

For Immediate Release

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Mass Worker Reductions During Andhra Pradesh's e-KYC Drive Raise Serious Concerns, Finds LibTech India Report

Andhra Pradesh witnessed a sharp and unprecedented decline in MGNREGA workers during the one-month Aadhaar-based e-KYC campaign, according to a new report by LibTech India titled *"MGNREGA Worker Reduction During the Aadhaar e-KYC Rollout: Evidence and Risks from Andhra Pradesh."*

Sharp decline in just 6 weeks

Between **8 October and 19 November 2025**, the number of registered MGNREGA workers in Andhra Pradesh fell from **124.7 lakh to 110.5 lakh** — a drop of **14.2 lakh (11.4%)**.

Active workers declined by **6.2 lakh (6.4%)** in the same period.

The steepest district-level drops were recorded in **Annamayya (27%), Kakinada (25%), Tirupati (20%), East Godavari (19%), and West Godavari (18%)**.

These reductions occurred **exactly during the period when e-KYC became compulsory** for job card renewal and attendance via NMMS.

High e-KYC completion and high reductions occurred together

The report notes that Andhra Pradesh achieved **79% e-KYC completion** (as share of total workers) and **86%** (as share of active workers).

Yet worker numbers fell sharply, suggesting **completion pressure rather than genuine verification** drove many deletions.

How the reductions happened

Frontline staff faced a **compressed one-month deadline**, daily monitoring, and multiple technical barriers — including weak connectivity, failed biometric authentication, mismatched Aadhaar photos, and NMMS errors.

The report finds evidence that, under this pressure, **workers who could not complete e-KYC in time were deleted directly in MIS**, instead of being supported through verification.

SOP safeguards were not followed

The Union Ministry's **January 2025 Deletion SOP** requires draft lists, public display in Panchayats, Gram Sabha scrutiny, worker notification, and opportunities for objection.

The report finds **no evidence of these procedures being followed** anywhere in the state.

Gram Panchayats — mandated to verify deletions — were **entirely bypassed**, contradicting the Ministry's stated commitment to decentralisation.

Part of a wider pattern

The findings mirror the **2022–23 ABPS transition**, when Andhra Pradesh saw nearly 78 lakh deletions during another Aadhaar-linked reform.

The report argues that repeated exclusion signals a **structural mismatch between technology-led compliance drives and ground realities**.

Recommendations

LibTech India urges the State Government to:

1. **Request withdrawal of mandatory e-KYC and NMMS requirements**, given their repeated association with wrongful deletions.
2. **Run a reinstatement campaign** by publicly displaying deletion lists at Gram Panchayats and restoring workers removed without due process.
3. **Revive consultations with workers and civil society**, drawing on the older APNA model, to provide the Centre with grounded feedback on technology use in MGNREGA.

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