

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of meetings held by this council till date along with the decisions taken in these meetings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR ADHIKARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Council for Land Reforms has been constituted vide Gazette notification dated 9.1.2008 to lay down broad guidelines of policy recommendations on Agrarian Relations and Land Reforms. The Council is constituted under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister with Secretary (Land Resources) as Member Secretary. The first meeting of the Council is yet to be held.

Impact of MGNREGS on availability of labourers during farming seasons

†1702. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE:

SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether is it a fact that the Central Government's flagship scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has led to the shortage of farm labourers in many States during peak farming seasons for sowing transplantation and harvesting;

(b) whether the Ministry of Agriculture has made any formal request to suspend MGNREGS during peak farming seasons;

(c) if so, whether Government proposes to suspend the scheme during peak farming seasons because the scheme provides a legal guarantee for specific number of days of wage employment in a financial year; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) No Sir. There have been no definite findings indicating shortage of farm labourers due to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) during peak farming season.

(b) to (d) Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation has recently suggested that possibility of amending guidelines of MGNREGS may be examined to ensure that job opportunities under the scheme are provided in a manner that it does not affect availability of labour for agriculture,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

particularly during sowing and harvesting seasons. Since MGNREGS is a demand driven scheme, backed by legislation, State Governments are obliged to provide up to 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household for doing unskilled manual work, if demanded, at any time of the year, as mandated in the Act. Restricting work under MGNREGA for any particular season will not be consistent with the spirit of the flagship legislation.

Suspension of MGNREGS programme during harvest season

1703. DR. K. P. RAMALINGAM:

SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has advised the State Governments to suspend the flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), which guarantees 100 days of paid work to any poor person who comes forward, during the peak harvest season;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether any State Government has opposed the decision taken by Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) to (c) No Sir. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a demand driven scheme, backed by legislation. The State Governments are obliged to provide up to 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household for doing unskilled manual work, if demanded, at any time of the year, as mandated in the Act. Restricting work under MGNREGA for any particular season will not be consistent with the spirit of the flagship legislation. This has been reiterated to all State Governments and they have been advised to implement the Act in letter and spirit.

Recovery of siphoned off MGNREGS funds

1704. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of allocation/utilization of Rs. 100 crore provided for Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana, particularly in LWE districts;