

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1209
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2015
Safety of Sanitation Workers
Singh Shri Ravneet

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that even today cleaning of sewage, septic tanks is being carried out by the cleaning workers by going inside the tanks without any safety equipments; and
- (b) if so, the steps being contemplated by the Government to effectively enforce the existing law in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA)

(a) & (b): To prevent the practice of cleaning of sewage and septic tanks by cleaning workers by going inside the tanks without safety equipment, a provision has been made in Section 7 of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013", (Ms Act, 2013), which lays down that no person, local authority or any agency shall engage or employ, either directly or indirectly, any person for hazardous cleaning of a sewer or aseptic tank. As the MS Act, 2013 had come into force on 6.12.2013, hazardous cleaning of a sewer or septic tank that is cleaning without protective gear and other cleaning devices is a prohibited activity with effect from 6.12.2014.

"Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013", which has come into force from 12.12.2013 stipulates the obligation of Employer towards employees who are engaged in cleaning of sewer or septic tanks which include, inter-alia, providing protective gear, safety devices, cleaning devices and insurance policy of at least 10 lakhs Rupees for which premium will be paid by the employer.

Whoever contravenes the provisions of section 7 of MS Act, 2013 shall for the first contravention be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to two lakh rupees or with both, and for any subsequent contravention with imprisonment which may extend to five years or with fine which may extend to five lakh rupees, or with both.