

THE ROLE OF MGNREGA IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JANAKONDA GRAMA PANCHAYATH OF CHITRADURGA DISTRICT

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Abstract:

The Indian Parliament passed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 23rd August 2005. But it was notified through the Gazette of India (Extraordinary) Notification dated September 7, 2005; it came into force on February 2, 2006 in 200 backward districts. The mandate of the MGNREGA is to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The core objectives of the MGNREGS are, (a) Providing not less than one hundred days of unskilled manual work as a guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in rural areas as per demand, resulting in creation of productive assets of prescribed quality and durability; Strengthening the livelihood resource base of the poor; Proactively ensuring social inclusion and Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions. This research paper analyses the role of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) programme in rural development with particular reference to Janakonda Gramma Panchayath of Chitradurga District.

Keywords: MGNREGA, Rural Development, Mahatma Gandhi, Rural Economy, Employment.

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was implemented and came into force on February 2, 2006. It was the first act of its kind in the world wherein an economic safety net is provided to around 2/3rd of the population through the right to work. The scale on which it has been provided is just mindboggling,

engaging around 1/10th of the total world population. It was the second in a series of right-based policies the Government of India has rolled out in the past decade. The others are the Right to Information (RTI) Act, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, the Right to Food Act etc. passed in 2005, 2009 and 2013 respectively. It was implemented in a phase-wise manner;

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with the first 200 most backward districts covered in Phase I i.e. 2006-07. The Phase II included 130 additional districts and the final phase covered the remaining rural districts. The Act currently covers all 645 rural districts throughout India. It has generated 1679.01 crore person days of employment since its inception at a total expenditure of Rs. 250310.81 crores (refer to Table 1 for details). The MGNREGA Act has laudable objectives of providing a work guarantee to poor rural households on one hand and creating a quality asset, strengthening the rural resource base, ensuring social inclusion, and strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions on the other. However, questions have been raised about the timing and purpose of the act, its design and structure, the logic of state intervention in the labour market in an era of liberalization, the likely impacts of the programme on asset creation and economy and its overall success. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is considered a Silver Bullet for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for a productive labour force in Rural Areas. Rural poor quality and unemployment in India have grown-up in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades. There is a growing incidence of illiteracy, blind faith, hungry people, malnourished children, anemic pregnant women, farmers' suicides, starvation deaths, migration resulting from inadequate employment, poverty, and the failure of subsistence production during droughts, etc. It is the biggest poverty alleviation program in the world which started with an initial

outlay of Rs. 11,30 crore in the year 2006-07 and now we can see 1,11,500 crore at the Revised Estimate stage. In the fiscal year 2021-22, the financial allocation for MGNREGA has increased from Rupees 73,000 crores at the Budget Estimate stage to Rs. 98,00 crores at the Revised Estimate phase. The Act provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household who will do community work-related and unskillful manual work at the statutory minimum wage. Its primary objective is to augment wage employment and strengthen natural resource management. Job cards are issued to all the workers looking for employment and the MGNREG act and unemployment stipend (allowance) are paid if work is not assigned within 15 days. Under the MGNREG act, the use of machinery which replaces human workers is minimized, wage rates for both men and women are the same and one-third of the beneficiaries should be women. It also provides equal opportunity to SCs, STs, and other weaker sections of society.

HISTORY OF MGNREGA

MGNREGA has come after almost 56 years of experience with other rural employment programs, which include both Centrally Sponsored Schemes and those launched by State Govt. These comprise the National Rural Employment Program (NREP) 1980-89; Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP) 1983-89; Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) 1989-1990; Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) 1993-99; Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) 1999-2002; Sampoorna

Grameen Rojgar Yojana 2 (SGRY) from 2001; National Food for Work Program (NFFWP) from 2004 were national rural employment schemes. Among these, the SGRY and NFFWP have been merged with NRE into to the Significance of MGNREGA. MGNREGA aims to achieve the objective as enunciated in Article: 41 of the Indian Constitution- “giving citizens the right to work”, i.e. While the earlier wage employment pro programs do not provide any guarantee of jobs, ta Jobs Act provided guaranteed jobs his guarantee for wage employment now uniformed all over the country like never before. It is a development initiative, chipping in with essential public investment for the creation of durable assets, without which the growth process can’t be possible in the most backward regions of rural India. Almost all the previous programwere allocation based rather than demand based. NREGA, which was launched in 2006, is considered to be unique from this standpoint. The key element of MGNREGA is the provision of employment by the state to those people who are unable to find alternative employment, which provides a form of social safety net to the rural unemployed people is a development initiative, chipping in with essential public investment for the creation of durable assets, without which the growth process can’t be possible in the most backward regions of rural India. Almost all the pre-programs were allocation based rather than demand based. NREGA, which was launched in 2006, is considered to be unique from this standpoint. The key element of MGNREGA is the provision of employment by the state to those people

