

an>

Title: Need to expedite the process of mechanisation for sewer cleaning under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI (SULTANPUR): As per Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)-2011 data, there are 1,80,657 manual scavengers in the rural areas of the country and this data is just based on the self-declaration by the households. Sixty eight per cent of these manual scavengers are working in just three states of the country namely Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The same census data showed that 24.6 crore households in India had 26 lakh insanitary toilets and they discharged excreta directly into open drains (13.14 lakh) or were cleaned manually (7.94 lakh) or 'serviced by animals' (4.97 lakh). As per the data Uttar Pradesh is having highest number of manual cleaners with majority of them being Dalits. Unofficially, it is reported that over 1.3 million people still do this work. It is a matter of concern that railways and sewer cleaners contribute largely to this unofficial count of manual scavengers in the country in the garb of sweepers. In August this year two workers were suffocated to death in a manhole while they were lifting the night soil from 13 ft deep manhole without protective gears in Bengaluru. But most of the times, these deaths go unnoticed. The Safai Karamchari Andolan has reported 1327 deaths in sewer even after one year of Supreme Court judgment which called for eradication of this practice. Only 3 percent of these deaths have been compensated.

We celebrated 125th birthday of Dr. B.R Ambedkar but an issue which runs counter to the very ideals of equality and dignity was not mentioned by any member. I urge upon the Minister concerned to expedite the process of mechanisation for sewer cleaning and elimination of dry latrines under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and implement the directives by SC and law in the strictest possible way.