

## **SAFAI SATHI ABHIYAN**

### **Distribution of Safety Equipments to Sanitation workers**

#### **Right to Dignity of Labor**

##### **Background**

A study suggests that India has over 5 million sanitation workers. Cleaning of domestic toilets, public and communal toilets, institutional toilets, sewers and septic tanks, drains, railway tracks, trash collection and segregation, and other sanitation tasks are all common in urban and rural locations. Sanitation workers are often denied regular and reasonable income as a result of societal discrimination and the nature of their labor. They also lack access to proper health care, employment benefits, insurance, and other social security measures. Sanitation personnel handled garbage collection and management, toilet cleaning, cleaning/disinfection of public locations, and maintaining sanitation services even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their job demands them to travel to many areas, deal with a variety of people, and work in high-risk environments such as hospitals, quarantine centers, and containment zones.

Sanitation employees are at a significant risk of infection due to a lack of personal protective equipment and other workplace safety precautions. Furthermore, because many of them live in squatter camps, there is concern regarding long-term viability.

Keeping the above challenges in mind, middle school students of St Mary's school raised funds for **Safai Sathi Abhiyan** wherein various activities were executed during school hours in order to collect safety equipment such as gloves and boots for informal sanitation workers of the nearby Safdarjung Enclave area. The students divided themselves into groups and adopted creative strategies to raise funds for the cause.

## **Work Done**

On March 24, 2022, sanitation workers were asked to visit the school. The Safai Sathi Abhiyan was organized by the students, with the goal of making workers aware of their health and cleanliness as part of the strategy. This programme not only allowed sanitation employees to interact with students one-on-one, but it also provided a secure venue for them to talk about their problems in depth.

The students began the event with a brief explanation of why the employees were invited to the school and what their purpose was. After that, the students participated in a fifteen-minute questionnaire round to have a better knowledge of the difficulties and issues that sanitation employees confront on a daily basis.



### Informative session for the workers

The questionnaire round was extremely informative, as students engaged in one-on-one conversations with workers, asking them questions about their daily routines, health and safety barriers during work hours, maximum duration of work in a day, or whether or not workers are satisfied with government schemes implemented for their welfare.



Planning and discussion on needs of the sanitation workers

The students chose to deliver safety equipment to workers once the questionnaire round was completed. The allocation of safety equipment was carried out in such a way in which students evaluated each worker's shoe size before handing over the appropriate boots.





Distribution of safety equipments

Finally, students presented a particular request to employees, emphasizing the need of using safety equipment on a regular basis and encouraging other sanitation workers to do so as well. The workers were given refreshments as a token of appreciation for their presence, and they expressed gratitude for being a part of this initiative.





The sanitation workers





## Planning strategies for fundraising

















Distribution of food and safety equipments to the sanitation workers