who are unable to find alternative employment, which provides a form of social safety net to the rural unemployed people. In other wage employment programs, anyone can be engaged labour while in MGNREGA only job card holders that apply for employment can be engaged as labourers. There is no time frame in other wage employment programs but in MGNREGA, employment will be given within 15 days of demand, and yet also within 15 days of work. In other wage employment programmes, the duration of employment is dependent on the duration of work by implementing agency while in MGNREGA; a job card holder applies for a maximum of 100 days. The other key attributes of this Act’s labour-intensive site work, are decentralized participatory planning, women’s empowerment, work-site facilities and above all transparency and accountability through the provision of social audits the and right to information. The use of information technology programs is considered to bring about greater transparency through intensive monitoring and faster execution. The payment of wages through bank and post office accounts is another innovative step that is likely to reduce fudging of muster rolls on the part of the implementing agencies since the actual payments are beyond their reach. Thus, MGNREGA is not only a welfare initiative but also a development effort that can take the Indian economy to new prosperity. SALIENT FEATURES OF MGNREGA Right-based-frame work All adult members of a rural household willing to do unskilled manual work have the right to demand employment.

The GP after due verification will issue a job card. After verification, the GP will issue a job card (containing details of the member) to the household with a photograph free of cost within 15 days of the application-bound bound guarantee of employment. Employment will be provided by the GP within 15 days of work application, else unemployment allowance will be paid. A household may fill to 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year, depending on its need. Permissible works Water conservation; drought proofing (including plantation & forestation); flood protection; land development; minor irrigation. In other wage employment programs, anyone can be engaged as a labourer while in MGNREGA only job card holders that apply for employment can be engaged as labourers. There is no time frame in other wage employment programs but in MGNREGA, employment will be given within 15 days of demand, and payment also within 15 days of work. In other wage employment programs, the duration of employment is dependent on the duration of work by implementing agency while in MGNREGA; a job card holder applies for a maximum of 100 days. The other key attributes of this Act are labour-intensive work, decentralized participatory planning, women's empowerment, work-site facilities and above all transparency and accountability through the provision of social audits and the right to information. The use of information technology in this program is considered 15 to bring about greater transparency through intensive monitoring and faster execution. The payment of wages

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SALIENT FEATURES OF MGNREGA

For the achievement of the desired objectives, MGNREGA has several design features which were missing in the erstwhile public works and employment generation programmes. Pankaj (2012) highlighted several challenges in the implementation of these programmes, enumerated as follows:

All of these schemes were centralized schemes, formulated and implemented by the bureaucracy without any consultation and involvement of the community. The second feature was their supply-driven nature and thus employment was provided based on the needs of the government. Thus, the needs of the people were kept at bay. Poor mechanism for accountability and transparency with no provision for social accounting and monitoring. It led to a lot of pilferage and wastage of resources and there were cases of leakage and rampant corruption by government officials, there was inadequate employment generation. Moreover, the employment generation was not seen in linkage with the provision for minimum livelihood security. Income, minimum wages and workers' amenities were not part of the entitlement, thus not ensuring at least a minimum level of dignity for

the poor., Low participation of women in the programmes., Employment opportunities were not flexible to the worker's demands.

OTHER FEATURES OF MGNREGA

Gives legal guarantee of wage employment to the adult members of rural households who are willing to do unskilled manual labour subject to a maximum of 100 days per household, Applicable for all villages in the district, Every rural household has the right to register under MGNREGA, Job cards issued to every household registered under MGNREGA, Job cards issued within 15 days from the date of receipt of an application for the job card registration, The registered job card holders can seek employment by giving a group / individual application, A minimum of 10 job seekers shall apply to sanction a new work under MGNREGA, Employment provided by sanctioning one of the works under "Shelf of Works" as identified and prioritized by the village community within 15 days from the date of receipt of applications for providing employment under MGNREGA, The village community has the right to choose works under 8 permissible categories of works, "Shelf of works" will be identified by the village community for 5 years which can be taken up in their villages as per the job demand and entitled person-days, The works proposed by the village community cannot be altered by anyone unless they are not in conformity with the guidelines of MGNREGA, The work shall be provided within 5 km jurisdiction from the village, If the work provided is beyond 5 KMs, the job

