

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *21
ANSWERED ON 21.07.2026

SANITATION WORKERS UNDER PRIS

*21.SHRI MUHAMMED HAMDULLAH SAYEED:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of sanitation workers engaged under the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep have been disengaged following the discontinuation of sanitation activities;

(b) if so, the reasons for the discontinuation of the sanitation programme and the disengagement of these workers;

(c) whether the Government proposes to restore the sanitation programme and re-engage the affected workers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken or proposed to be taken to strengthen sanitation services and ensure livelihood opportunities for the affected workers in Lakshadweep?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION
No.*21 ANSWERED ON 21.07.2026 REGARDING “**SANITATION WORKERS UNDER
PRIs**”

(a) to (b): “Panchayat”, being “Local Government”, is a State subject and part of State List of Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Panchayats are set up and operate through the respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. States/ Union Territories (UTs) have made their own Panchayati Raj Act, subject to the provisions of the Constitution. Article 243G of the Constitution empowers the Legislature of a State to make provisions, by law, for the devolution of power and responsibilities upon Panchayat at appropriate level, subject to such conditions as may be specified, with respect to the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice and implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to matters included in the Eleventh Schedule to the Constitution. The State legislatures are to consider the 29 subjects set out in the Eleventh Schedule for devolution of power and responsibilities upon Panchayats. One of these 29 subjects includes “Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries”.

Accordingly, all matters relating to Panchayats, including engagement of sanitation workers, implementation of the sanitation programme etc. comes under the jurisdiction of the State/UT, including UT of Lakshadweep. Powers have been delegated to the Lieutenant Governors and Administrators in the Union Territories in respect of various matters.

The UT of Lakshadweep has informed that Sanitation activities have not been discontinued in their Union Territory and the UT Administration deployed 332 Multi-Tasking Staff/Multi-Skilled Employees for sanitation and waste management activities in place of the 210 casual labourers previously engaged for this purpose, which is an increase of about 58%.

(c) to (d): The UT of Lakshadweep has informed that sanitation services have been continuing uninterrupted across all inhabited islands and the sanitation programme has not been discontinued. The engagement of casual labourers has been discontinued from 31.05.2026 on the deployment of adequate regular manpower. Sanitation services have also been strengthened through the deployment of regular staff, ensuring uninterrupted sanitation and solid waste management services across all inhabited islands. The existing manpower is considered adequate for carrying out sanitation and allied public service functions through the Village (Dweep) Panchayats. As per information received from the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, the UT of Lakshadweep has intimated that their all 10 villages are reported to have been 100% covered with Solid Waste Management (SWM) arrangements and Liquid Waste Management (LWM) arrangements and have been declared as Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus (Model).
