

NREGA payment stalled, workers struggle to meet expenses

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JAIPUR: Villagers of Gordhanpura in Baran district say they have not been paid for work undertaken under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. They say they have approached authorities several times about payment being stuck, but have found no relief.

"Even ordinary expenses have become hard, we are dependent on this work to get by," said Gyarsi Bai, a resident of the village. She had worked at an MGNREGA site for 24 days. Cycles of payment under NREGA are released every fortnight. Forty-year-old Kali Bai said she had worked on projects of NREGA for digging and making little ponds to collect water during the monsoon. She said she had not been paid even for work undertaken in December.

Others in the village complained of long delays in receiving money under NREGA. Ghisi Bai said she had worked 25 days; Murti said she had still to be paid for 36 days of work; Vinita Bai was awaiting payment for 14 days.

Fund Transfer Orders (FTOs) of over Rs3,000 crore are pending across the country. No FTOs generated since May 8 in Rajasthan have been cleared by the National Electronic Fund Management System of the Centre, according to data accessed from the MGNREGA website on May 26.

Block development officer Chhatanlal Meena said he would attempt to find out what had stalled payments and rectify the problem.