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Q4(b)

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for rural development

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Rural and Agrarian transformation in India

Rural and Agrarian transformation in India: Programmes of rural development, Community Development Programme, cooperatives, poverty alleviation schemes; Green revolution and social change; Changing modes of production in Indian agriculture; Problems of rural labour, bondage, migration.

Core demand of the question

- **Mahatma Gandhi** National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for rural development
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

MGNREGA is a legal rural employment right, not a scheme of grace.

It supports landless and women more than proprietary farmers.

Development here is a **wage floor** and some local assets.

It can check distress migration when implementation works.

It does not replace land or industrial rural jobs.

Introduction

MGNREGA is a rights-based **wage floor** in rural India. As rural development it is livelihood security, women's cash, and a bargain against distress migration, not a substitute for land reform.

Body

What it does

- One hundred days of unskilled work as a legal claim, a shift from charity works.
- It raises reservation wages and can slow footloose labour in Breman's sense when paid on time.
- Women and SC/ST often use it more, which touches feminization of poverty and caste landlessness.

Development meaning

- Assets (tanks, roads) are uneven. The core development is bargaining power of the rural poor against dominant-caste employers Srinivas mapped.
- A. R. Desai would still ask whether it changes agrarian class or only manages surplus labour.

Limits

- Delay, leakage, and elite capture of works. It is not industrial ruralisation.

Flow diagram

MGNREGA -> Wage right
Wage right -> Bargain versus local malik
Wage right -> Women cash

Conclusion

MGNREGA develops rural society as a right to wage, especially for women and the landless. It is real and modest: a floor, not a new agrarian structure.

Facts & figures

2005 Act

The statute that turned rural work into a justiciable entitlement.

Women's participation

A consistent feature that puts cash outside the seed-line purse when paid to them.

Jan Breman

Footloose labour that NREGA can, at best, slow.

Wage floor

The local labour-market effect on private farm wages.