Ministry of Rural Development Issues Ombudsperson Guidelines to Strengthen Transparency and Accountability under VB-G RAM G

Stronger Grievance Redressal Mechanism to Safeguard Rural Workers' Rights under VB-G RAM G

Digital Monitoring, Social Audits and Citizen Participation to Strengthen Accountability under VB-G RAM G

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The Ministry of Rural Development has strengthened the framework for transparency, accountability and citizen participation in the implementation of the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, through the Guidelines for Ombudsperson and Appellate Authority.

The guidelines reinforce the spirit of the VB- G RAM G Act by strengthening institutional mechanisms to safeguard workers' statutory rights, address implementation-related grievances and promote accountable delivery of programme benefits. The Ombudsperson will serve as an important link in the programme's accountability framework, providing rural citizens with an accessible mechanism to raise complaints and seek appropriate redressal.

A dedicated Ombudsperson at the district level will address grievances relating to job cards, employment, wage payments, delay compensation, worksite facilities, muster rolls and denial of statutory entitlements. The guidelines also cover discrimination, harassment and violations of workers' rights, including those of women and vulnerable groups, ensuring that such concerns receive due attention.

The guidelines strengthen the institutional capacity of Ombudspersons through an expanded pool of eligible candidates with experience in rural development, public administration, law, academics, social work and management. Provisions relating to tenure and remuneration have also been revised to support continuity and effective functioning. Emphasis has been placed on field visits, community engagement and familiarity with digital platforms.

A key feature is the dedicated digital platform for Ombudspersons, which will facilitate online registration and tracking of complaints, recording of proceedings, uploading of awards and monitoring of action taken. Geo-tagged and time-stamped photographs during field visits will further strengthen documentation, traceability and transparency in the grievance redressal process.

The guidelines also reinforce the role of social audit as a vital mechanism for community-led transparency and accountability. Ombudspersons will attend at least three Social Audit public hearings or Gram Sabhas every month, providing an opportunity to hear citizens' concerns directly and facilitate appropriate follow-up. Social audit findings and community feedback, along with individual grievances, will support the identification of discrepancies and corrective action in accordance with prescribed procedures.

The Ombudsperson and Appellate Authority framework complements other accountability measures under VB–G RAM G, including digital monitoring, public disclosure and social audit. Together, these mechanisms aim to promote transparent implementation, strengthen oversight and ensure that grievances are addressed through a structured and accountable process.

Through these guidelines, the Government seeks to further strengthen citizen-centric governance under VB–G RAM G, ensuring that rural workers have accessible avenues for grievance redressal and that implementation remains transparent, responsive and accountable.

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