

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

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CHENCHU TRIBE PARTICIPATION IN MGNREGS IN KURNOOL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This MGNREG scheme had created much bargaining power at the rural villagers for better wages to their labour force. It is a pioneering scheme in which the economical and social right of a citizen is put in the legal purview. This scheme has the main task of creation of durable assets like water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, afforestation and tree plantation, creation of irrigation canal including minor and micro irrigation work, irrigation facilities at SC/ST land holdings and at the Indhira Awas Yojna beneficiaries lands, land development and its improvement, renovation of traditional water bodies and improvement of existing tanks, making rural connectivity by providing all-weather roads and any other asset creation works notified by Central



government in consultation with state government.

KEYWORDS: Chenchu Tribe, labour force, economical and social right.

INTRODUCTION:

A Wild tribe called Chenchus inhabit in the Nallamala Hills. As to their origin, no tradition or legend exists. They believe themselves to have existed on these hills from the beginning, on which account their ancestors were called the Adi Chenchus.

The tradition of the people in the plains at the foot of the hills, states that the present race of Chenchus has greatly degenerated in

size and physique. The Brahmins, however, call them Yanady Chenchus, and state that the ancient or Adi Chenchus, from whom the man-lion Narasimha, god of Ahobilam, obtained his bride Chenchita-still worshipped at Ahobilam were taller and more monstrous than the present race.

Their features are small and animated; their cheek bones higher and more prominent than those of the generality of Hindus; the nose is flatter and the nostrils more expanded; their eyes are black and piercing. In stature they are shorter than their neighbours. Their hair, which they wear very long and rolled up at the

back or near the crown of the head like that of a woman, is more shaggy and less straight, probably from exposure, than that of the Hindus. In person they are usually slightly made but well formed (except about the knee, which is large, and the leg). The color of the skin is slight darker. Al-together they resemble what might be the produce of a cross between the Jacoon aborigines of the Malaya peninsula and a common Telugu ryot of the neighbouring villages'. It may not be uninteresting to compare this account with that given in Scott's Ferishta, where the writer, a Muhammadan, speaking of the Chenchus as they appeared before Prince Muhammad Masum, a son of Aurangzeb, who passed through the district in 1694, observes that "they were exceedingly black, with long hair, and on their heads, wore caps

made of the leaves of trees. Each man had with him unbarbed arrows and a bow for hunting. They molest no one and live in caverns or under the shade of the branches of trees. The prince presented some of them with gold and silver, but they did not seem to put any value on either, being quite unconcerned at receiving it. Upon the firing of a small gun they darted up the mountains with a surprising swiftness uncommon to man."

They live in small communities called gudems. The gudems are generally placed near the plains and villages, and are never shifted from place to place. There are seventeen gudems on the western and nine on the eastern flank of the hills.

Their huts are in the shape of bee-hives and are always kept cleanly swept. The walls are of wicker-work, about three feet high, with conical roofs of straw, with a sort of screen thrown in front of the low entrance. They seldom occupy the higher plateau except in the harvest seasons, during which they go there for the purpose of hunting or gathering produce.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Asha Sharma (2012) highlights the difference in employment and empowerment attainment among the SC/ST women in rural India. The study found that the high status of women among the SC/ST groups in the Rajnandgoan, Jhabua, Mayurbhanj and Cuddalore has important effect on the generating community assets and enhancing their spending capacity. High poverty rates pose to be significant obstacles in attaining empowerment among SC/ST women in rural India. By putting cash earning in women's hands, NREGA has both increased and diversified the contribution that women are making to household incomes as wage earners.

Prasad K.V.S., (2013) considers that the process outcomes include strengthening grass-root processes of democracy and infusing transparency and accountability in governance. Keeping this view, the authors have made an attempt to review the performance of MGNREGA as the main objective of this paper. It also explains the objectives, features, permissible works under this Act and funding pattern of MGNREGA. The author concludes that MGNREGS is not only giving rural livelihoods but also involving them in other non-agricultural work. This has helped in handling disguised workers. Employment in other non-agricultural work will also improve the rural infrastructure i.e. rural asset building. It will ultimately lead to sustainable development.

Bindiya Narang (2014) made a livelihoods analysis of MGNREGA. The paper based on a field study conducted in Mewat, a backward district of Haryana, analyses the livelihoods context in selected villages and determines the effectiveness of this Act within wider livelihood strategies of rural poor. A concurrent mixed method research design has been used and perspectives from different stakeholders have been taken into account. The study yielded information on a plethora of constraints in terms of inadequacy of physical infrastructure, amenities, human and natural capital in the study area. The potential of this Act though found incipient, but the findings are also suggestive of the change it can bring to the rural edifice of this district, provided livelihoods oriented interventions are carried out in a participatory and sustainable manner.

