

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4446
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2021**

MANUAL SCAVENGING

4446. KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE:

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

- (a) whether the Government is planning to amend the Manual Scavenging Act in order to make mechanised cleaning of sewers and septic mandatory and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to redefine manual scavenging with an emphasis on categorisation of sanitation workers and if so, the details thereof ;
- (c) whether the Central Mechanical Engineering Institute (CSIR-MERI) has developed a mechanised system to help address the menace of Manual Scavenging and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to grant funds to civic workers for buying cleaning machines and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government is establishing a National 24x7 Helpline number where cases of manual scavenging can be reported and if so, the details thereof ; and
- (f) the measures being taken by the Government for the protection of the health of manual scavengers in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a): 1. There is no such proposal to amend the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013) for the following reasons:

Under section 33 of the above Act, “it shall be the duty of every local authority and other agency to use appropriate technology appliances for cleaning of sewers, septic tanks and other spaces within their control with a view to eliminating the need for the manual handling of excreta in the process of their cleaning”.

2. Under Rule 3 of the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013 (MS Rules, 2013) no person shall be allowed to clean a sewer manually, except:-

(i) For the removal concrete or FRP (Fibre reinforce Plastic) or damaged manhole door where mechanical equipments cannot be put into operation.

(ii) For inter-linking the newly laid sewer main with the existing sewer main, in case of sewer of size of more than 300 mm diameter.

(iii) For removal of submersible pump sets fixed at the bottom of the suction wells.

(iv) For the reconstruction of the manhole or rectification of the sewer main.

(v) Any circumstance, when it is absolutely necessary to have manual sewage cleaning, after the CEO of the local authority has permitted to do so after recording in writing the specific valid reasons for allowing such cleaning.

(b): There is no such proposal. However, we are granting capital subsidy for purchase of equipment for mechanise cleaning of sewer and septic tank to avoid any accident due to manual cleaning.

(c): Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) has informed that its constituent laboratory, Central Mechanical Engineering Research, Durgapur has developed a prototype trolley mounted machine with engine operated slurry pump and filtrated systems for mechanised cleaning of sewer system for 500 people population.

(d): National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing a Scheme, “Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) under which loans are provided to safai karamcharis, manual scavengers & their dependants upto Rs10 lakhs for procurement of sanitation related instruments/vehicles used for mechanised cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. In case of Self Help Groups of the above, the maximum loan is upto Rs. 50.00 lakh. Subsidy upto a maximum of Rs.3,25,000 per beneficiary is provided under Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) to those who avail such loans.

(e): There is no proposal for setting up a National 24x7 helpline number for reporting cases of manual scavenging. However, a Mobile Application “Swachhta Abhiyan App” was launched on 24.12.2020, for uploading the data relating to insanitary latrines and manual scavengers, If any engaged there.

(f): Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Health Authority (NHA) to provide Health insurance benefits to Manual Scavengers households under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), upto Rs. 5.00 lakhs.
