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Civil groups begin 45-day campaign for accountability law

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Jaipur: Civil society groups on Monday began their 45-day statewide 'Jawabdehi Yatra' to pitch for social accountability law. Renowned social activist Aruna Roy flagged off the rally from here and called the law a potent weapon to curb corruption, ensure time-bound delivery of government services and make officials accountable for citizens' sufferings. The bill was drafted by the government in 2020 but is yet to be tabled in the assembly.

Over 100 civil society groups, including Suchna Evam Rozgar Abhiyan (SR Abhiyan), are participating in the rally aiming to educate civilians about the importance of the law. On Monday, around 100 activists collected at Shaheed Smarak, braving the cold temperature, and marched towards Civil Lines Phatak holding banners and posters reading bring 'Jawabehi Kanoon' (accountability law).

"Gehlot government should bring the law in the budget session in February-March. The law was part of Jan Ghoshna Patra (election manifesto) which was officially adopted by them as part of the government agenda," said Roy, while addressing the gathering at Shaheed Smarak.

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Reportedly, SR Abhiyan had drafted the bill and given it to the government in 2019. Thereafter, the government formed a committee under the IAS officer Ram Lubhaya who studied the draft and prepared it for the government in 2020.

"A section of bureaucrats has raised objection against some provisions of the law calling it has more potential for 'misuse.' The

provisions that even a senior officer can be held accountable and is answerable for delay in services is most objected by the officials,” said an official.

Roy and Nikhil Dey have been working for the law since 2011. They held 100-day state wide campaign in 2015 for the same. Dey explained with examples that how the bill would empower the last man standing who faces difficulty in getting benefits of government schemes.

In the next 45 days, the team including NGO workers, volunteers and interns would be holding discussions with the locals on the law's importance and would submit the memorandum to district collectors.