

MNREGA

The pandemic has created unprecedented demand of work in rural India due to reverse migration. Thus MNREGA should be augmented to raise entitlement of workers.

The accumulated allotment to MNREGA including 39,800 cr in Atmanirbhar Bharat is highest since its inception. But this is still only 0.47% of GDP below than 1.7% of GDP recommended by World Bank. Government also raised working days upto 150 days but Kerala Odisha and other states have exhausted this limit already. The rise of payment from 100 to 202 ₹ is very meagre and does not match minimum wages which vary state to state. Some other problems like

- (i) payment delay - more than 15 day delay without compensation has made the scheme demand driven to supply driven.
- (ii) corruption - Due to fabricated job card, ghost beneficiaries have siphoned the money away from actual needy.
- (iii) Digitised problems - like document arrangement, complex

kyc norms etc has burdened the poor mostly women.

- (iv) Demand-supply mismatch - In 2019 only 5.22 cr workers got employed against demand of 5.88 cr workers.

~~Hence~~, MNREGA has emerged as one of the most important scheme providing relief in a right based approach. It should be further strengthened in following way :-

- (i) Raising payment - ₹202 is very meagre wot. current crisis and inflation. Government should raise it by extra budgetary allocation upto 1.7% of GDP.
- (ii) Empowering local bodies - To deliver door step service with the help of community service centre to solve documentary and kyc issue.
- (iii) Skill improvement - The time is ripe to link MNREGA with skilling schemes like PMCKY to make the workers Atmanirbhar. Linking them with SHG to empower women and livelihood projects like poultry farm, dairy farm etc.
- (iv) Reducing delay and simple grievance redressal to sustain interest of people in MNREGA.
- (v) Data coordination to match region to region & season to season work demand