

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 02.03.2010
ANSWERED ON
FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON NREGS .

65

Smt. Mohsina Kidwai

Will the Minister of COAL, HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware that a fact finding committee has found serious irregularities in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in several States;
- (b) if so, details thereof;
- (c) whether several districts which have been found misusing the NREGS funds are continuously getting assistance; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to check such irregularities and ensure effective implementation of the scheme?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(DR. C. P. JOSHI)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement as referred to in reply to parts (a) to (d) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 65 for answer on 2.3.2010

(a) & (b): During regular reviews of the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, visits by NLMs and Central Council members, through media reports and by way of complaints made by individuals, irregularities in the implementation of the Act have come to the notice of the Ministry of Rural Development. All cases of irregularities are referred to the concerned State Governments for taking appropriate action in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Central Government, as such has not constituted any fact finding committee on NREGS.

(c) & (d): Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is demand based. Funds are released by the Centre based on the labour demand arising at the field level. Under the Act, Central Government is committed to bear the entire cost of wages paid to unskilled workers which are to be paid within 15 days from the date on which work was done. Cases relating to misuse of MGNREGA funds are taken up with the concerned State Governments for conducting enquiry and for taking action against the guilty officials in accordance with the provisions of the Act and also for taking disciplinary action against the service rules applicable to the officials.

To check such irregularities and to ensure effective implementation of the scheme, the following steps have been taken:

(i) Orders dated 7.9.2009 have been issued directing all State Governments for setting up of the office of Ombudsman at district level for redressal of grievances in a time bound manner.

(ii) A Web enabled Management Information System (MIS) (www.nrega.nic.in) has been made operational which places all critical parameters such as job cards, muster rolls, wage payments, number of days of employment provided and works under execution online for monitoring and easy public access for information. 9.0 crore job cards and 2.9 crore muster rolls have been up loaded on the web site.

(iii) 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. To cover the gaps in financial services and outreach and also to ensure greater transparency in wage disbursement, Rural ATM, hand held devices, smart cards and biometrics have been initiated.

(iv) The Ministry has accorded utmost importance to the organization of Social Audits by the Gram

Panchayats and issued instructions to the States to make necessary arrangements for the purpose. Modifications have been made in para 13 of Schedule-I of the Act to provide for procedures on conducting social audits. The Ministry has issued instructions to the State Governments for enforcement of the new social audit provisions under NREGA

(v) Scheme of Independent Monitoring by eminent citizens has been approved.

(vi) District level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been set up for monitoring of rural development programmes including NREGA.

(vii) In cases of misappropriation and embezzlement of Government funds under MGNREGA, all State Governments have been requested to ensure that not only disciplinary action should be taken against the guilty officials, but simultaneously criminal prosecution should also be initiated under Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act, besides recovering the amount involved from the persons concerned in accordance with the Law.