

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to allocate more funds to meet the increased demand for jobs under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN (KASARAGOD): Sir, continuing economic distress in rural India has led to increased demand for jobs under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which promises 100 days of unskilled work for every household at a pay of about Rs. 210 per day.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme assumed renewed significance during the pandemic when millions of workers migrated to rural areas causing an unprecedented surge in demand for work under the programme. Even after the lockdowns were eased or lifted, the demand for work has remained high owing to job losses in different sectors. An amount of Rs. 1281 crore was due as unskilled wages at a time when scores of workers are relying on MGNREGS as a last resort to earn a living in the face of huge employment loss across the country.

With four months remaining in the financial year, MGNREGS has finished spending Rs. 73,000 crore initially allocated in the Budget but its financial statement was a negative net balance of Rs. 10,244 crore including payments due. The additional funding of Rs.25,000 crore is not sufficient to tackle the crisis.