



NAMASTE Day

Why in News?

On the occasion of the '[National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem \(NAMASTE\) Day](#)', **(16th July)**, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, inaugurated the helpline (14473) for waste pickers and distributed PPE kits and [Ayushman cards](#) to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and Waste Pickers, in Lucknow.

Key Points

About NAMASTE Scheme

- **About:** The NAMASTE scheme is a **human-centric initiative** by the government to ensure that no Safai Karamchari has to engage in [hazardous manual work](#) such as cleaning sewers and septic tanks.
 - The scheme aims to improve the working conditions of **Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs)** and promote their well-being through various support measures.
- **Implementation and Duration:** Launched jointly by the Union Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment and **Housing and Urban Affairs**, the scheme is being implemented by the [National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation \(NSKFDC\)](#).
 - The scheme, with a budget of Rs 349.73 crore, will run from FY 2023-24 to 2025-26, covering all 4800+ ULBs and replacing the previous [Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers \(SRMS\)](#).
- **Key Entitlements for Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs):** The scheme offers various entitlements for SSWs to ensure their safety, well-being, and sustainable livelihood:
 - SSWs are being profiled through a digital application.
 - Provision of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** kits to ensure safety during work.
 - Ensuring access to necessary **safety tools** and resources.
 - Providing training to enhance workers' safety and skills.
 - Ensuring comprehensive [health insurance](#) for SSWs.
 - The scheme aims to **create livelihood opportunities** for SSWs through:
 - Providing access to vehicles and machines related to sanitation at subsidized rates.
 - Encouraging SSWs to start their own sanitation businesses, supported by capacity-building initiatives.

About Manual Scavenging

- [Manual scavenging](#) is defined as “the **removal of human excrement** from public streets and dry latrines, cleaning septic tanks, gutters and sewers”.
- A manual scavenger is anyone employed to manually clean, carry, or handle human excreta from insanitary latrines, open drains, pits, or railway tracks, before it fully decomposes, as per the [Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act \(PEMSR\), 2013](#).
 - India **prohibited the practice** under the PEMSAR Act, 2013, which acknowledges manual scavenging as a “**dehumanizing practice**” and aims to address the historical injustices endured by manual scavengers.

▪ **Government Initiatives and Schemes:**

- [Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge](#)
- [Swachhta Abhiyan App](#)
- [Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan](#)
- [National Commission for Safai Karamchari](#)
- [Swachhta Udyami Yojana \(SUY\)](#)
- [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)](#)
- [Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/namaste-day>

