

SAFAI KARMACHARI ANDOLAN

(A Movement for elimination of manual scavenging)

Smt. Aruna Roy,
Member, National Advisory Council,

9th August 2010

Dear Smt Aruna Roy

Sub: Eradication of Manual Scavenging by 2010

India still carries the shame of the existence of manual scavenging; many thousands of dalits continue to clear and dispose human excreta from dry latrines using ash, tin plates and baskets with bare hands. It is a shame that the dry latrines are owned either by private households or government bodies and departments.

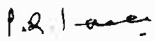
We, the Safai Karmachari Andolan have been engaged in a protracted struggle since 1993 to eliminate manual scavenging and to reclaim our dignity and human personhood. We have been employing different strategies in our campaign since 1996: taking surveys to identify dry latrines, users and those forced into manual scavenging, filing petitions and complaints with government officials at different levels, educating and sensitising the civil society especially dry latrine users, filing of public interest litigation in the supreme court and networking with individuals, media and civil society organisations to form solidarity and pressure groups. Safai Karmachari Andolan has substantial evidence of the prevalence of manual scavenging in at least 15 states of India.

We filed a PIL in Supreme Court in 2003 along with 18 other organizations and individuals in which we named the state governments, Central govt ministries and departments as respondents. Till date there have been 21 hearings in Supreme court in which, all the respondents have filed counter affidavits with false information of 'nil' manual scavenging in their jurisdictions. However, SKA has been able to keep this case alive by providing counter affidavits with facts and figures of evidence of manual scavenging from across the country at every hearing. Consequently the Supreme Court is continuing to monitor the status of manual scavenging and demanding from the governments and their departments for time bound measures to eliminate manual scavenging. The process over the last few years has built up tremendous pressure on the government to implement the 'Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act 1993, and to liberate Dalits from the caste based discrimination, atrocity and violence of manual scavenging. All of this opened a vision of a manual scavenging -free India by December 2010.

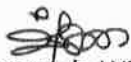
In fact the government of India itself had committed itself to the eradication of manual scavenging and had set several deadlines, the latest being March 2010. It seems to us that it is unlikely that the government would make serious efforts to eradicate this inhuman practice in the foreseeable future. This issue concerns the human dignity of millions of Dalits in the country, most of them being women. We therefore seek the National Advisory Council which is the highest policy advisor to the government of India to intervene and ensure the end of manual scavenging.

Thanking You,

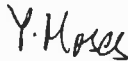
Yours Sincerely,



S.R. Sankaran



Bezwada Wilson



Y. Moses



K Anuradha

S.R. Sankaran IAS (Retd.)
Chair Person

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Bezwada Wilson
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**Consultation on *Transparency and Accountability in Government*
to set Agenda for NAC Sub Group**

**Transparency and Accountability in Government in a Rights
Framework**

**Agenda
(Tentative Draft)**

1. Generic Discussion on moving from systemic "*Accountability within government*" towards "*Accountability to the People and in the public domain*".10.30 am – 11.30 am

- a. Rights based enforcement frameworks for realizing Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy
- b. Governance based on Transparency, Consultation and Public Accountability (including establishing pre-legislative processes)

2. Current Initiatives (including)11.30 am– 12.30 pm

- ✓ a. Judicial Standards Bill
- ✓ b. Whistleblower's Bill
- c. Law on Data Protection and Privacy
- d. RTF Bill
- e. Communal Violence Bill
- f. Torture Bill
- g. Seeds Bill
- h. UID Bill
- i. Manual Scavenging

3. Proposed Initiatives (including)..... 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm

- ✓ a. Social Audit Legislation
- ✓ b. Lokpal Bill
- c. Legislative Framework for Special Component Plan
- ✓ d. Grievance Redressal Law

- Equal opportunities Commission
- Sanctions, in penalties, good faith
- Rependum

Curriculum

Rajya
Sakha

R71

4/10/10

Land
acqui

WORKING LUNCH.....1.30 pm – 2.15 pm

4. Thematic Checklist (including).....2.15 pm – 3.15 pm

- a. Human Rights
- b. Electoral and Political Reform
- c. Entitlement Legislations
- d. Structural Issues of Governance (CAG, Judiciary, RTI Commission)
- e. Local Self Government
- f. Statutory & Administrative obligation to disclose information under various Acts and Executive Instruments - including a framework for Sec 4 (RTI Act) Compliance and Citizens's Charters etc.

5. Timeline and discussion on the *Way Forward* 3.15 pm – 4.15 pm

- a. Formation of committees
- b. Consultations
- c. Meetings
- d. Process
 - i. Initial group of NAC and others with specialized interests to brainstorm and define the parameters of the issue.
 - ii. Place the issues before the Chairperson and /or the NAC.
 - iii. NAC Sub Group to organise consultations with civil society and peoples groups, separately and along with concerned Ministries.
 - iv. Sub Group Convenor in consultation with the Sub Group will prepare the final recommendations to place before the NAC.
 - v. Partnership with institutions (like LBSNAA, National Judicial Academy, TISS) for facilitating consultative process on certain issues