seekers shall be given 10% of the minimum wage as an additional amount, State Govt. to pay 25% of minimum wage for the 1st 30 days as compensatory daily unemployment allowance on failure to provide employment for the families demanding the works under the MGNREG Act, and ½ of the wage for the remaining period of the year, Wages are paid according to State Minimum Wage rate notified under the Minimum Wages Act 1948. Equal payment for men and women, Wages to be paid within a fortnight, 1/3 of beneficiaries should be women; Social Audit is a must for all the works implemented under NREGA. The details of the Social Audit conducted during 2010-11 and 2011-12 (up to the month of May), Provisions of the RTI Act shall be applicable in Letter & Spirit to ensure transparency and accountability

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the functional aspects of MGNREGA in Janakonda Grama panchayath of Chitradurga district of Karnataka.
- To study the socio-economic profile of the beneficiary in the study area
- To explore the role of MGNREGA in the economic empowerment in Janakonda Grama panchayath of Chitradurga district of Karnataka.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study is based on Primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and schedule methods. The secondary data was collected through published and unpublished records from the PRIs, reports from government of Karnataka and from the department of Rural

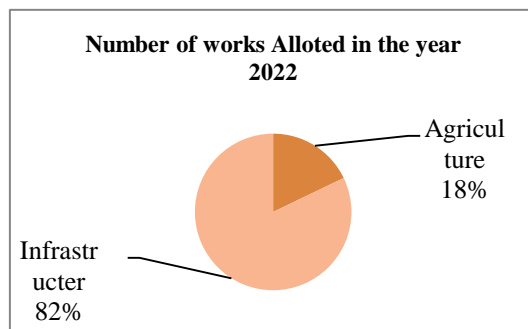
Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR), MGNREGA report etc.,

SAMPLE

A sample of 50 respondents were selected for the present study through random sampling technique and the data were collected by interviewing 50 respondents from the Janakonda Grama panchayath of Chitradurga district of Karnataka.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Development works allotted in the scheme of MNAREGA for the financial year: 2022-2023 in Janukonda Grama Panchayth, in Chitradurga District.



Source: Fieldwork

The MGNREGA has brought about a positive change in the rural areas of Janakonda GramaPanchayath of Chitradurga District. The scheme has made a significant contribution towards the development of the region by providing employment to the rural population and improving the infrastructure. The scheme has provided employment to the rural unemployed and increased the purchasing power of the rural people. This has resulted in increased agricultural productivity, improved access to basic services, increased access to credit, and improved livelihoods.

It has also enabled the development of roads, water facilities, Anganwadi centres, school buildings, and other public infrastructure in the region. The scheme has also provided a platform for the community to come together and work towards a common goal of development in the region. The MGNREGA is a step towards empowering the rural population and providing them with better access to the resources necessary for their development. Overall, the MGNREGA has been effective in bringing about positive change in the rural areas of Janakonda Gram Panchayat of Chitradurga District. The scheme has provided employment and improved the infrastructure of the region. It has also enabled the community to come together and work towards a common goal of development in the region. The scheme has been successful in its aim of empowering the rural population and providing them with better access to the resources necessary for their development. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has played a very significant role in the development of Janakonda Gram Panchayath in Chitradurga District. It has provided employment opportunities to the rural population and has helped to improve the living standards of the people. MGNREGA has also helped to create durable assets in the form of roads, water conservation projects, and other infrastructure in the village. This has increased the connectivity of the village with the other parts of the district. By creating employment opportunities, MGNREGA has also helped to improve the

overall economic condition of the people of Janakonda Gram Panchayath.

SUGGESTIONS

- Daily wages should be Increased
- If any Person gets injuries Government should provide all the Medical Assistance
- Under MGNAREGA Programmes Machines are used, so this development will decrease employment opportunities hence Machines should not be used.
- Under this Programme the equal focus should be on Agriculture developmental works.

CONCLUSION

MGNREGA is one of the key programmes of the government where provision of work is triggered by the demand for unskilled labourers of rural area. The scheme also been considered as a landmark legislation in the history of social security legislation and a silent revolution in employment generation in rural areas. The scheme not on employment generation but also to increase in the production of agriculture sector, Thus, it can be concluded that MGNREGA has been instrumental in the rural development of Janakonda Gram Panchayath and has helped to improve the lives of the people.

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