Sarda Prasad (2014) opines that the consequence of labour shortage in agriculture is changes in cropping pattern and land market. The farmers have adopted various strategies to overcome labour shortage in agriculture such as use of family labour, increased use of machinery and hired labour from outside the village. Farmers (especially small and medium farmers) unable to pay wage rate as equal to the MGNREGA wage rate due to low income from agriculture. As MGNREGA is a labour bank in the rural areas, these labour should involve in agricultural work in the field of farmers that the best strategy to overcome labour shortage in agriculture. Another strategy is implementation of cooperative farming in the study areas.

Sugapriyan G. and S. Prakasam, (2015) analyzes the Success of MGNREGA in Kanchipuram District, using Data Mining Technique along with the comparison of previous year statistic data provided by the government. The author analyzes the performance and success of this scheme. The study shows that total number of person days generated for Women in the financial year 2012-13 are 14994815, for the year 2013-14 the number of days counts to 15826218 and for the financial year 2014-15 till November the number came to 10588415. Here we can find the increase in the number of women person days generated while comparing to the previous financial year.

MGNREGS IN KURNOOL DISTRICT

Kurnool District, which is located in the Rayalaseema region, is the biggest and driest of all the drought prone districts of A.P. In this district it is clearly estimated that the droughts visits at least thrice in a decade. The Irrigation Commission and other Central Commissions have been identified the whole district as drought prone. A single dry crop i.e. ground nut is raised under rain fed conditions in most parts of the district. Agriculture is the main source of economy of the district. The work force engaged in agriculture is more than three fourth's of the total work force. The demand for labour in agriculture sector is highly uncertain and seasonal. This is leading to migration of labour in a large scale to the nearest cities. The drought conditions are creating an ecological imbalance and converting the district into a desert. Drought prone areas are more vulnerable to denude the forests and exhaust the natural resources like water, soil, minerals etc. By result the rivers and other streams dry up. Consequently the underground water levels vanish and the area under irrigation is declined. The instant result is the decrease in agriculture production. This is leading to food problem. All these uneven conditions are making the lives of agricultural labourer and farmers rigorous and not bearing. As a result the district has witnessed a number of farmers' suicides.

Keeping all the above facts in view the Government of India has decided to implement the ambitious MGNREGS in this district in the Second phase. In spite of many other schemes under taken for the betterment of rural poor, it is the only programme that has mobilized the rural folk involvement. In this chapter an attempt is made to evaluate the progress and performance of MGNREGS in Kurnool District.

CHENCHU TRIBE AND MGNREGS

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Chenchu Special Project is under implementation since June, 2009 with the aim of improving the implementation of MGNREGA thus enhancing livelihood security of each Chenchu households, whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work and also to create desirable assets. The need of Special Project arise because it was noted that Chenchu population was decreasing, migrating for livelihood and also cases of extreme poverty, hunger and starvation in some pockets of Gudems. Special arrangements for MNREGA implementation have been made in 5 districts viz; Mahabubnagar, Prakasam, Kurnool, Guntur and Nalgonda. Due to State Bifurcation Mahabubnagar & Nalgonda districts are handover to PO, MADA, Manannur, Mahabubnagar district for implementation.

The main features of Chenchu MGNREGS Project are:

The following are the main features of Chenchu MGNREGS Project in Kurnool district.

1. Fixed 15 days wage employment per month throughout the year (Rs.2700/- per month to each Chenchu wage seeker);
2. Advance wage payment on fixed date, fixed schedule and fixed venue. 50% of wage in advance and 50% after completion of allocated works to maintain cash inflow among Chenchu;
3. Wage amount is distributed in cash on fixed dates & fixed venues through exclusive Chenchu Village Organization (V.O).

HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT

The year wise employment details of Chenchu households in Kurnool district is presented in table1.

Table 1
Chenchu Household Employment Details

S. No	Year	No of HHs Working	No of HHs Completed 100 days	No of HHs Completed 75-100 days	No of HHs Completed 50-75 days	No of HHs Completed < 50 days
1	2009-10	904	164	114	209	417
2	2010-11	1,459	679	174	126	480
3	2011-12	1,444	730	167	149	398
4	2012-13	1,477	453	186	197	641
5	2013-14	1,404	280	183	209	732
6	2014-15	1,413	640	132	138	503
7	2015-16	1,581	570	236	190	585
8	2016-17	1,566	1,071	224	82	189

