

जयराम रमेश
JAIRAM RAMESH



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भारत सरकार
कृषि भवन, नई दिल्ली-110114
MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
KRISHI BHAVAN, NEW DELHI-110 114

D.O.No.FTS-66592/2011

30th November, 2011

Dear Mamatachidi -

I am writing this letter to **apprise you on the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in West Bengal (WB) and seek your intervention in certain areas.**

2. Recently, I have reviewed the Progress of implementation of MGNREGA in West Bengal during Financial Year (FY) 2011-12. There are certain important issues which I wish to bring to your notice for your personal intervention.

Unspent Balances

3. The approved Labour Budget (LB) of West Bengal for financial year 2011-12 is Rs.3,868 crore. The State had an Opening Balance of Rs. 247 crore as on 01.04.2011. Taking into account Central releases of Rs.1,284 crore and other receipts including State share, the **Total Available Fund with the State Government is Rs.1,823 crore.**

4. Despite availability of sufficient funds, the State has not been able to generate employment as projected in LB upto September/October, 2011. **As on date, around Rs.900 crore continues to lie unutilized with various Project Implementation Authorities in the State.** The State Government needs to make efforts for optimum utilization of this unspent amount against meeting the demand for works under MGNREGA in various parts of the State.

Release of Second Installment for 2011-12

5. Shri D.K. Jain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development has recently visited West Bengal to participate in a review meeting on implementation of MGNREGA and held discussions with you on possible and quick resolution of implementation issues under MGNREGA. **The State Government, in the review meeting has assured to comply all the conditionalities for release of 2nd installment latest by 25.11.2011 and forward a fund release proposal along with a compliance report on pre-requisites under MGNREGA by 30.11.11.** I hope that the State Government would adhere to the agreed timelines for smooth and timely release of 2nd tranche during financial year 2011-12 to West Bengal.

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Critical Implementation Issues

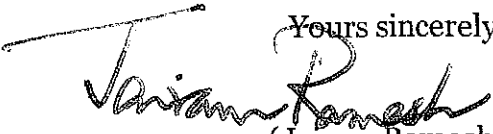
6. Further, I would like to bring before you the following vital implementation issues which need your personal and immediate intervention:

- **Participation of women:** Participation of women workforce in MGNREGA in West Bengal has not been satisfactory and was below the national average during 2010-11. While the share of women participation under MGNREGA in the country was estimated at 48 per cent, it was 34 per cent in West Bengal.
- **Human Resource Issues and Vacant Posts:** We need to bring in complete synergy between Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj in the State and strengthen the human resources of these Departments for effective and successful implementation of MGNREGA at District/Panchayat level. **The post of Commissioner (MGNREGA) which is lying vacant for a year needs to be filled-in to ensure appropriate coordination with the State/Central Government and the Programme Implementing Authorities.** While the placement of other required Professionals may take a few months, the post of a Commissioner (MGNREGA) needs to be filled in immediately.
- **Implementing Electronic Wage Payment System:** The State Government has decided to opt for e-FMS application for seamless transfer of wages to the accounts of MGNREGA workers. However, to make it a reality, the State needs to agree to (a) make all MGNREGA payments through a Central Account to be operated at the State/District level and, (b) generate all payment orders using NREGAssoft. Upon receipt of confirmation of these conditions, my officers will work with their counter part in West Bengal Government for successfully rolling out the e-FMS application system. Meanwhile, the State Government may identify a few Community Development Blocks for pilot implementation of such an innovative wage disbursement system.
- **Land Productivity Initiative:** In our assessment, MGNREGA in West Bengal has a tremendous potential in improving productivity of lands owned by farmers who have been covered under Article-4 of para-1 of Schedule I of the MGNREG Act, 2005 and includes small and marginal farmers, SC/ST and BPL farmers. A survey of all such eligible beneficiaries and land improvement works should be carried out in a time-bound manner in consultation with line departments at district/block/panchayat level.
- **Plan for Category-4 Beneficiaries:** The State Government need to earmark adequate funds for important line departments viz. Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, etc. for effective coverage of beneficiaries falling under category-4 of Schedule I of the MGNREGA 2005. A time-bound action plan would be necessary to accomplish this goal.
- **Empowering Panchayats:** Article 243(G) of the Constitution envisages empowering the Panchayats with necessary power and authority to enable them to function as institutions of Self-Government. The Keeping in view this spirit, Panchayats have been assigned a central role in MGNREG Act, 2005. Effective steps need to be taken to ensure that the role envisaged in Article 243(G) is not circumvented.

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7. I leave these thoughts with you and seek your personal intervention to monitor and resolve these expeditiously. I assure you of the fullest support of my Ministry in your endeavour to making West Bengal a model state for MGNREGA implementation.

~~non-personal~~
With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Jairam Ramesh)

Ms. Mamata Banerjee
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of West Bengal
Kolkata.