

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is a centrally sponsored scheme, funded on the basis of 90:10 between the Centre and the State. It is an employment generation programme implemented in consonance with section 4 of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA).

OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME:

1. To provide 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in the rural areas notified by the central Government under section 3(1) of the NREGA and whose adult members by application are willing to do unskilled manual works.
- 2 To create Durable assets in rural areas.
- 3 To strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor.
4. To enhance the livelihood security of the rural households. Under the programme, wages not below the minimum wage rate of Rs.66/- is to be paid. The rate fixed in the State is Rs.100/-per day per head where men and women are paid equal wages under the scheme. The material cost component of projects including the wages of the skilled and semi-skilled workers involved under the scheme is not to exceed 40% of the total project cost.

Provision for payment of Unemployment Allowance to a person who is registered under the scheme and who applies for employment but are not given employment within 15 days are entitled to receive unemployment allowance at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the daily wage for the first 30days and $\frac{1}{2}$ per day beyond that. In case of failure to provide work when funds are available, the State has to bear the cost of unemployment allowance. The District Programme Co-coordinator can also impose fine/penalties on the programme officer and the VDB Secretary as per the amount agreed to by the State Employment Guarantee Council.

APPROVED SCHEMES.

As per the scheduled 1 of the Act, the following works are permissible under NREGS:

1. Water conservation and rain harvesting.
2. Drought proofing, afforestation and tree plantation.
3. Irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works.
4. Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the ST/SC or land of the beneficiaries of land reforms or land of beneficiaries under IAY.
5. Renovation of traditional water bodies including de-silting of tanks.
6. Land development.
7. Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas.

8. Rural connectivity to provide all water access. 9. Any other work that may be notified by Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

NREGA STATUS IN NAGALAND.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was launched on 2nd February, 2006 in 200 districts. On the basis of backwardness, Mon was the only District selected in Nagaland out of the 200 districts. Thus the scheme was launched for the first time in Mon district during 2005-2006 though the actual implementation started only during 2006-2007. The Government of India released Rs.1461.09 lakhs as Central share against which the State released Rs. 144.0 lakhs. Under the programme, 8.77 lakhs man days were generated during the year.

During the year 2007-08, 4(four) more districts viz. Kohima, Wokha, Mokokchung and Tuensang were declared as NREGA Districts. In order to meet the requirement of the 10% share of the State for the 5(five) districts the department projected its requirement at Rs.3135 crores. However no earmarked allocation was considered and the department allocated Rs.600.00 lakhs to meet its share for implementation of all Centrally Sponsored Schemes. As such, the department could earmark only an amount of Rs. 150.00 lakhs towards NREGA and an additional allocation of Rs. 106 lakhs provided by the state Government. The total state share towards NREGA now stands at Rs. 256,00 lakhs.

BUDGET FOR 2008-2009.

The Government of India has declared all the districts in the state as NREGA districts and thus, all the 11 districts in Nagaland will be covered under NREGA with effect from 1st April 2008. The Government of India has released a total of Rs.327.00 lakhs as seed money for implementation of the programme in the newly created NREGa districts which will cover Phek, Zunheboto, Kiphiri, Longlen, Peren and Dimapur.

(Source: Deptt. Of Rural Development, Nagaland)