

NHRC, India takes suo motu cognizance of the reported death of a sanitation worker and hospitalisation of two others due to inhalation of toxic gases while cleaning a sewer in Satna, Madhya Pradesh

Issues notices to the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation and Superintendent of Police, Satna, calling for a detailed report within two weeks

The report is expected to include the status of the investigation and compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased and the injured workers

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has taken *suo motu* cognizance of a media report that a sanitation worker died and two others were hospitalised in a critical condition after inhaling toxic gases while cleaning an underground sewer line in Satna district, Madhya Pradesh on 25th September, 2025. Reportedly, the workers had fallen unconscious inside the sewer. The local residents pulled them out and rushed them to the hospital.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the media report, if true, raise a serious issue of human rights violation. Therefore, it has issued notices to the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation and the Superintendent of Police, Satna, Madhya Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks.

The report is expected to include the status of the investigation and compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased worker and to those injured.

Issuing the notices, the Commission has also observed that in spite of directions given by the Supreme Court and its Advisory issued to all the States and Union Territories to ensure the safety of sanitation workers, such tragic incidents still happen. It appears that the authorities had deputed the workers without protective gear and machines to clean the sewer lines.

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