

जयराम रमेश
JAIRAM RAMESH



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

Dear Sardar Parkash Singh Badal -

No. 62
17th November 2011

As you are well aware Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is the flagship rural development scheme with an outlay of around Rs.40,000 crore and is being implemented through the States in a highly decentralized manner. Given the magnitude and the reach of MGNREGA, putting in place proper fiduciary controls and social accountability mechanisms is sine qua non to ensure that the benefits reach the targeted population fully.

Towards this end, Ministry of Rural Development in consultation with the C&AG has issued the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Audit Scheme Rules, 2011. The rules provide for establishing an independent social audit mechanism in the States to conduct social audit in Gram Panchayats once in six months. The summary of the reports should be submitted by the State Government to C&AG, which will be one of the inputs for the C&AG's audit. The rules also envisage that the action taken report of the State Government on the social audit findings will be placed before the State Legislature. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition No.645 of 2007 has directed all the State Governments to file affidavits on the implementation of the operational guidelines of MGNREGA of which social audit is an important part.

On November 8th, 2011, I had a meeting with the State Government officials to review the action taken to establish the social audit mechanism. It was agreed that the following steps would be taken by the States within the timeframe indicated:-

1. Establish an independent organization under the auspices of the State Rural Development Department to facilitate conduct of social audit (within a month);
2. Constitute a search committee to identify and appoint a committed officer as the Director of Social Audit (within a month);
3. Send proposal to MoRD for setting up a State Unit and for the pilot social audits (within a month);
4. Take up and complete social audit on pilot basis in a few blocks in each State before March 2012;
5. The structure of the social audit organization and recruitment of requisite resource persons to be firmed up only after proper evaluation of the pilot experience.

The Ministry of Rural Development will be organizing capacity building for a core team of resource persons (10 to 20 from each State) from December 1, 2011 and this core team can spearhead the said process.

I request your personal intervention and support to ensure that the above-mentioned actions are taken expeditiously and a robust social audit mechanism is established in your State.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Jairam Ramesh)

Shri Parkash Singh Badal
Chief Minister of Punjab