

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 449
ANSWERED ON – 22/07/2026

MANUAL SCAVENGING IN THE COUNTRY

449. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN

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

- (a) State-wise list of persons engaged in manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks identified by Government;
- (b) the initiatives taken up by Government for the welfare of persons engaged in manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and their dependents;
- (c) State-wise list of dry toilets required to be cleaned by persons engaged in manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and the details thereof; and
- (d) whether Government takes into cognizance the fact that such a practice is abolished and therefor the initiatives taken up to ensure steps otherwise?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)

(a) & (b) The “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” (MS Act, 2013) prohibits the hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. Recently a fresh survey of manual scavengers, as per the provisions of MS Act, 2013 has been conducted in all districts of the country under which no manual scavenger has been found.

National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme to ensure safety and dignity of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) has been launched in 2023-24. Under the scheme, 89,915 SSWs have been validated across the country. State-wise details of validated SSWs are at **Annexure**.

Measures taken to enhance worker safety and promote mechanization under the NAMASTE scheme are as under:-

- i. Personal Protective Equipment Kits to SSWs.
- ii. Occupational safety training to SSWs.
- iii. Safety devices to Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs).

- iv. Upfront Capital Subsidy for sanitation related machinery to sanitation workers, their groups of maximum five persons and Private Sanitation Service Operators (PSSOs).
- v. Health Insurance coverage.
- vi. Workshops on prevention of hazardous cleaning of sewer and septic tanks.

Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-U) 2.0 launched on 1st, October, 2021 includes a 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.

(c) MS Act, 2013 also bans the construction or maintenance of insanitary latrines and prohibits the employment or engagement of any person for hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

(d) State Governments and Union Territories have been requested to ensure implementation of the various provisions of the MS Act 2013.

Annexure referred to in reply to parts (a) and (b) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 449 for answer on 22.07.2026 regarding "Manual scavenging in the country".

State-wise number of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers Validated under the NAMASTE scheme.

S. No.	STATES/ UTs	Number of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers Validated
1	Andaman and Nicobar	60
2	Andhra Pradesh	4052
3	Arunachal Pradesh	86
4	Assam	466
5	Bihar	3462
6	Chandigarh	253
7	Chhattisgarh	1465
8	Daman Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli	116
9	Delhi	3649
10	Goa	250
11	Gujarat	7648
12	Haryana	2677
13	Himachal Pradesh	435
14	Jammu and Kashmir	727
15	Jharkhand	1115
16	Karnataka	6312
18	Kerala	1797
19	Ladakh	21
17	Lakshadweep	86
20	Madhya Pradesh	3836
21	Maharashtra	8782
22	Manipur	185
23	Meghalaya	108
24	Mizoram	143
25	Nagaland	105
26	Odisha	1294
27	Puducherry	243
28	Punjab	4465
29	Rajasthan	4082
30	Sikkim	107
31	Tamil Nadu	6981
32	Telangana	3817
33	Tripura	353
34	Uttar Pradesh	12463
35	Uttarakhand	644
36	West Bengal	7630
	Total	89915
