

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

**STARRED QUESTION NO. *37
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.07.2022**

SAFETY OF SEWERAGE AND SEPTIC TANK CLEANING WORKERS

***37. SHRI SUBRAT PATHAK:
SHRI MANOJ TIWARI:**

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that sewerage and septic tank cleaning workers are still working in pathetic conditions and often lose their life while on job;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the total number of such workers who died while cleaning sewers and septic tanks during each of the last five years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to formulate a scheme to introduce sustainable solutions to prevent the deaths of workers while cleaning the sewers and septic tanks and if so, the details and the salient features thereof alongwith the action proposed/ taken with the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) in this regard;
- (d) the time by which such scheme is likely to be implemented; and
- (e) the details of other measures taken/being taken by the Government for the safety of sewer and septic tanks cleaners?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred in reply to parts (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No.37 for answer on 19.07.2022 raised by Shri Subrat Pathak and Shri Manoj Tiwari regarding "Safety of Sewerage and Septic Tank Cleaning Workers".

(a) and (b): The Government takes a serious cognizance of the deaths occurring 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 Rules, 2013".

State-wise details of persons who are reported to have died due to hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks during the last five and current years are at **Annexure**.

(c) and (d): CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-CMERI), Durgapur, a constituent laboratory of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed an integrated solution for mechanized drain cleaning in a scientific way in line with "The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013".

The mechanized sewage cleaning system has been developed for urban and local bodies with a population density 5000. It can clean the blockage of up to 300 mm sewer line. The system is equipped with slurry dispensing unit for sludge collection, a multistage mechanical filtration, high-pressure jetting system, desilting mechanism and post-cleaning inspection unit. The main features of the system are to collect the sludge (Grey) water, filtration of the sludge (grey) water for utilization in the blockage cleaning, the high-pressure multi-jet cleaning system to suit the tough Indian blockage conditions and the hydraulically operated desilting mechanism with moveable type collection bucket to remove the silt from the manhole and collect in the collection bucket. The technology has been transferred to industries for its production and commercialization.

(e): The Government has formulated a scheme "National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)". The NAMASTE project, is a joint project of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- a. Zero fatalities in sanitation work in India.
- b. All sanitation work to be performed by skilled workers.
- c. No sanitation workers should come in direct contact with human faecal matter.
- d. Sanitation workers are to be collectivized into SHGs and are empowered to run sanitation enterprises.
- e. All Sewer and Septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) have access to alternative livelihoods.
- f. Strengthened supervisory and monitoring systems at national, state and ULB levels to ensure enforcement and monitoring of safe sanitation work.
- g. Increased awareness amongst sanitation services seekers (individuals and institutions) to seek services from registered and skilled sanitation workers.

2. The following measures have been taken for the benefit of sanitation workers and their dependants to provide sustainable livelihood and to promote 100% mechanization, specially cleaning of sewers, septic tanks, desilting of drains, garbage lifting, sludge handling, solid waste disposal etc.:-

- i. Under the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) concessional loans are provided to sanitation workers and their dependants and the urban local bodies for procurement of sanitation related equipments, machines and vehicles costing upto Rs. 50.00 lakh per unit.
- ii. The Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) has been revised from 2020-21 to provide capital subsidy upto Rs. 5.00 lakh to sanitation workers and their dependants for sanitation related projects.
- iii. Under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme, free short duration upskilling training is provided to the sanitation workers. The candidates are taught about mechanized cleaning Standard Operating Procedure and safety precautions for safe and healthy cleaning of sewers and septic tanks, use of PPE Kits etc.
- iv. Workshops are organised with officers, engineers, sanitary inspectors, supervisors, contractors and sanitation workers etc. of urban local bodies and authorities responsible for cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. During the workshops the participants are made aware about the provisions under the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013”, the rules framed thereunder and other provisions for safe and healthy cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.
- v. NSKFDC also organises health camps in the basties of identified manual scavengers and sanitation workers. During these camps, free medical health check-up is facilitated to the target group of the NSKFDC. Further, need based free medicines & spectacles are provided to the target group during the camps. The doctors of different disciplines i.e. Eyes, General physician and Gynecologist etc. examine the patients.

Annexure

Annexure referred in reply to parts (a) to (b) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 37 for 19.07.2022 regarding Safety of Sewerage and Septic Tank Cleaning Workers .

Year-wise and State-wise details of death of persons during last five years and current year due to hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks

S. No.	Name of State/UT	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
		Total No. of death	Total No. of death	Total No. of death	Total No. of death	Total No. of death	Total No. of death
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2	9	2	0	0	0
2.	Bihar	2	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Chhatisgarh	0	1	0	0	0	0
4.	Chandigarh	3	0	0	0	0	0
5.	Delhi	13	11	10	4	4	2
6.	Gujarat	7	2	14	0	5	0
7.	Haryana	11	6	14	0	5	2
8.	Karnataka	3	9	7	2	5	0
9.	Kerala	1	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Maharashtra	5	6	15	4	0	4
11.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	1	0	3	0
12.	Odisha	0	0	0	0	2	0
13.	Punjab	8	2	3	0	1	0
14.	Rajasthan	6	2	5	0	0	0
15.	Tamil Nadu	7	9	13	9	5	5
16.	Telangana	2	2	0	0	2	0
17.	Uttar Pradesh	13	8	26	0	0	4
18.	West Bengal	9	0	6	0	4	0
	Total	92	67	116	19	36	17