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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
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Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)

(Ministry of Social Justice& Empowerment)

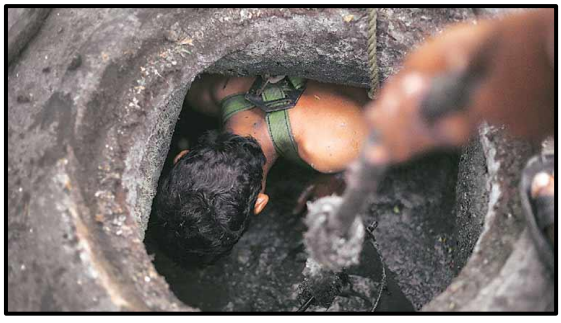
May 16, 2022



The Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE). The scheme was introduced in January 2007, to rehabilitate the identified manual scavengers in alternative professions by the end of FY 2008- 09. The scheme was subsequently revised in November 2013 and in 2020-2021.The objective of SRMS is to provide assistance to the identified manual scavengers and their dependants for their rehabilitation in alternative occupations.

Background

Manual scavenging is a **"dehumanizing practice"** which has carried on in the country with a background of historical injustice and indignity suffered by the manual scavengers.It constitutes problems that encompass domains of health and occupation, human rights and social justice, gender and caste, and human dignity.



The Act of Manual Scavenging refers to manually cleaning, carrying, disposing of, or handling in any manner, human excreta in an insanitary latrine.[1]In 2013, the definition of manual scavengers was also broadened to include people employed to clean septic tanks, ditches, or railway tracks.

[1]https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1778858#:~:text=As%20per%20Section%202%20(1,prohibited%20with%20effect%20from%206.12.

Laws against Manual Scavenging[2]

As per the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013)" manual scavenging is a prohibited activity in the country with effect from 06.12.2013. No person or agency can engage or employ any person for manual scavenging from the above date. Any person or agency who engages any person for manual scavenging in violation of the provisions of the MS Act, 2013 is punishable under Section 8 of the above Act, with imprisonment upto two years or fine upto rupees one lakh or both.

Identification of Manual Scavengers

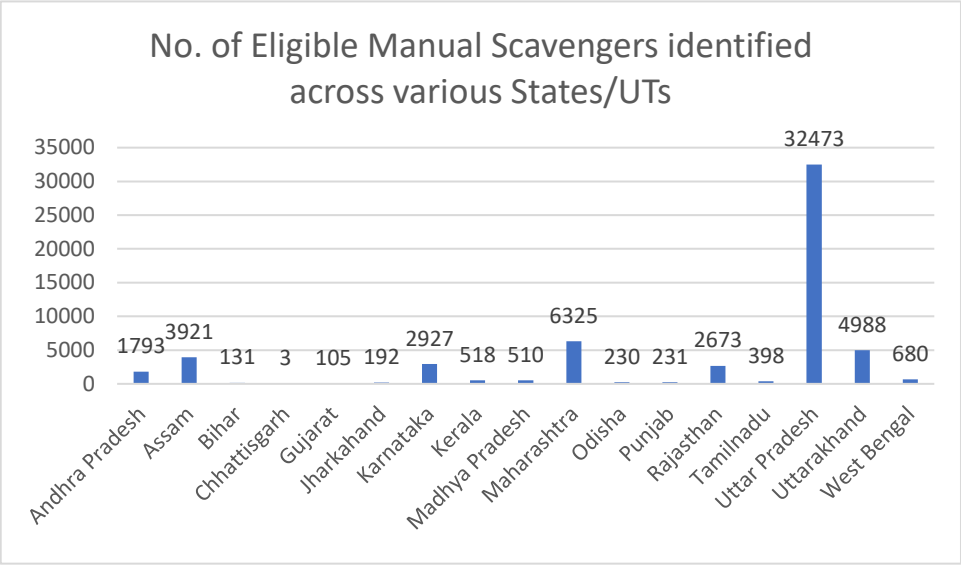
Two national surveys have been conducted at the initiative of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment during the year 2013 and 2018 for the identification of Manual Scavengers. As per these two surveys, 58098 eligible manual scavengers have been identified.

As per the information provided by the identified manual scavengers, caste related data is available in respect of 43,797 manual scavengers. Category-wise break-up of number of manual scavengers is as follows[3]:

Category	No. of Manual Scavengers
Scheduled Castes	42,594
Scheduled Tribes	421
Other Backwards Classes	431
Others	351

[2] http://sulabhenvis.nic.in/Database/ManualScavenging_8058.aspx?format=Print
[3] https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1776848

State-wise numbers of manual scavengers identified across 17 states/UTs are as follows:



Components of the Scheme

The following are the main components of SRMS as revised upto 2020-21:



- **Onetime cash assistance of Rs. 40,000** to identified manual scavenger.
- Credit linked back-end **capital subsidy upto Rs. 3.25 lakh** with provision of concessional Loans for project cost upto Rs. 15.00 lakh.
- Skill Development Training upto two years with stipend of Rs.3000/- per month to the manual scavenger/dependent who opts for such training.
- Subsidy on Loans to manual scavengers/ sanitation workers and their dependents for sanitation related projects (for projects upto Rs. 15 lakh)

- Coverage of Manual Scavengers for Health Insurance under Ayushman Bharat (PM-JAY) Yojana

- Behavioural Skill Development Training (RPL).

