

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1328
ANSWERED ON 03/12/2024**

APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS

1328. SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details and total number of consultants working in the Ministry of Rural Development, SC, ST, OBC and Minority category-wise;**
- (b) the total number of consultants recruited on regular posts and the number of consultants whose salaries are paid from the consolidated fund of the Government;**
- (c) the number of staff members or consultants belonging to SC, ST, OBC and minority communities;**
- (d) whether the constitutional provisions of reservation roster have been followed in the said appointment, if not, the details of the Acts, rules or office memoranda of the Government under which these constitutional provisions have been discontinued;**
- (e) whether the job cardholders of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) are paid wages within 15 days;**
- (f) whether the wage rate under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is uniform in the country, if not, the reasons therefor; and**
- (g) the outstanding amount for material and wages under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI)**

(a) to (d): The Ministry of Rural Development comprises two departments viz – the Department of Rural Development (DoRD) and the Department of Land Resources (DoLR). Under this Ministry, the Department of Rural Development is engaged in the implementation of several flagship programs of the Government of India - the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Deendayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) and the National Social Assistance Program (NSAP), etc.. All these flagship programmes are implemented through a dedicated Management Information System using innovative IT solutions. The Department of Land Resources is engaged in the exercise of the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) and Watershed Dev. Component-Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0. Therefore, it is seen that the workload in this Ministry has significantly increased.

The Ministry of Rural Development has hired consultants to facilitate the smooth implementation of its flagship programmes and to support the Officers engaged in different programme divisions of the Ministry. The Consultants also provide support for facilitating day-to-day coordination of the Ministry with the States/UTs, enabling the Officers to focus on core policy issues and ensure the meeting of milestones within the set deadline.

As on 30.11.2024, a total of 284 consultants were hired with different divisions of the DoRD and 41 consultants were hired by the DoLR. These consultants are hired through Institutions, Autonomous bodies, Public Sector Enterprises, etc. The Consultants are hired after following due process with the approval of the Competent Authority, thereby ensuring compliance with the provisions of the General Financial Rules (GFR) and other extant instructions. The remuneration of the consultants is paid from the funds made available to this Ministry as Budget support. The category-wise data of the Consultants is not available with this Ministry.

(e): The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is a demand-driven wage employment programme and funds are released to States/UTs on the basis of agreed to Labour Budget and performance of the States during the year. The funds released under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

is based on the provisions of the Act and guidelines. Fund release to States/UTs is a continuous process and the Central Government is committed to making funds available keeping in view, the demand for work. Necessary action has been taken for ensuring timely payment of wages to beneficiaries.

Details of the Fund Transfer Orders (FTOs) generated within 15 days from the closure of muster rolls under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS during the last financial years 2023-24 and the current financial year 2024-25 (as on 28.11.2024) are given below:

Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25
% Fund Transfer Orders (FTOs) are generated within 15 days	97.98	98.91

(f): As per Section 6 (1) of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA), 2005, the Central Government may by notification specify the wage rate for unskilled work for its beneficiaries. Accordingly, the Ministry of Rural Development notifies Mahatma Gandhi NREGA wage rate for every financial year for States/UTs. To compensate the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA workers against inflation, the Ministry of Rural Development revises the wage rate every financial year based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour (CPI-AL). The index is different for different States/UTs as notified by the Labour Bureau, Shimla. If the calculated wage rate of any State/UT is lower than the wage rate of the previous financial year, it is protected by maintaining the previous financial year's wage rate. The wage rate is made applicable from the 1st of April of each financial year. However, each State/UT can provide wages over and above the wage rate notified by the Central Government.

(g): The fund release to the States/UTs is a continuous process and Central Government is committed to making funds available to States/UTs for the implementation of the Scheme as per the demand for work on the ground. In the FY 2024-25 (as on 28.11.2024) an amount of Rs. 55105.57 Crores under wage components and Rs.

19978.06 Crores under material and admin component has been released to States/UTs.

Under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, States/UTs furnish fund release proposals to the Government of India. The Ministry releases funds periodically in two tranches with each tranche consisting of one or more installments, keeping in view the “agreed to” Labour Budget, demand for works, opening balance, pace of utilization of funds, pending liabilities, overall performance and subject to submission of relevant documents by the States/UTs. Here it is also mentioned that after 1st October of FY fund release is also subject to furnishing audit accounts and utilization certificate by the States/UTs. As on 27.11.2024, the amount due to States/UTs under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is Rs. 2902.06 crore for Material component and Rs. 661.50 crore for wage component.
