

**Payment of wages through Post Offices under MGNREGA**

1671. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Post Offices, particularly rural Post Offices, are vulnerable to being captured by corrupt middlemen thereby denying legal wages to poor under MGNREGA;

(b) whether it has come to the notice of the Ministry that Post Offices are not paying wages in time to workers under MGNREGA;

(c) if so, the reasons why many States are relying on Post Offices; and

(d) why the Ministry, through Jan Dhan Yojana, could not make payment through banks under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHAUDHARY BIRENDER SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Some instances of operation of middlemen in payment of wages through post offices have been reported. However, Government proposes to address these issues by using biometric authentication system as in Andhra Pradesh, Telengana and Jharkhand.

(c) and (d) Post Officers are preferred in some States due to their better reach in the rural areas. At present, there are only 68000 bank branches in the rural and semi-urban areas of the country catering to over 6 lakh villages in the 2.47 lakh Gram Panchayats where the MGNREGS is operational. Consequently, there are significant number of GPs which do not have bank branches within 5km. radius. Efforts are made to improve the reach of the Banks in the rural areas using the Banking Correspondent model under the PM Jan Dhan Yojana.

**Construction of roads under PMGSY in West Bengal**

1672. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the length of roads, in kilometres, targeted to be constructed in every district of West Bengal under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during 2014-15;