- Health Camps.

- Workshops on Hazardous Cleaning of Sewers and Septic Tanks.



To make the scheme more effective, SRMS has been further revised w.e.f. April 1, 2021. The major modifications made under SRMS are[4]:-

- The maximum amount of capital subsidy per beneficiary has been revised from Rs. 3.25 lakh to **Rs. 5.00 lakh.**

- **Payment of capital subsidy has been made upfront** in place of back-end subsidy earlier.

- For Sanitation Related Projects, in addition to the identified manual scavengers and their dependants, the **sanitation workers and their dependants** are also made eligible for same amount of capital subsidy and interest subsidy.

- For **group projects**, the project cost has been increased to **Rs. 50.00 lakh per group** upto five members. Each member of the group can have maximum project share of Rs. 10.00 lakh.

- Taking cognizance of health issues of manual scavengers and to enhance their health conditions the Government has extended **health insurance benefits of upto Rs. 5.00 lakh to all the identified manual scavengers under Ayushman Bharat Yojana.**

Cost Sharing and Implementation

Government of India provides 100 per cent of the funds for the scheme. The scheme is implemented nationwide through National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation, centrally owned, not for profit, formed in 1997 with the sole objective of ending manual scavenging and aiding the development of manual scavengers. State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) identified at the state level aid the implementation of the scheme.

[4] https://pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1794770

As per the budget for the FY 2022-2023, a total of Rs. 70 crores has been allocated for the scheme.

Achievements under the Scheme

The table below summarises the achievements related to coverage of manual scavengers and their dependents under the Scheme[5] **(**as on 01 December 2021):

S. No.	Provision	Coverage
1.	One Time Cash Assistance of Rs. 40,000	58098
2.	Skill Development Training	18,199
3.	Capital Subsidy for Self Employment projects	1562

Other Government Measures for the Welfare & Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers

Taking cognizance of the inhuman practice of manual scavenging, the Government of India has been taking many initiatives to totally eliminate the practice from the country.

- More than **10.88 crore sanitary toilets have been constructed in rural areas and 62.64 lakh in urban areas** and insanitary toilets have been converted into sanitary toilets under the Swachh Bharat Mission, since October 2, 2014. This work made a huge contribution towards ending the practice of manual scavenging.

- After receiving reports from the social institutions working in this field about existence of insanitary latrines, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched a mobile app ***"Swachhata Abhiyaan"* on December 24, 2020 to capture the data of insanitary latrines** still existing and manual scavengers, if any, associated with them. Any person can upload the data of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers on the mobile app. Thereafter, the data is verified by the concerned district administration. As on 02 February 2022,over 6000 cases have been uploaded on the App. However, not a single insanitary latrine has been confirmed so far.

- **A National Policy for Mechanized Sanitation Eco-system** has been formulated in consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Drinking water and Sanitation which envisages, inter alia, the following:

    - Appointment of Responsible Sanitation Authority in every District.
    - Setting up of Sanitation Response Unit (SRU) in each municipality.
    - Equipping SRUs with necessary devices, machines and vehicles required for mechanized cleaning.

[5]https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1776848

- Professionally trained manpower for mechanized cleaning.
- 24x7 helpline to receive complaints regarding blockage of sewers and septic tanks.
- Setting up facilities for evacuation, transportation and treatment of sludge from septic tanks.
- Training to the staff of municipalities and contractors in the mechanized cleaning of sewers/septic tanks.

- The work of cleaning railway tracks is now being done by automatic cleaning vehicles instead of by hand. The multi-functional railway track cleaning vehicle has been developed with the assistance of the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Program of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and is in line with the Make in India initiative.

- In accordance with the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Judgment dated 27.03.2014 in Civil Writ Petition No. 583 of 2003, **compensation of Rs. 10 lakh each** is paid to the families of those who have died while cleaning sewers/septic tanks. Central and State Governments are providing rehabilitation benefits, as per their schemes to the families of persons who died due to hazardous cleaning.

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

i. Under the SwachhtaUdyami Yojana (SUY) concessional loans are provided to sanitation workers and their dependants and the urban local bodies for procurement of sanitation related equipment, machines and vehicles costing upto Rs. 50.00 lakh. 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.

ii. Under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme, free short duration upskilling training is provided to the sanitation workers. The candidates are trained about mechanized cleaning and safety precautions for safe and healthy cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

iii. 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 there under and other provisions for safe and healthy cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

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