PRESS RELEASE

Date: 31 October 2025

Guarantee Under Strain: MGNREGA Employment and eKYC Exclusions in AP

MGNREGA Employment Declines Sharply in Andhra Pradesh; Nearly 38 Lakh Registered Workers at Risk Due to Aadhaar eKYC Requirement

LibTech India's latest MGNREGA Tracker (April–September 2025) reveals a steep decline in employment generation in Andhra Pradesh along with significant digital exclusion risks due to the ongoing Aadhaar eKYC mandate. Despite the state's strong track record in MGNREGA implementation, both employment and household participation have reduced this year. All analysis is based on official MGNREGA MIS data (nrega.nic.in).

Key Findings

Sharp reduction in employment, worse than national trend

- Persondays generated in Andhra Pradesh fell by **13.6%**, sharper than the **10.4% decline nationally**.

- Household participation dropped from **42.79 lakh to 40.74 lakh (-4.8%)**.

SC/ST workers are disproportionately affected

- Persondays generated declined **18.7% for Scheduled Castes** and **17% for Scheduled Tribes**, compared with **11.3% among 'Others'**.

Household income has fallen

- Average income generated by each MGNREGA household saw a **4.8% decline**, dropping from ₹10,695 to ₹10,178 between FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26. This decrease occurred even though the Central government raised the notified wage from ₹300 to ₹307.

- Workers collectively earned **around ₹435 crore less** than last year due to reduced work availability.

District Performance — Top 2 and Bottom 2

Except for three districts, all other districts in Andhra Pradesh recorded a drop in MGNREGA employment.

- **NTR** saw the sharpest fall, with a **44.7% decline in persondays generated**.

- **Chittoor** recorded a **31.3% decline**, signalling severe contraction in availability of work.
- **Palnadu remained essentially stable with a minor drop of 0.4%.**

Top performers (districts that bucked the trend):

- **Nellore (↑ 4.8%)** and **Visakhapatnam (↑ 4.1%)**, were the only districts that managed to increase employment during this period, contrasting sharply with the statewide decline.

eKYC Push Could Lead to Mass Exclusion

The current push for mandatory Aadhaar-based e-KYC risks excluding lakhs of MGNREGA workers from accessing work and wages. In Andhra Pradesh, nearly 38 lakh registered workers still do not have e-KYC completed, and even among active workers, over 21 lakh remain unverified.

Workers are unable to complete e-KYC due to:

- migration to cities for seasonal work,

- Technical failures

- poor network connectivity in rural areas.

LibTech India calls on the Government of Andhra Pradesh to:

- Request the Government of India to **stop making Aadhaar-based e-KYC mandatory**, as these digital filters aimed at "weeding out fake workers" are instead blocking genuine workers from accessing their legal right to work.
- The State Government should **organise consultations in Andhra Pradesh** — involving worker groups, civil society organisations, researchers, and the Central Government — to present ground realities and ensure that accountability measures do not lead to exclusion of genuine workers.

About LibTech India

LibTech India is a team of engineers, social workers and social scientists working to improve public service delivery in India. The team has worked across multiple states for over a decade, combining research, field action, and data-driven advocacy.

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