

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT  
RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2334  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.03.2026**

**PROTECTION OF SANITATION WORKERS**

**2334. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA:**

**Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:**

- (a) the rationale for excluding sanitation workers from the heat protection measures under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code of 2020;**
- (b) whether it is a fact that 90 per cent of deaths of workers have taken place due to lack of proper protective gear; and**
- (c) if so, details of steps taken to prevent the same?**

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT  
(SUSHRI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE)**

**(a) to (c): The Central Government has enacted the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH&WC) Code 2020, came into force on 21.11.2025, to regulate the occupational safety, health and working conditions of the persons employed in establishments including building or other construction work, factories, mining etc. The provisions of OSH & WC Code 2020 and rules, regulations and standards framed thereunder are implemented by the appropriate government.**

**Some deaths have occurred in States/UTs due to hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and non-observance of safety precautions as prescribed under the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” and “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013” and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.**

**Contd..2/-**

**To tackle hazardous cleaning of Sewer and Septic Tanks, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in convergence with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched the “National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)” Scheme in 2023-24. The objective is to ensure safety and dignity of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and to empower them socially and economically. The aim is to achieve zero fatality in sanitation work and to ensure that no sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter. Major steps taken to prevent deaths of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers under the scheme are as under:-**

- (a) Personal Protective Equipment Kits to SSWs.**
- (b) Occupation safety training to SSWs.**
- (c) Safety devices to Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs) in larger Urban Local Bodies.**
- (d) Upfront Capital Subsidy for sanitation related machinery to sanitation workers, their groups of maximum five persons and Private Sanitation Service Operators (PSSOs).**
- (e) Workshops on prevention of hazardous cleaning of sewer and septic tanks.**
- (f) Appointment of Responsible Sanitation Authority.**

**\*\*\*\*\***