

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 221
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/08/2025

MEASURES TO ADDRESS RURAL UNEMPLOYMENT

221 Shri KapilSibal:

Will the Minister of Rural Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the specific measures taken by Government to address unemployment in rural areas, and the manner in which job creation will be enhanced under schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in 2025-2026;
- (b) the data collected by the Ministry on rural unemployment trends in 2025;
- (c) the new MGNREGS projects launched by the Ministry to boost rural employment; and
- (d) the manner in which the Ministry will assess job creation outcomes under MGNREGS by 2026?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN)

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

Statement referred to in reply to Parts (a) to (d) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 221 for 08.08.2025.

(a): For generation of employment in rural areas, this Ministry is implementing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Mahatma Gandhi NREGS) which provides at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. It is a demand driven wage employment Scheme and is a fallback option when no better employment opportunity is available. During the current financial year 2025–26 (as on 05.08.2025), against the Agreed-to Labour Budget of 198.86 crore person days, 115.27 crore person days have been generated. Ministry of Rural Development closely monitors the demand for employment at the ground level in order to ensure that there is no unmet demand.

The Central Government has initiated several measures to generate awareness about the scheme. These include, (i) to initiate appropriate Information Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns including wall paintings for the wide dissemination of the provisions of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, (ii) to expand scope and coverage of demand registration system to ensure that demand for work under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS does not go unregistered, (iii) prepare plans in a participatory mode and approve them in the Gram Sabha, (iv) Organization of 'Rozgar Diwas'.

The Ministry of Rural Development is implementing two welfare schemes in the field of skill development for rural poor youth under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) to eradicate poverty in the country as mentioned below :-

- I. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), which is a placement-linked skill development program for wage employment.
- II. Skill development through Rural Self Employment and Training Institutes (RSETIs) enabling a trainee to avail bank credit and start his/her own Micro-enterprise. Some of such trainees may also seek regular salaried jobs.

Both the above mentioned schemes are aimed at increasing employability of rural youth, either through payment of wages or through self-employment.

(b): Under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS preparation of Labour Budget (LB) is an essential annual exercise. Keeping in view the past trends, likely demand for employment and shelf of works, plans are prepared by the Gram Panchayats with a rural participatory planning and bottom-up approach. Based on this exercise, States/UTs present their Annual Action plans to the Empowered Committee of the Central Government.

The Empowered Committee under the chairpersonship of Secretary (Rural Development), which also includes Senior Officers of States/UTs considers the Annual Action Plan for the forthcoming financial year and works out an "Agreed-to" Labour Budget. This "Agreed-to LB" is only an indicative number for better planning so that employment can be provided against

demand on time. The Ministry also does periodic revision of the “Agreed-to” Labour Budget in consultation with States/UTs as per demand for employment at ground level, so as to provide employment in time to every wage seeker on demand.

(c): In order to upgrade the skill base of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers, Government of India launched “Project UNNATI” in December 2019. By upgrading skill base of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers, the project intends to improve their livelihoods, so that they can move from the current partial employment to full-time employment through either self-employment or wage employment. The Project aims to enhance the skill base of 2 lakh Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers. So far 90,894 candidates have been imparted skill training under Project Unnati. Since 2014-15, 8.10 crore durable assets have been created under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, generating a massive employment of 3,052 crore person-days. In the current Financial Year, so far 26.51 lakh works have been completed and 1.36 crore works are ongoing (as on 05.08.2025) providing wage employment to crores of rural households.

(d): Government of India is committed to strengthening and supporting Mahatma Gandhi NREGS to ensure livelihood security for rural households through sustainable employment opportunities.
