

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1689
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.03.2025**

SOP FOR CONSTRUCTION AND SANITATION WORKERS

1689. SHRI C. VE. SHANMUGAM:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the construction workers / sanitation workers carry out their work without any safety measures and minimum safety equipment;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether Government has any Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for these workers in order to keep them safe;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and**
- (e) further steps taken by Government to ensure their safety?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SUSHRI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE)**

(a) to (e): The Government has enacted the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 [BOCW (RE&CS) Act, 1996] to regulate the employment and conditions of service of building and other construction workers. The Act provides for their safety, health and welfare measures and for other matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Government has set up the Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CIRM) for implementation of labour laws in the central sphere. Regular inspections are conducted by the Director General (Inspection)/Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) Organisation in the Central Sphere and appropriate action taken where necessary under the provisions of the Building and Other Construction Workers (RE&CS) Act, 1996. The state governments are mandated to ensure enforcement of the labour laws in the state sphere.

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In order to augment the efforts for safety and health of construction workers, “Construction Advisory Service (CAS) Division” has been created in Directorate General of Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Mumbai which has initiated various certificate courses in the field of Construction Safety.

Also, several instructions under the BOCW(RE&CS) Act, 1996 have been issued from time to time to State/UT BOCW Welfare Boards, inter-alia, for framing rules for safety and health of BOCW.

The Government has enacted the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, which, inter-alia, has made it mandatory for the employer to provide the safety gear, devices and ensure safety precautions. A National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme was launched in 2023 to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers. The focus is on prevention of hazardous cleaning and promotion of safe cleaning practices through trained and certified sanitation workers.

Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-U) 2.0, launched in October, 2021, includes a new component i.e. Used Water management (UWM) with one of the objectives of eradication of hazardous entry into sewers and septic tanks, and sustaining elimination of manual scavenging, through mechanization of sewer and septic tank cleaning operations.

A National level competition titled “Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge (SSC)” was launched by MoHUA on 19th November 2020, on the occasion of World Toilet Day. The overall objective was to ensure zero human casualty from hazardous entry, going forward, by ensuring elimination of manual entry into sewers and septic tanks, and in such cases where manual entry is unavoidable, to do so outfitted with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and safety kits, with adequate approval, training and supervision.

An SOP has also been issued containing procedure to be followed during mechanical and manual cleaning of sewer and empty of septic tanks along with training module for Sanitary workers on Cleaning of Sewers and Septic Tanks.

Since sanitation is a State subject under 7th schedule of the constitution, States/ULBs have to plan, design, execute and operate sanitation projects in the urban areas of the country.
