodies.
