



**COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Congress**  
**Samar Mukherjee Nagar**  
**Visakhapatnam, April 14-19, 2015**

***Resolution***

**On MGNREGA**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the policy of the Modi Government to dilute and ultimately eliminate the legal right to 100 days of work on demand in rural India, a right established through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. In spite of all its weaknesses, MGNREGA had a positive impact on rural employment and wages.

The demand for work projected by the States in their labour budgets (2014-2015) required an allocation of Rs 61,000 crores. Instead, the Government allocated just Rs 33,000 crores in the interim budget presented after the Lok Sabha elections. The amount allocated in the 2015-6 budget remains the same, that is, Rs 33,000 crores. This is in fact a decrease, since the amount includes the backlog of unpaid wages of around Rs 6000 crores.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Congress of the CPI(M) condemns the cutback, which has led to a drastic reduction in the number of days of work provided under the Act. In 2014-5 only 15.5 per cent of households demanding work had got 100 days work, compared to 51.7 per cent of households in 2012-3, and 46.6 per cent of households in 2013-4. The average number of workdays is now less than 37 days a year, the lowest since the Act was passed. Yet, the Central Government wants to further restrict its implementation to some backward district.

Left-led Tripura, where the average number of days of employment was 88 workdays in a year, the highest number in the country and more than double the national average, has suffered cuts and delayed fund transfers. Despite these setbacks, the Left Front Government has maintained its excellent record with respect to the scheme.

Although at the national level, the average daily wage rose to Rs. 142.80 in 2014-5, the actual expenditure on wages came down by Rs. 5737 crores. The move by the Government to spend less on wages will be intensified by the utterly wrong decision to change the ratio of labour to material expenditure from the 60:40 ratio by aggregating it at the district level. This will greatly strengthen the role of contractors.

This Congress denounces the deliberate policy of delaying payment to the States. The Government is aware that such delay will lead to a backlog in wage payments and ultimately discourage workers from asking for work under MGNREGA. In the last years of its rule the Congress Government had also followed this cruel policy of delayed wage payments.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Congress of the CPI(M) calls upon its units to mobilise the rural poor for struggles to ensure the implementation of MGNREGA. It demands that the Central Government should provide the required funds to States in time and that it should restore the funds allocation denied to Tripura.

As part of this struggle the Party will continue to demand the strengthening of MGNREGA. Our demands include: the removal of restrictions on the number of days and adults per family; a more just schedule of rates, especially for women; timely payment of inflation-indexed minimum wages with periodic revisions; payment of compensation where work is denied; and no change in the ratio of labour to the material component, which must be aggregated at the panchayat and block levels.

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