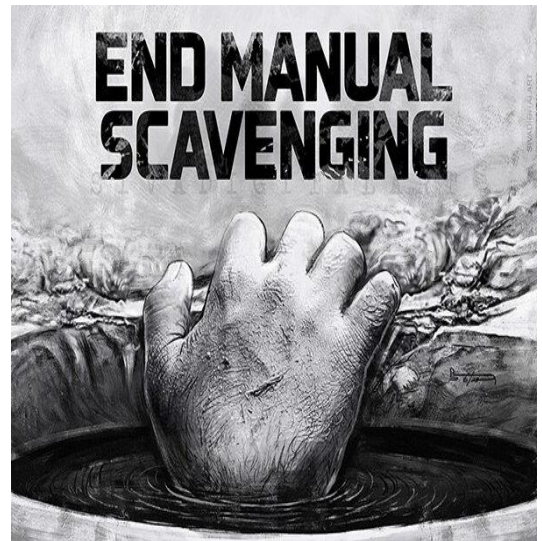




What is Manual Scavenging?

- Manual scavenging is defined as “the removal of human excrement from public streets and dry latrines, cleaning septic tanks, gutters and sewers”.
- India banned the practice under the **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMSR)**.
- The Act recognizes manual scavenging as a “dehumanizing practice”.



What are the Steps taken to tackle the Menace of Manual Scavenging?

❖ **The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation (Amendment) Bill, 2020:**

- It proposes to completely mechanise sewer cleaning, introduce ways for ‘on-site’ protection and provide compensation to manual scavengers in case of sewer deaths.
- It will be an amendment to The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.
- It is still awaiting cabinet approval.

❖ **The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013:**

- Superseding the 1993 Act, the 2013 Act goes beyond prohibitions on dry latrines, and outlaws all manual excrement cleaning of insanitary latrines, open drains, or pits.
- The Building and Maintenance of Insanitary Latrines Act of 2013:
- It outlaws construction or maintenance of unsanitary toilets, and the hiring of anybody for their manual scavenging, as well as of hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

❖ **Prevention of Atrocities Act:**

- In 1989, the Prevention of **Atrocities Act** became an integrated guard for sanitation workers, more than 90% people employed as manual scavengers belonged to the Scheduled Caste. This became an important landmark to free manual scavengers from designated traditional occupations.

❖ **SC Judgment:**

- In 2014, a **Supreme Court** order made it mandatory for the government to identify all those who died in sewage work since 1993 and provide Rs. 10 lakh each as compensation to their families.