

## Unit 5

The Government launched the Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam (AGAMT) from the year 2006-07 onwards. The Scheme aims at substantial injection of resources into one-fifth of the Village Panchayats each year and improvement of rural infrastructure in the State over a span of five years. Under this Scheme, in order to improve the basic infrastructure facilities in the Panchayats, priority has been given to the Village Panchayats in which the per capita income is very low. Based on this, the list of one-fifth of Village Panchayats in each Block has been prepared according to the ascending order of per capita income and improvement of rural infrastructure is being taken up over a period of five years since 2006-07.

2. Based on the ascending order of per capita income, the list of Village Panchayats in each District/Block to be taken up under AGAMT during 2009-10 has already been communicated to the districts. This list is inviolable and cannot be modified under any circumstances. Each Village Panchayat would get a direct State assistance of Rs. 20 lakhs. Out of this, Rs. 15 lakhs is for the tied component and Rs. 5 lakhs is for the untied component. The permissible limits of expenditure under the tied component are indicated in G.O(Ms) No.97, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, dated 13.6.07, and are reproduced below against the relevant components. It is clarified however that this ceiling can be exceeded by drawing on a part of the untied component. For example, the ceiling for the school sports centre component is Rs. 1.5 lakhs. However a school sports centre can be developed for Rs. 2 lakhs by taking Rs. 50,000 from the untied component of Rs 5 lakhs.

For each of the AGAMT Villages, a Committee consisting of the following members will be given the responsibility for the selection of the works and finalisation of the exact location of the works.

(a) Village Panchayat President concerned.

(b) Block Development Officer (Village Panchayats)

© Assistant Engineer (RD)/Block Engineer of the concerned Block.

(c) Village Administrative Officer concerned.

The Village Panchayat President is the person who possesses local knowledge and hence his views about selection and location of works should be given due weightage.

The BDO (Village Panchayats) should ensure that the Scheme guidelines have been followed while submitting proposals for administrative sanction.

The Assistant Engineer (RD)/Block Engineer should ensure that the technical specifications are adhered to and the values of the proposed works have been correctly arrived at.

The VAO will help in identifying suitable sites for the proposed works with reference to Revenue records.

Uzhavar Sandhai (mohana santhai) is a scheme of the Government of Tamil Nadu to promote direct contact between farmers and consumers in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The scheme was introduced in 1999 by the state government under M. Karunanidhi, the chief of

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). The first Uzhavar Sandhai was inaugurated in madurai on 14 November 1999. The objective of the scheme was to promote direct contact between farmers and consumers, through which the farmer can get full profit without middlemen or brokers. In 2001, when the opposition Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK) came into power, the scheme was stalled. It was revived again by the DMK after it came to power in 2006. In 2011, ADMK formed the government but continued with the scheme. The markets are maintained and regulated by the Tamil Nadu State

Agricultural Marketing Board and prices to the products are fixed on day basis.

Samathuvapuram (transl. Equality Village) officially Periyar Ninaivu Samathuvapuram (Periyar Memorial Equality Village) is a social equality scheme of the Government of Tamil Nadu to improve social harmony and to reduce caste discrimination. Under the scheme, villages of 100 houses each are being created to accommodate the various castes, with one community hall and burial ground to be shared by all. The scheme is named after the social reformer Periyar E. V. Ramasamy.

The scheme aims to ease the situation and to integrate the Dalits segregated by the caste system to begin using the wells and temples of the dominant communities. 4 The Chief Minister of

Tamil Nadu M. Karunanidhi introduced the housing scheme to create villages of 100 houses each. Each village is subdivided into 40 houses for Dalits, 25 houses for backward caste, 25 houses for most backward caste, and 10 for other communities. To avoid caste discrimination, the Samathuvapuram would have one community hall for all communities, as well as a common burial ground. The first samathuvapuram inaugurated by M. Karunanidhi on 17 August 1998 in the Melakottai village near

Tirumangalam, Madurai. By 2001, 145 samathuvapurams were opened across Tamil Nadu.

Following the change in the state government in 2001, the scheme was abandoned. In 2006, the scheme was revived after M. Karunanidhi came to power. During his tenure, 95 samathuvapurams were opened state-wide.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (or, NREGA No 42, later renamed as the “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act”, MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the ‘right to work’.

It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The act was first proposed in 1991 by P.V. Narasimha Rao. In 2006, it was finally accepted in the parliament and commenced implementation in 625 districts of India. Based on this pilot experience, NREGA was scoped up to cover all the districts of India from 1 April 2008. The statute is hailed by the government as “the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world”. In its World Development

Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a “stellar example of rural development”.

The MGNREGA was initiated with the objective of “enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year, to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work”. Another aim of MGNREGA is to create durable assets (such as roads, canals, ponds, wells). Employment is to be provided within 5 km of an applicant’s residence, and minimum wages are to be paid. If work is not provided within 15 days of applying, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance. Thus, employment under MGNREGA is a legal entitlement.

MGNREGA is to be implemented mainly by gram panchayats (GPs). The involvement of contractors is banned. Labour-intensive tasks like creating infrastructure for water harvesting, drought relief and flood control are preferred.

Apart from providing economic security and creating rural assets, NREGA can help in protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural urban migration and fostering social equity, among others.