



From Manhole to Machine Hole scheme | Maharashtra | 21 Oct 2025

Why in News?

The **Maharashtra government** has approved the 'From Manhole to Machine Hole' scheme, aimed at **preventing tragic deaths from suffocation during sewer cleaning**.

Key Points

- **About:** It is a **Maharashtra state initiative** to replace [manual scavenging](#) with **robotic sewer-cleaning machines**, making sewer cleaning **safe, modern, and dignified** for workers.
- **Technological Intervention:** It has approved the purchase of **100 vehicle-mounted robotic sewer-cleaning machines** worth **Rs 100 crore**.
- **Legal Basis:** It complies with the [Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 \(PEMSR Act\)](#), which promotes **rehabilitation and technical alternatives** to manual cleaning.
- **Implementation Agency:** It is managed by the **Social Justice Department** through **Mahatma Phule Backward Classes Development Corporation**.
- **Worker Training:** **Sanitation workers** will be **trained and prioritised** for operating the machines, ensuring **skill development and employment**.
- **Cost & Maintenance:** **Local bodies** can decide the cost of **operating and maintaining machines** for five years, expenses borne by respective **municipal corporations**.
- **Significance:** Addresses the continued engagement of **around 8,000 manual scavengers**, aiming to ensure **dignity, safety, and progressive sanitation practices** in Maharashtra.

Manual Scavenging

- **About:** As per the **PEMSR Act, 2013**, it refers to the **manual cleaning, carrying, disposal, or handling of human excreta** from **insanitary latrines, open drains, pits, railway tracks, or any other designated areas**.
- **Legal Framework:** Manual scavenging has been **officially banned in India** under the **Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993**.
 - The **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013** further **prohibits their employment**, guarantees **rehabilitation**, and classifies all related offenses as **cognizable and non-bailable**.
- **Initiatives to Curb Manual Scavenging:** [Swachhta Udyami Yojana \(SUY\)](#), [NAMASTE \(National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem\)](#), [National Commission for Safai Karamchari](#)