

# Alliance of Indian Wastepickers

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*Alliance of Indian Wastepickers is a national coalition of organizations working with waste-pickers and other informal waste workers. The alliance was created to have coordinated efforts to ensure inclusion of waste pickers in various national level programmes. Members of the alliance are from more than 10 states of India and represent more than 45000 wastepickers.*

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020

To

Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman

Honourable Union Finance Minister

New Delhi

**Subject: Inclusion of sanitation workers including waste-pickers and informal waste collectors in the INR 50 lakh insurance cover programme rolled out for the health-care workers.**

Respected Madam

We the members of the Alliance of Indian Wastepickers, welcome the relief package announced by the Union Finance Ministry. For earning our livelihood, we waste-pickers and informal waste collectors have been keeping our cities and towns clean. In the times of COVID 19 pandemic, we are working diligently. We along with the other sanitation workers are the first lines of defence against the spread of the disease. This was mentioned by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the nation on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

However, as defenders, we run the risk of contracting the disease ourselves. Due to the nature of our work, our immunity suffers too. In the times of crisis, our work of waste management has been identified as other essential services which contribute to the better health of all citizens.

We request that we be recognized as health workers and all waste-pickers and informal waste collectors as well as the sanitation workers are included in the INR 50 Lakh insurance cover programme rolled out for the healthcare workers.

The eligibility for inclusion can be based on the occupational identity cards or the letters of employment issued by the municipal authorities and rural local bodies, trade unions, civil society organizations, resident and apartment welfare associations and the database of waste-pickers' organizations and the relevant government bodies. The effort should be made in such a way that the inclusion in the scheme is universal and no exclusion of any waste-picker or informal waste collector be allowed.

We the waste-pickers and informal waste collectors request the government to give directions to the relevant departments, state governments and urban and rural local bodies for the satisfaction of our given demand.

**Endorsed by the following organizations:**

Center for Applied Research and People's Engagement, Aurangabad, Maharashtra

Centre for Sustainable Development, Nagpur, Maharashtra

Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh

Iainehskhem Self-help Group, Shillong, Meghalaya

Janvikas Society, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat, Pune, Maharashtra

Main Bhi Dilli Campaign, Delhi

National Coalition for Sustainable and Inclusive Development (NCU), Delhi

Rajasthan Kachra Majdoor Sangh, Jaipur, Rajasthan

Safai Sena, Delhi

Sarvoday Shramik Mahila Sakh Sanstha Maryadit, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Stree Mukti Sanghatana, Mumbai, Maharashtra