

Eradication of manual scavenging

*93. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of manual scavengers in the country, as on 31st March, 2013, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Ministry has prepared a comprehensive plan to eliminate the manual scavenging completely; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the financial provisions and time-frame therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (KUMARI SELJA): (a) As per the Houselisting and Housing Census, 2011 data released by the Registrar General of India, there were 7.94 lakh latrines in the country from which night soil was removed by humans. However, the number of persons still engaged in manual scavenging is not available.

The ongoing Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC), 2011, in rural India is, *inter-alia*, capturing the data about the manual scavenging in rural areas, including the non-statutory towns. In addition, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is steering and coordinating a survey of manual scavengers in 3546 statutory towns in the country.

(b) and (c) Presently, a multi-pronged strategy is being followed for elimination of the manual scavenging. This, *inter-alia*, consists of:—

- (i) Administration of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993;
- (ii) Conversion of dry latrines into water seal toilets; and
- (iii) Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers and their dependents, into alternative occupations.

The Government has also introduced the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Bill, 2012”, in Lok Sabha on 3.9.2012. A multi-pronged strategy has been worked out in the provisions of the new Bill with a view to eliminate manual scavenging and insanitary latrines and to provide for the rehabilitation of manual scavengers.

In order to eradicate all existing reported dry latrines, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation is implementing the Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme in urban areas. The scheme has been extended upto 31st March, 2014 with a provision of Rs. 367.16 crores as Central subsidy.

Under the Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers, there is a budget provision of Rs. 570 crore during 2013-14.

Disposal of complaints under MGNREGA

*94. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the aims and objectives of Standard Operating Procedure issued by the Ministry under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA);

(b) to what extent this helps in reducing or quickening the processing of complaints;

(c) whether it is a fact that if States fail to take action on complaints, Government can stop release of funds under MGNREGA; and

(d) if so, the details of such instances where States have not taken action and Government has stopped funds since its implementation, particularly with reference to Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) As per provisions made in Section 27(2) of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Central Government may, on receipt of any complaint regarding lack of effective implementation of the provisions of the Act or regarding the improper utilization of programme funds, order an investigation into such complaint. To give effect to the provision of Section 27(2) read with the provisions relating to accountability given in Section 23 of the Act, the Ministry has drawn up a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The primary aim and objective of the SOP is to redress complaints/grievances arising out of MGNREGA implementation in a time bound manner by categorizing the complaints/grievances on the basis of their nature and scope and defining probable course of action that is to be followed.

(b) The States/UTs have been instructed to adhere to the SOP while redressing complaints/grievances under MGNREGA. Depending on the nature and category of