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Centre releases Rs 12,000 crore pending wages of NREGA to states

By ET Bureau | Updated: Apr 09, 2016, 06.58 PM IST

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NEW DELHI: Just a day after it was rapped by the [Supreme Court](#) for lack of funds to drought ridden states under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) government released Rs 12,230 crore to all states. The money transferred to the states covers dues of Rs 6,700 crore pending from last year as well as payments for the works undertaken in April 2016.

The apex court had come down heavily on the Centre to provide relief to drought hit states saying that the situation could worsen and add to rural distress this year.

In a press statement [Birender Singh](#), rural development minister said that his department had brought about "large scale reforms oriented more towards combating the agrarian distress and meeting the demand for work in drought affected areas creating durable and income generating assets mostly linked to augmentation of irrigation potential."



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In 2016-17, as part of their [Labour Budget](#), the States have proposed to construct 8.82 lakh farm ponds and 10.39 lakh organic compost pits to boost the agriculture sector.

Presently 54% of payments to NREGS workers run into delays and government wants to bring this down to 25% by June end. In order to plug the leakages and address the delay in payments government started the direct benefit transfer through electronic fund management system (EFMS) last year.

During the year 2015-16 government has registered expenditure under MGNREGA to the tune of Rs 41,371 crore, which is the highest expenditure under the programme since its inception, the ministry's statement said.

Out of this expenditure Rs 30,139 crore has gone towards payment of wages. "This has allowed for the highest employment generation over the past three years and the best achievement on key parameters over the last three years such as works taken up, 55 per cent women participation and 95 per cent of payments through electronic fund management system," Singh said.

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