Source: <http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in>

The data in table 1 shows that the number of Chenchu households working under MGNREGS is erratically distributed. But there is some kind increase in the number of working households. The per cent of Chenchu households which were availing statutory 100 days of employment in year gone up from 18.14 per cent in 2009-10 to 68.39 per cent in 2016-17. In the same way the households which worked for 75 days and above is also showing upward trends as such per cent of households increased from 12.61 per cent in 2009-10 to 14.30 per cent by 2016-17. In case of households availing 50 to 75 days of employment and less than 50 days of employment showing down ward trends. To be precise, with regard to 50 to 75 days of employment the per cent of households decreased from 23.12 per cent (2009-10) to 5.24 per cent (2016-17). With regard to less than 50 days of employment the per cent of households decreased from 46.13 per cent (2009-10) to 12.07 per cent (2016-17).

WAGE PAYMENT

Wage payment arrangements in PTG-Chenchu project are different from general NREGA. Because in Chenchu areas the Post Office and Bank network are poor. In order to counter this problem wage payments are made by Village Organizations (VOs) in cash. Under general NREGA payments are made to individual on week or fortnight basis. But in Chenchu Special Project wage payments are made in two installments. First payment is given in advance to motivate Chenchus for work and second installment is given after the completion of work. These payments are also not made to individual but to the SHGs groups. Muster rolls and measurement books are maintained at each work based on which the advance payments to SHGs groups are adjusted as per work done. Table 2 gives the details of wage earnings of Chenchu households in Kurnool district.

Table 2
Chenchu Household Wage Earning Analysis

S. No	Year	Avg. Days of Emp. Provided per HH	Total Wage (Rs in Lakhs)	Avg. Wage per Day
1	2009-10	59.7	38.91	72.1
2	2010-11	105.22	126.04	82.11
3	2011-12	109.97	180.95	113.95
4	2012-13	82.71	144.51	118.29
5	2013-14	63.66	117.7	131.68
6	2014-15	104.11	218.3	148.39
7	2015-16	91.68	244.18	168.47
8	2016-17	177.34	499.28	179.79

Source: <http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in>

As per table 2 the average days of employment provided for household is showing upward trends except three years of study i.e. 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2015-16. The total wage amount allocated is enormously increased. During 8 years of study the wage amount allocated for the Chenchus in the district increased more than 12 times. The average wage per day per worker is gradually increasing. During 8 years of study the average wage increased more than 2 times.

PLANNING AND SHELF OF WORKS

Field teams facilitate SHGs to identify suitable works. Such identified works are compiled at Habitation/Gudem levels and forwarded to Project Officer, ITDA (PTG-Chenchu), Srisailam for administration sanction through concerned Special Officers of Prakasam, Kurnool and Guntur districts. The Project Officer gives administration sanction to such works as per the pre-circulated guidelines. After obtaining administration sanction, Special Officers include all work in shelf of respective Chenchu Computer Center. The major work wise person days of employment and wage amount allocated for such works in Kurnool district is presented in table 3.

Table 3
Chenchu Work Category Analysis in Kurnool District

S. No	Year	Total Tech & Admin Sanction Given - (Nos)	Total Tech & Admin Sanction Given - (Rs in Lakh)	Works In progress - (Nos)	Works In progress - (Rs in Lakh)	Works Completed -(Nos)	Works Completed -(Rs in Lakh)	Shelf of Works -(Nos)	Shelf of Works -(Rs in Lakh)
1	2009-10	348	452.18	25	32.14	158	315.59	165	104.45
2	2010-11	269	452.42	22	44.88	191	363.44	56	44.11
3	2011-12	218	451	19	41.22	163	381.22	36	28.57
4	2012-13	172	229.63	47	76.96	78	112.19	47	40.48
5	2013-14	333	1197.28	127	555.86	70	194.29	136	447.13
6	2014-15	121	443.84	58	251.62	27	64.39	36	127.82
7	2015-16	734	795.15	140	340.09	58	135.82	536	319.25
8	2016-17	175	414.32	88	243.86	2	8.01	84	162.19

Source: <http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in>

It can be found from table 3 that total administrative sanction given to number works in Chenchu habitations varies between 121 (2014-15) works to 734 (2015-16) works. The per cent of works under progress is gradually increasing except in 2015-16. In 2009-10 only 7.18 per cent of works were under progress and they bulged to 50.29 per cent by 2016-17. On the other hand the number of completed works is declining year by year. In 2009-10 45.40 per cent works were completed. By 2011-12 the per cent of completed works enhanced to 74.77 per cent. But afterwards the per cent of completed works sharply fall down and stood at 1.14 per cent. The highest (73.02) and lowest (16.51) per cent of shelf of works is registered in 2015-16 and 2011-12 respectively.

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