



From Sanitation Worker to Entrepreneur

Shiv Lal's Journey Towards Dignity and Self-Reliance

Posted On: 15 OCT 2026 4:01PM by PIB Delhi

For nearly two decades, Mr. Shiv Lal, a 44-year-old resident of Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan, worked as a Sewer and Septic Tank Cleaning Helper to support his family.

Belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) Valmiki community, he faced persistent financial challenges despite years of hard work and dedication. Having studied only up to the 8th standard, he had limited opportunities to acquire technical skills or secure better-paying employment. His monthly income of approximately Rs 6,000 was insufficient to meet household expenses and provide adequately for his children's education.

Mr. Shiv Lal married in 2002, and his wife is a homemaker. His 19-year-old son recently gained admission to college, while his 10-year-old daughter continues her schooling. With limited financial resources, meeting daily household needs and supporting his children's educational aspirations remained a constant challenge. Nevertheless, he remained determined to improve his family's circumstances and create a more secure future for his children.

Despite working in the sanitation sector for many years, Mr. Shiv Lal had limited opportunities for economic advancement. His modest earnings, lack of technical skills and limited educational qualifications restricted his ability to become financially independent. Social stigma and discrimination associated with sanitation work presented additional challenges. However, he aspired to move beyond daily-wage employment and establish a business of his own. He envisioned purchasing a Tractor cum Suction Machine that would enable him to provide sanitation services independently, earn a better income and improve his family's quality of life.

A significant turning point came on 12 August 2025, when Mr. Shiv Lal received financial assistance under the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY), a component of the NAMASTE Scheme. The assistance, provided through an upfront capital subsidy, helped him procure a Tractor cum Suction Machine and establish his own sanitation service business. The total project cost was Rs 11,34,000, of which Rs 7,25,500 was financed through a loan and Rs 4,08,500 was provided as a capital subsidy. This support helped him overcome a major financial barrier and transition from working as a helper to becoming a self-employed entrepreneur.

SUCCESS STORY

From Sanitation Worker to Entrepreneur – Shiv Lal's Journey Towards Dignity and Self-Reliance

Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) under the NAMASTE Scheme

(Name of the beneficiary: Shiv Lal)

NAME Shiv Lal	AGE 44 Years	GENDER Male
CATEGORY Scheduled Caste (SC) – Valmiki Community	STATE Rajasthan	DATE OF SUPPORT 12 August 2025

BACKGROUND

For nearly two decades, Mr. Shiv Lal worked as a Sewer and Septic Tank Cleaning Helper. He earned about ₹6,000 per month and had studied only up to the 8th standard, which limited his opportunities for better employment and financial stability.

THE SCHEME INTERVENTION

Under the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY), he received an upliff capital subsidy to procure a Tractor cum Suction Machine. The total project cost was ₹11,34,000, with a loan of ₹7,25,500 and a capital subsidy of ₹4,08,500.

CHALLENGES

For nearly two decades, he faced financial constraints, low income, lack of technical skills and limited education, earning only about ₹6,000 per month.

IMPACT

The support has improved his financial position, enhanced his dignity of work and self-reliance, and given him greater ability to support his children's education.

GREATER CONFIDENCE

The scheme has transformed his life, helping him move from daily-wage work to a sustainable and independent business.

CURRENT SITUATION

Today, Mr. Shiv Lal owns and operates his own sanitation service business. After meeting a monthly loan EMI of ₹18,186 and labour expenses of around ₹8,000, he earns a net surplus of ₹10,000–₹12,000 per month.

From Sanitation Worker to Entrepreneur

“From a modest monthly wage to an independent sanitation enterprise, Shiv Lal's journey is a testament to perseverance, opportunity and the pursuit of dignity through self-reliance.”

— Shiv Lal —

Today, Mr. Shiv Lal operates his own sanitation service business, giving him greater control over his livelihood and improved earning opportunities. After meeting his monthly loan repayment of approximately Rs 18,186 and labour expenses of around Rs 8,000, he reports a net monthly surplus of approximately Rs 10,000–Rs 12,000 after accounting for operational expenses and repayments. Compared with his earlier monthly income of Rs 6,000, this represents a meaningful improvement in his economic circumstances and earning potential.

The intervention has also strengthened Mr. Shiv Lal's confidence and enabled him to pursue his aspiration of building a sustainable livelihood. His improved financial position provides greater support for his children's education and his family's needs. By becoming a business owner, he has taken an important step towards self-reliance and greater dignity in his professional life.

Mr. Shiv Lal's journey demonstrates how targeted financial assistance and access to productive assets can create opportunities for sanitation workers to become entrepreneurs. Through the Swachhta Udyami Yojana under the NAMASTE Scheme, he has been able to move beyond low-paid employment and establish an independent source of livelihood. His experience reflects the importance of inclusive development initiatives that empower sanitation workers, promote economic independence and support families in building a more secure future.

From a modest monthly wage to an independent sanitation enterprise, Mr. Shiv Lal's journey is a testament to perseverance, opportunity and the pursuit of dignity through self-reliance.

SS-133-TAR-KV-GA-RK

Date: 15.10.26

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