

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5005
ANSWERED ON 01/04/2025**

BAREFOOT TECHNICIANS

5005. SHRI G KUMAR NAIK:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Barefoot Technicians (BFTs) currently employed in the country, State-wise;**
- (b) whether the Government has any plans to revise the current travel allowance of Rs. 2,000 to BFTs, considering they are required to use own vehicles and often travel around 20-30 km to even 60-100 km, depending on the size and number of panchayats;**
- (c) whether the Government is considering the provision of health insurance coverage for BFTs and death compensation for their dependents, particularly when they are involved in longdistance travel;**
- (d) whether the Government is considering extension of social security benefits to BFTs, including Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and Provident Fund (PF); and**
- (e) whether the Government has any plans to either remove the 11-month contract renewal requirement or to extend the contract period for BFTs to provide greater job security to BFTs?**

ANSWER

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

(a): The Barefoot Technician (BFT) Project was launched by the Ministry during FY 2015-16 and is being implemented across 20 States in the country. 'Barefoot Technician' is an educated person identified from the local Mahatma Gandhi NREGA workers or from among the mates/supervisors and are specially trained in civil engineering concepts using a customized training module such that she/he acquires required skills for identification and estimation of works, giving mark-out for works in the field and record

measurement of the work done in the Measurement-Book of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. State-wise details of BFTs deployed currently is given at Annexure.

(b): The deployment of Barefoot Technicians (BFTs) falls under the purview of the respective State Governments. Each State Government is responsible for formulating necessary guidelines for the deployment of BFTs, clearly outlining the terms of engagement and service conditions.

Para 18 and 20 of Schedule II of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA), 2005, envisages that as far as possible, employment shall be provided within a radius of five kilometers of the village where the applicant resides at the time of applying and in case the employment is provided outside the said radius, the labourers shall be paid ten per cent of the wage rate as extra wages to meet additional transportation and expenses for living.

The responsibility of arranging manpower for the said scheme is of the State Government, Central Government supports the State Government in this regard through allocation of funds for bearing administrative expenses as per law.

(c)& (d): Para 27 of Schedule – II of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (Mahatma Gandhi NREG Act, 2005), envisages that “If a person employed under the Scheme meets with death or becomes permanently disabled by accident arising out of and in the course of employment, he or his legal heirs, as the case may be, shall be paid by the implementing agency an ex gratia as per entitlements under the AamAadmiBimaYojana or as may be notified by the Central Government”.

Since Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is not a regular/contractual employment but a fall back option for livelihood for rural households, when no better employment opportunity is available, workers under the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS are not covered under the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) scheme. However, Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers can avail the benefit of any Pension, Provident fund or any other scheme being implemented by the Central/State Government, if they are covered under the guidelines of those schemes.

(e): The State Government is responsible for determining the tenure and remuneration etc. for BFTs in a manner it deems appropriate.

Annexure

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5005 dated 01.04.2025.

State-wise details of BFTs deployed in the country as on 26.03.25		
Sl. No.	State/UTs	No. of BFTs deployed
1	Andhra Pradesh	635
2	Arunachal Pradesh	68
3	Bihar	966
4	Chhattisgarh	494
5	Gujarat	118
6	Haryana	54
7	Jharkhand	600
8	Karnataka	1587
9	Kerala	143
10	Manipur	72
11	Meghalaya	245
12	Mizoram	100
13	Odisha	562
14	Punjab	67
15	Rajasthan	476
16	Sikkim	62
17	Telangana	215
18	Uttarakhand	577
19	West Bengal	673
Total		7,714

Note: In State of Madhya Pradesh, all the BFTs have been deployed under Social Audit Unit. Hence data has been furnished in respect of 19 States only.
