

## **The Tribune**

### **MGNREGA workers stage protest, demand regular jobs**

Field and office employees working under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) today staged a protest against the government over their demand of regular jobs.

They have been protesting from a long time over their demands and have been urging for a panel meeting with the Chief Minister. They claim that despite the fact that there had been numerous vacancies in the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat, the MGNREGA employees were not regularised by the government whereas the neighbouring Haryana state had regularised its employees.

Addressing the protesters, union leader Sukhdeep Singh said around 1,200 MGNREGA workers had been working on different posts in various departments of the state for the past seven years. “Every year, our contract is extended till March 31 despite the fact that we were recruited through a proper procedure of advertisement and then interviews for the posts. We have been working in the Rural Development and Panchayat Department for the past several years and the department is now advertising for recruitment to fill posts lying vacant instead of regularising our jobs.”

“Even in 2011, the then Rural Development and Panchayat Minister, Ranjit Singh, promised to regularise us if they came into power but all these turned out to be false promises. The state government was not keen on regularising our jobs since it was exploiting the employees by paying them meagre salaries,” Sukhdeep Singh added.