

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2412
ANSWERED ON 09.03.2021

IMPACT OF CORONA PANDEMIC IN RURAL AREAS

2412. SHRI MAHESH SAHOO:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the impact of the Corona Virus pandemic in the rural areas of the country;
- (b) whether the Government has undertaken any survey of the said impact in the rural areas and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the next course of action to support redevelopment of the said areas?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (c) Measures were taken by the Ministry of Rural Development for providing relief and boosting employment and livelihood opportunities in rural areas during the Corona Virus pandemic. However, the Ministry has not undertaken any survey on the impact of Corona Virus pandemic in the rural areas of the country.

Ministry of Finance, Government of India, on 26th March 2020, announced relief package under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) for the poor to help them fight the battle against Corona Virus. The relief package announced includes, inter-alia

- i. One-time ex-gratia payment of Rs 500 per month for 3 months (April, May and June 2020) to women Jan Dhan Account holders. In pursuance of this, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) implemented the scheme of relief package of one-time ex-gratia payment of Rs 500 per month for 3 months (April, May and June 2020) to women Jan Dhan Account holders through various Banks. A total of Rs. 30956.97 crores has been released towards direct benefit transfers to 20.64 crore Women beneficiaries of Jan Dhan account holders under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) @ Rs. 500/- each for three months.
- ii. Ex-gratia of Rs.1000 in two instalments (Rs.500/- each) to the existing old age, widow and disabled/Divyangjan beneficiaries of the schemes of National Social Assistance Programme(NSAP). A total of Rs. 2814.50 crore as ex-gratia was released in two tranches in April and May, 2020 to States/UTs under PMGKY for the existing 282 lakh beneficiaries of NSAP schemes.
- iii. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA) wage rate revised w.e.f. 1.4.2020 with average wage rate increase of Rs.20 over the wage rate of 2019-20.

- iv. The collateral free credit limit for the Self Help Group(SHG) members under National Rural Livelihood Scheme (NRLM) enhanced from Rs.10 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh.

Apart from this, Government of India launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (GKRA) on 20th June, 2020 for a period of 125 days to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for returnee migrant workers and similarly affected citizens in rural area, in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic with resource envelop of Rs. 50,000 crore. The objectives of the Abhiyaan were to provide immediate employment & livelihood opportunities to the distressed, to saturate the villages with public infrastructure and creation of livelihood assets to boost the income generation activities and enhance long term livelihood opportunities by giving focus on 25 works in 116 selected districts across 6 States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The Abhiyaan is a convergent effort of ongoing 25 schemes of 12 Ministries/ Department of Central Government. More than 50 crore man-days of employment was created under the Abhiyaan with an expenditure of Rs. 39292.81 crore.

Four schemes of the MoRD namely, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Mahatma Gandhi NREGS), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana- Gramin (PMAY-G), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee RURBAN Mission (SPMRM) have been identified under the GKRA. The achievement in this regard is as under:

- i. PMAY-G has sanctioned a total of 770522 houses and completed 481210 houses with a total expenditure of Rs.5618.19 crore.
- ii. Under PMGSY, as against the target of Rs. 2902 crore, an expenditure of Rs. 1529 crore has been incurred as on 30.11.2020.
- iii. Under SPMRM, the development works in 47 Rurban clusters under GKRA have been implemented with fast pace for providing employment and livelihood opportunities to the rural citizens. During the abhiyaan period, 13494 works have been completed against the target of 13886 which is 97% of overall physical target and Rs. 693.55 crore expenditure (including convergence expenditure) has been made which is 87% of financial targets taken by SPMRM under GKRA.

Other major steps taken by the MoRD under various schemes during the outbreak of Covid-19 for expeditious socio- economic development in rural areas are listed below:

- i. Mahatma Gandhi NREGS which is a demand driven wage employment programme 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. During FY 2020-21 (upto 06.02.2021), more than 326 crore person-days have been generated, which is approximately 44% more than the employment generated during the same period in FY 2019-20 and more than 1.61 crore new job cards have been issued. Government has enhanced the allocation under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA for Financial Year 2020-21 from BE Rs.61,500 crore to Rs.1,11,500 crore.
- ii. PMAY-G aims to provide assistance to eligible rural households for construction of 2.95 Crore Pucca houses with basic amenities to achieve the objective of “Housing for All” by 2022. In the current FY, 35.44 lakh houses have been sanctioned and 24.44 lakh houses have been completed in PMAY-G and 0.64 lakhs in Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) with an expenditure of Rs.39195 crore.

- iii. PMGSY was launched in the year 2000 as a measure towards alleviation of poverty in rural areas by providing access to basic services to the rural population by providing them good quality roads. During the period of COVID states were directed to accelerate the pace of works so as to create more employment opportunities and boost rural economy. Under PMGSY, 25,943 Kms. of road length has been completed in 2020-21 and expenditure of Rs. 18,923 Cr. Incurred during this financial year.
- iv. SPMRM is a unique programme, designed to deliver catalytic interventions to rural areas on the threshold of growth. 300 Rurban Clusters with thematic economic growth points, are being developed across the country under this Mission. The Ministry had issued an advisory to the States/UTs regarding modification in existing projects/works proposed in DPR of cluster due to Covid-19 pandemic and to include more economic activities in order to reboot the rural economy. Cluster wise consultations have been convened with PRI members, SHG representatives as well as State and district functionaries to identify issues and suggestions with respect to further improving the on-ground implementation of the Mission. Under SPMRM, a total expenditure Rs. 3089 Cr. including convergence funds and critical gap funds has been incurred during financial year 2020-21.
- v. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission(DAY-NRLM) aims to reduce poverty by organizing the rural poor women into Self Help Groups (SHGs), and continuously nurturing and supporting them to take economic activities till they attain appreciable increase in income over a period of time. During the year 2020-21 (till Jan 2021), the Ministry of Rural Development under DAY-NRLM facilitated women Self Help Groups to leverage credit of Rs 56417 Crores from formal banking system for investing for continuation of their exiting economic ventures and also acquire new productive assets to start new enterprises.

There are two other skill development programmes for rural poor youth under DAY-NRLM, namely, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), and Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs). Both these schemes are aimed at increasing employability of rural poor youth either for wage or self-employment. After unlock orders and opening of training centres, under DDU-GKY a total of 9986 candidates have been trained and 36933 candidates have been placed in jobs during the current financial year 2020-21 (upto December, 2020). Under RSETI a total of 111367 candidates have been trained and 93874 candidates have been settled during the current Financial Year 2020-21(upto December, 2020).
