

Irregularity in wage payment to labourers revealed

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JAIPUR: Irregularities in payment of wages to nearly 5,500 workers for the construction of houses under Mukhyamantri Gramin BPL Awas Yojana (MGBAY) were revealed in an internal assessment of the rural development department.

Labourers working on the construction of sanctioned homes under MGBAY were entitled to Rs 181 per day as daily wages. The state government in 2014-15 modified the scheme, allowing owners of the sanctioned units to work in it as daily wage labourers up to the period of 90 days. The payment to them was linked with the MGNREGA funds.

However, it was observed that despite the provisions, 55,000 beneficiaries enrolled in a muster roll were not being paid. Findings also revealed that out of 70,824 under construction homes, beneficiaries of only 14,882 homes were issued payments.

"For each home, an assistance of Rs 70,000 is to be given under the scheme. However, with a view that construction takes time and BPL (Below Poverty Line) owners of these homes should not incur any losses during that period, they were allowed to work for their own homes," said an official who was part of the review.

Adding to that, the official said, "Field officials at the panchayat samitis however, are dilly-dallying in releasing money. There are discrepancies in sanctioning payments due to which pace of work has slowed down, while in some districts it has been completely stalled".

Major anomalies emerged from Udaipur where out of 19,977 sanctioned homes BPL owners of only 3,895 were paid for their labour. In Dungarpur out of 6,183 payment was released for only 1,850 beneficiaries. Similarly, in Jhalawar only 343 beneficiaries out of 2,198 and in Baran 1,299 out of 2,639 were given daily wages. Other districts where irregularities were observed are Kota, Jodhpur and Karauli.

Based on the internal report, the department has sought explanation from the field officers and is also planning to take action if they are not able to provide justification.