

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 718
TO BE ANSWERED ON JULY 24, 2025**

MODEL CONTRACTING FRAMEWORK UNDER SBM-U

NO. 718. DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE:

SHRI RAJESH VERMA:

SHRI RAVINDRA DATTARAM WAIKAR:

SHRI NARESH GANPAT MHASKE:

SMT. SHAMBHAVI:

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has introduced a new Model Contracting Framework under the Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban (SBM-U) to improve sanitation service delivery;**
- (b) if so, whether this framework ensures the safety, dignity and welfare of sanitation workers and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether the framework encourages participation of Private Sanitation Service Operators and community-based sanitation workers and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) the estimated number of households relying on septic tanks and the importance of regular desludging in urban areas; and**
- (e) whether the Government is providing support to Urban Local Bodies for effective implementation of this framework and if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI TOKHAN SAHU)**

(a) to (c) : Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), has issued Model Empanelment and Contract documents in June, 2025 to guide Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in engaging Private Sanitation Service Operators (PSSOs).

This framework aims to establish clear legal and operational guidelines for delivering safe, mechanized services in compliance with the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation (PEMSR) Act, 2013.

The model contract document establishes the terms of services for sewer and septic tank cleaning services. It also defines the roles and responsibilities of city and private operator, service level benchmarks, and cost of services to citizens. It further sets the terms for penalties, termination and blacklisting of private operators that violate the safety protocols causing risks to the health and safety of sanitation workers and failing to perform mechanized cleaning services under this contract.

Besides ensuring safety, dignity and safe mechanized sewer and septic tank cleaning by sanitation workers, these model documents encourage private entities such as cooperative societies, self-help groups (SHGs), Sani-entrepreneurs, or Micro-entrepreneurs etc. involved in sewer and septic tank cleaning services to register with cities.

(d) : Out of an estimated 42 crore urban population in India, about 50% (4.5 crore households) use septic tanks. This indicates a critical need for regular desludging services to safely remove and dispose of faecal sludge at designated treatment locations. Around 35% of the population is connected to sewer networks that require regular maintenance for efficient wastewater flow to treatment plants. Both sewer systems and septic tanks need regular cleaning - sewer manholes must be cleared of blockages, and septic tanks must be desludged regularly.

(e) : Financial assistance packages are available for SHGs and Sani-entrepreneurs to procure mechanical equipment and setup businesses as mechanical cleaning service providers through National Safai Karamcharis Development Corporation (NSKFDC). In addition, the cities are also financially supported to procure adequate numbers of septic tank desludging equipment under Used Water Management (UWM) component of Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban 2.0.
