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Transforming lives: NSDC helps manual scavengers receive skill training

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LUCKNOW : According to official data, UP is among the states with the highest number of manual scavengers in the country, and many of these are from Amroha. The National Skill Development Council (NSDC), under the aegis of the ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship, in association with the National Safai Karamchari Finance and Development Corporation has begun an aspirational project for manual scavengers in Amroha and Moradabad districts of the state.

Through this recently rolled out programme, trainees are being encouraged to work as entrepreneurs, improve their lives and serve as examples to others in their community.

"The pilot project in Amroha was started with the objective to

provide skill training to manual scavengers to ensure that they got a dignified and secure means of livelihood. Sixty candidates, in batches of two, have successfully completed their training under the job role of sewing machine operator. The minister of social justice and empowerment, Thawar Chand Gehlot, presented them certificates at an event in Moradabad. Some of them have already been employed locally in Amroha," said an official involved with the project.

He said that at present, 120 candidates were enrolled for training in Amroha. "Trainees, mostly women, travel kilometres to learn," he said.

One of the trainees, Rajni, said she always wanted to educate her children. "After losing my husband, the responsibility of our four children fell on my shoulders. I could only find the job of a 'safai karamchari' (cleanliness

worker), which paid enough for us to survive. But now, my days are improving. My daughters say they will handle household chores and my sons tell me they will handle the finances. The children helped me register for the programme. They also motivate me to attend classes everyday. I want to make them proud," she said.

Another trainee, Suman, said, "The trainer is hard working and keen to address all our doubts. We can see that he is giving his all to help us. The government can only give us a platform. We have to make the most of it."

Barsha, mother of four, said she was one of the first to register for the course of the sewing machine operator. "Before the training, my husband looked for daily work at construction sites but now, he has also joined the course. Since the training began in July, I have come a long way.

This training has given us hope," she said.

She said as both her husband and she, bread-winners for the family, were currently training, the stipend of ₹3,000 received by each was helping them manage household expenses.

"The hope of securing a job and the desire to learn something new keeps us from missing even a day's class. All my children go to school but when they don't, we get them along to the training," she said.

The training centre has a crèche equipped with bed, books, laptop and colouring books. While parents get trained, their children are kept busy learning. Founders of the training centre, Inosculation Hub Pvt Ltd, Poonam Batra and Jitender, said they realised that to ensure women's participation in the programme, they had to provide solutions to their challenges.