

**Demand to bring a legislation for complete ban on manual scavenging
and take steps for rehabilitation of manual scavengers**

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA (Odisha): Sir, an estimated 1.2 million scavengers in the country are involved in sanitation. Apart from social atrocities that these workers face, they are exposed to certain health problems by virtue of their occupation. These health hazards include exposure to harmful gases like methane and hydrogen sulfide, cardiovascular degeneration, musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthritis changes and intervertebral disc herniation, infections like hepatitis, leptospirosis and helicobacter, skin problems, respiratory system problems and altered pulmonary function parameters.

Mahatma Gandhi first called for the abolition of manual scavenging but the degrading practice continues. Between 2002 and 2003, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment admitted existence of 6,76,000 scavengers. According to a survey by Bezwada Wilson of the Safai Karmachari Association, an estimated 12 lakh scavengers are present in the country. According to Sulabh, four to five million people were working as scavengers in 2005 and were often employed by the local civic bodies to clean excrement in public places. This situation persists despite the fact that Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, is in force.

The sewer workers' health hazards include exposure to harmful gases, cardiovascular degeneration, musculoskeletal disorders, infections, skin problems and respiratory system problems including accidental deaths.

I urge upon the Government to bring a legislation to completely ban the manual cleaning of sewers and public and private latrines, and create alternative employment for the persons involved in manual scavenging.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by Shri Rama Chandra Khuntia.

**Demand to give permission to increase MBBS seats in Osmania and Kakatia
Government Medical Colleges in Andhra Pradesh**

SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, Osmania Medical College was established in 1846 and is one of the oldest medical educational institutes in the world. Osmania Medical College is the only educational institution in India and, possibly, in the world where every medical specialty has a separate training hospital. And, Kakatiya Medical College was set up in 1950s and is also one of the premier institutions in Andhra Pradesh.