

Strengthening of MGNREGS

928. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the National Advisory Council (NAC) has proposed to strengthen the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that if more effective planning is introduced, the annual budget of ₹ 40,000 crore for MGNREGS could be better utilized; and
- (d) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) to (d) National Advisory Council (NAC) while examining policy reforms and implementation of flagship programmes including Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) recommended certain measures for effective implementation of MGNREGA. These included expeditious notification of Social Audit Rules, strengthening institutional and technical support in the Ministry and for Central Council and providing technical support to States through resource groups on wage payment, transparency and accountability, grievance redressal, planning, natural resource management, convergence, expansion of permissible works, demand for work, capacity building, training, staff, management etc.

The steps already taken by the Government on the above aspects for more effective planning, better implementation and utilization of funds under MGNREGA include the following:—

- (i) Permissible administrative expenditure limit was enhanced from 4% to 6% for deployment of dedicated staff for MGNREGA, strengthening of management and administrative support structures for social audit, grievance redressal and ICT infrastructure.
- (ii) With a view to ensuring timely payment, infusing transparency and enhancing the integrity of wage payment, Schedule-II of MGNREG Act has been amended to make wage disbursement to MGNREGA workers through institutional accounts in Banks or Post Offices a statutory requirement unless specifically exempted.
- (iii) States have been instructed to establish State Employment Guarantee Funds for greater flexibility in management of funds for MGNREGA.
- (iv) For convergence of MGNREGA with other development programmes of the Government which have similar target groups, convergence guidelines have been

developed and disseminated by the Ministry for several other development schemes.

- (v) Amendments to para-1 of Schedule-I of MGNREG Act have been carried out from time to time to enlarge the scope of works and activities that can be taken up.
- (vi) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based MIS has been made operational to make data available to public scrutiny including job cards, muster rolls, employment demanded and number of days worked, shelf of works, funds available/spent, social audit findings, registering grievances etc.
- (vii) State Governments have been advised to make use of ICT enabled models like Business Correspondent, Rural ATM, handheld devices, smart cards, bio-metrics, mobile banking etc., for easy wage payments to MGNREGA workers.
- (viii) In consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, MGNREGA Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011 has been notified on 30th June, 2011. All States have been asked to put in place a robust Social Audit mechanism as outlined in the Rules.
- (ix) Instructions have been issued directing all States to appoint Ombudsman at district level for grievance redressal.

Diversion of MGNREGS funds by States

†929. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the States which have spent the funds allocated for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) or other schemes; and
- (b) the action taken to curb such types of incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) and (b) No specific report of States spending funds meant for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on other Schemes has been received in the Ministry. The Ministry receives a large number of complaints of all types about implementation of MGNREGA in the country. The complaints mainly relate to cases of job cards not provided, misappropriation of funds, engagement of contractors, forgery of muster roll, manipulation in job cards, under payment of wages, non-payment of wages, corruption and other irregularities, use of machinery, delay in payments etc. As implementation of the Act is done by the State Governments in accordance with the Schemes formulated by them as per the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.