

Aadhaar must for MGNREGS work

From April 1, workers in rural areas enrolled under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), which mandates 100 days of work for a household a year, must have an Aadhaar card.

Those who have registered under the scheme will be required to furnish proof of possession of Aadhaar or undergo the enrolment process till March 31, a senior official in the Cabinet Secretariat said. However, till an Aadhaar card is obtained, ration card, driving licence, voter identity card, Kisan passbook with photo, job card issued under the MGNREGS and a certificate issued by a gazetted officer or a tehsildar will be admissible as proof of identity to get the benefits.

Those who have applied for Aadhaar can produce their enrolment slip or a copy of the application for getting the 12-digit unique identification number, which acts as proof of identity and address anywhere in the country.

The government has invoked Section 7 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, which mandates that when the government gives subsidy, benefit or service from the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI), an individual can be asked to undergo authentication or furnish proof of possession of Aadhaar.

The expenditure for the MGNREGS is met from the Consolidated Fund of India. A sum of Rs. 38,500 crore has been allocated for the MGNREGS in the current fiscal.

The move to make Aadhaar mandatory for the MGNREGS will prevent leakages of subsidies and ensure that the beneficiaries get their due, according to another official who is part of the wing looking after the implementation of the Aadhaar-linked Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme.

The DBT scheme, aimed at checking leakages of welfare funds,

was launched on January 1, 2013 to cover 24 schemes of eight Ministries. Under the DBT, all cash benefits are transferred to the beneficiary's bank account. The Centre has asked its departments and the State governments to widen the scope of the DBT scheme to include all monetary and in-kind transfers. To spread the scheme further, it was shifted to the Cabinet Secretariat last year, and its implementation is being monitored by the Prime Minister's Office.

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has also made it mandatory for 50 lakh pensioners and four crore subscribers to provide either the Aadhaar number or proof that they have applied for it.

Source: xaam.in