

Odisha CM Dedicates GARIMA Scheme for Welfare of Sanitation Workers



Bhubaneswar: In a first in the country, Odisha today launched the GARIMA scheme for the welfare of the sanitation workers of the State.

Dedicating the scheme, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, “It is a humble tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary who had been fighting throughout his life for the rights equality and social dignity of this underprivileged people”.

He said, “Manual scavenging has been the starkest example of discrimination in the name of caste, practiced in India, relegating the less privileged to perform the sanitation work. In the words of Mahatma, I quote “Sanitation is more important than independence” unquote”. In spite of the Nation, making several strides in various sectors, competing with the best in the world, these underprivileged people were made to render this invaluable service to the society for generations, deprived of safety, dignity and a decent livelihood, apart from suffering social stigma and exclusion, Naveen added.

They have also been rendering valuable service in our fight against Covid. risking their life. “This GARIMA scheme, I hope, will be successful in realising the dreams of our father of Nation. and give the sanitation workers their rightful place in the society “, he added.

The scheme- Garima aims at ensuring safety & dignity in the core sanitation work along with several protective and welfare measures.

It includes state wide survey and identification of sanitation workers engaged in core sanitation work, regulating sanitation service organizations including those in the private sector, introduction of special wage category, introduction of Risk & Hardship allowance, provision of health and life insurance, priority in educational institutions, 90 percent grant as Housing Assistance, 90 percent grant for buying 2 wheeler, mandatory provision of personal protective equipments and safety devices, ex-gratia in case of accident and injury, EPF, ESI, Family pension etc.

A dedicated corpus fund initially with Rs. 50 crore will also be created. A State Commission for Core Sanitation Workers will also be constituted.

The Scheme will be implemented in all the 114 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Odisha.

About 20,000 core sanitation workers and their families covering one lakh population are likely to be benefitted under this scheme. This scheme is another feather in the cap of our social welfare programmes. It will go a long way in eradicating their social stigma and pave way for a respectable life for them, an official release issued by the Odisha government said.