

Regarding need to enhance budgetary allocation under MGNREGS and ensure its effective implementation-Laid

SUSHRI S. JOTHIMANI (KARUR): The MGNREGA scheme is not being effectively extended to everyone and depriving people from their fundamental right to work because of a series of harmful decisions. A recent visit to my Parliamentary Constituency highlighted the detrimental impact of these actions. The scheme did not receive any additional budgetary allocation in the revised estimates for 2024-25, despite the Ministry of Rural Development being short of Rs.4,000 crores for wages. MGNREGA mandates that wages be disbursed within a week - or at most a fortnight - after work is completed. Yet, many workers are still waiting for wages after over five weeks, largely due to the poorly implemented Aadhar Payment Bridge System (APBS). The Centre owes over Rs.5,000 crore for material components, limiting the number of projects that can be undertaken. New rules also prevent adding new works to the recognized projects under the Scheme until the end of the 5-year term, almost restricting many of the usual works taken up, practically reducing the persondays. As a result, many workers have been left without opportunities, leading to a drastic decline in overall persondays. I urge the Union Government to increase the budget allocation for MGNREGA, remove restrictions on the works that can be undertaken, and pay the workers on time.