

## **50% of Rural Jobs Target met under MGNREGA**

As against 100 days guaranteed in the MGNREGA, an average 49 workdays of employment was generated in 2015-16 under the central rural job scheme, the Government told Parliament on Thursday.

MoS for Rural Development Ram Kripal Yadav, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha said Manipur reported only 16 workdays of employment, the lowest among all States, followed by Puducherry with 17 days, Goa 18 days and Lakshadweep 22 days.

The overall average was 49 workdays in 2015-16, he said. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a demand-driven wage employment programme, guaranteeing up to 100 days of unskilled work in a year to every rural household. It has been a key source of livelihood for millions of rural households, primarily during the lean period. It is not a substitute for all other employment opportunities.

The Government is actively engaged with State Governments in establishing systems that ensure provision of work as per demand, transparency and accountability, Yadav said.

The Minister added that the States have also been requested to organise 'Rozgar Diwas' periodically to capture latent demand under the programme and to disseminate about provisions of the Act

According to the officials, 49 workdays of employment is highest so far and several steps have been initiated to streamline the rural job scheme.

Activities under MGNREGS, including building check dams and village ponds, resulted in 46.43 hectares of land being brought under irrigation, as per a report released last month by the Ministry on the performance of the NDA flagship scheme.

According to the report, the number of households that demanded employment in 2015-16 were 53.5 million and of these, 48.2 million had been provided with work.

The total person days-or the number of people multiplied by the number of days they had been provided work-stood at 2.36 billion in 2015-16, the report said.