

marketing margin is beyond the delivery point and arises as a result of Gas Sale and Purchase Agreement (GSPA) signed between the Seller and the Buyer.

- (d) Does not arise.

Payments to workers engaged in NREGA projects

132. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has recently taken some steps to improve the efficiency in payment to workers under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the workers under NREGA are neither paid as prescribed by Government nor paid timely at most of the places;
- (d) if so, the details of representations etc., received by Government in this regard; and
- (e) the further strategies formulated to streamline NREGA and to improve efficiency in payments to workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) and (b) Wage disbursement to NREGA workers through Banks/Post Office accounts has been made mandatory to ensure proper disbursement of wages to NREGA workers. 8.66 crore bank/post office accounts have been opened so far. ICT enabled financial transactions in rural areas by using Rural ATM, hand held devices, smart cards and biometrics have been introduced with the aim to maintain transparency and avoid manipulation and delay in payment of wages to NREGA workers.

(c) and (d) Central Government has notified wages payable under NREGA to the unskilled workers in accordance with the wage policy decided by the Government. Workers are paid wages as per the revised wage rates. Since wages under NREGA are paid on task rate basis, the output of a worker is measured and payment is made in accordance with the Schedule of Rates fixed by the State Governments. 124 representations relating to delayed payment/less payment of wages have been received in the Ministry.

(e) The primary focus of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is on improving the delivery system in respect of payment of wages through banks/post offices. Ministry has therefore, taken up the matter with Department of Posts and Department of Financial Services for providing basic infrastructure for outreach of Banks/Post Offices in remote areas. Regular meetings with Department of Posts are also held in this regard. Innovative methods like smart card, business correspondent model and biometric cards have also been introduced.

NREGS in Jammu and Kashmir

133. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: