

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3972
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27/03/2026

PRE-LEGISLATIVE CONSULTATIONS ON VB-G RAM G ACT

3972 Shri Derek O' Brien:

Will the Minister of Rural Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted consultations with the States prior to introducing the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-GRAM G) Act, 2025;
- (b) if so, the details of the consultations held including the dates; and
- (c) the details of any other consultations held with stakeholders and particulars of the same?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI KAMLESH PASWAN)

(a) to (c): In the past twenty years, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Mahatma Gandhi NREGS) has contributed in providing guaranteed wage-employment to rural households. However, further strengthening had become necessary in view of the significant socio-economic transformation witnessed in the rural landscape driven by widespread coverage of the social security interventions and saturation-oriented implementation of major Government schemes. Similarly, rural connectivity, rural housing, electrification, financial inclusion and digital access have deepened, the workforce has diversified, and aspirations have shifted towards better incomes, growth-oriented infrastructure, sustainable livelihoods and greater climate resilience.

Wide consultations were held with all important stakeholders like the States, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA workers, functionaries, Civil society Organizations, experts etc. to strengthen the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, resulting in notable improvements in participation, transparency and digital governance. A brainstorming session under the chairpersonship of the Union Minister of Rural Development was also held to seek suggestions and views of the stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. A range of administrative and technological reforms have been introduced by the Ministry based on consultations and feedback obtained from the States.

However, deeper structural issues persisted. Monitoring in several states revealed gaps, including work not being done on the ground, expenditure not matching physical progress, the use of machines in labour-intensive work, and frequent bypassing of digital attendance systems. Since the overall architecture of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS had reached its limits, it warranted reassessment in light of evolving rural realities.

Against this backdrop and to cater to the changing aspirations, the need for stronger convergence was felt to establish an integrated, Whole-of-Government rural development framework covering several complementary Government schemes. Additionally, it was felt essential that rural infrastructure creation must transition from fragmented provisioning to a coherent and future-oriented approach which also necessitated that resources are distributed in a fair manner to reduce disparities and promote inclusive growth across all rural areas of the country based on objective parameters.

Here it is also stated the Ministry is continuously engaging with the States/UTs through weekly meetings to seek their comments/suggestions for framing of rules and guidelines under the new Act.
