



Dear Member,

On 5th September, 2005 the Indian Parliament passed an important enactment – the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (No.42) to provide for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household in 200 districts across the country whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Act came into force with the launching of employment guarantee scheme on 2nd February 2006 in Bandlapalli, in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Inaugurating the program, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh described the event as “a landmark in our history in removing poverty from the face of the nation.”

The scheme seeks that to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor lays focus on the following works in their order of priority water conservation and water harvesting; drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation); irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works; provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India; renovation of traditional water bodies including desalting of tanks; land development; flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas and rural connectivity to provide all-weather access.

As per the implementation status report of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, the scheme is operational in 19 districts of Andhra Pradesh namely – Adilabad, Anantapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, East Godavari, Guntur, Karimnagar, Khammam, Kurnool, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nellore, Nizamabad, Prakasam, Ranga Reddi, Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Warangal. Under the scheme 35, 06,883 lakh households were provided employment on demand involving 995.86 lakh persondays. So far Rs 1,661.32 crore fund was received of which Rs 1,052.81 crore was spent involving a total of 3, 64,656 works, of which 43,222 were completed leaving 3, 21,434 in progress.

The prime minister while launching the scheme called for a sound monitoring system and a grievance redressal mechanism to be put in place to ensure that the scheme had its intended effect. “Three watchwords should be followed: outlays must be matched by outcomes, productive assets must be created and guarantee must be implemented in true spirit” – said Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Rural Development Minister stated that it is the first ever program to involve people and their representatives at grass roots levels. Nevertheless, it is felt that the scheme as a whole is not so effective due to lack of community awareness and far below standards of implementation. Therefore the problem must be addressed through close monitoring, full transparency and accountability, propaganda through pamphlets, cultural shows and various other awareness programs. Only, then the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act would help us get rid of scourge of poverty, disease and indebtedness.

I thank you for your co-operation.



Atluri Subba Rao