

35% of work under scheme meant for migrant workers went to MGNREGA

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Much of the ₹10,000-crore extra allocation for the Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan (GKRA), an employment scheme for migrants thrown adrift by the sudden lockdown in March, will be spent on works done through the flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and rural housing project.

The Central government announced the additional allotment a few days ago. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the programme in June.

This also could mean an indirect, extra allocation for the MGNREGA. This is because the latest data shows that though the GKRA was launched by converging 25 different works, spread over 11 ministries under various banners, an overwhelming number of those (almost 11) form part of the projects allowed under the flagship programme.

The tentative data sourced from the GKRA website shows that since June, around 1.10 million works have been completed under the campaign. Of those, around 380,000 (35.28 per cent) are ones that directly related to the MGNREGA.

These include building water conservation and harvesting structures, plantation



(including those through funds for Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning), creating cattle sheds and farm ponds, building solid and liquid waste management structures, digging wells, etc.

Of the 1.10 million, a significant number of them — 159,697 — have been on building water conservation and harvesting structures since June 20.

The highest number of works — 481,201 — under the GKRA was on rural housing, which comes within the tent of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin).

So far, around 510 million

mandays of work has been generated the campaign and of the allocated ₹50,000 crore, around ₹40,000 crore has been spent, the website shows.

“An additional outlay of ₹10,000 crore is being provided for the PM Garib Kalyan Rozgar Yojana. Funds can be used for MGNREGA or for Gram Sadak Yojana, this will help accelerate rural economy,” the official statement said.

Though the GKRA was launched to provide jobs to returning migrants, critics say that a thorough analysis of the new jobs created through the campaign needs to be done because there wasn't any new allocation for the

campaign and most of the works would have in any way been completed in the normal course.

The GKRA is meant to provide 125 days of meaningful employment to nearly a third of the returning migrants in 116 districts to which most of them went back in the wake of the lockdown.

Of these districts, Bihar and UP accounted for the highest number.

With several of the migrants returning to their villages, it remains to be seen whether the government extends the campaign beyond the mandated 125 days.

THE LOWDOWN

MGNREGA work done through Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan till Nov 23

Work	Work done/ activities completed
Cattle shed	45,701
Goat shed	9,980
Poultry shed	2,854
Vermi composting	4,848
Farm ponds	34,005
Solid & liquid waste mgmt	25,645
Horticulture	14,361
Aanganwadi centres	3,607
Plantation	73,307
Wells	16,399
Water conservation & harvesting	159,697

*including through CAMPA funds

Source: GKRA website