

**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.

Even though both the medical colleges are very old and contributing a lot to medical education in the country, the number of seats have not been increased over the years. Even after 166 years of Osmania Medical College's existence, it has got only 200 MBBS seats and Kakatiya Medical College has got just 150 MBBS seats.

For 2012-13 academic year, the Medical Council of India has given permission to increase medical seats to various other Government and private medical colleges, but denied the same to Osmania and Kakatiya Medical Colleges citing insignificant and unjustified reasons.

On filing a petition, the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, after ascertaining the facts, has directed the MCI to immediately allocate 50 seats each to Osmania and Kakatiya Medical Colleges. It also directed the Government of Andhra Pradesh to rectify deficiencies identified by the MCI within one month. But, so far, the MCI has not given permission to above medical colleges.

In view of the above, I request the Minister of Health to direct the MCI to immediately give permission for these colleges to increase the number of seats as directed by the High Court. Otherwise, poor meritorious students are put to loss, and it tantamounts to denial of higher educational opportunities to poor meritorious students.

Demand for early completion of Chittoor Mega Food Park in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY (Andhra Pradesh): Chittoor Mega Food Park is the first Mega Food Park being established in the country at the total cost of Rs. 126.54 crores, in village Mogili, at Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh. Out of fifteen Mega Food Parks sanctioned during the Eleventh Plan by the Ministry of Food Processing, this is the first Mega Food Park approved by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. The Mega Food Park Scheme was approved by the Government during the Eleventh Plan, with an objective of developing adequate infrastructure facilities with effective supply chain management from farm gate to retailer outlet in a market driven manner. The approval of first phase of Chittoor Mega Food Park was accorded in the year 2009. Till date only 50-60% works at the Central Processing Centre (CPC) have been completed. Special Purpose Vehicle viz. M/s Srimi Mega Food Park Pvt. Limited have floated tenders for various components of basic enabling, core processing and non-core infrastructure at the CPC. However there has been inordinate delay in completion of this project. The early completion of this Mega Food Park will not only generate employment but