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Delimitation of local bodies under consideration: Stalin

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Present term of office-bearers will not be affected

2,400 lakh mandays of employment generated up to May 31 under NREGS

Action plan to restructure, in three years, all panchayat-level federations

CHENNAI: A proposal on delimitation of local bodies, rural and urban, is under consideration of the government, Deputy Chief Minister M.K. Stalin told the Assembly on Friday.

Initiating a debate on the demands for grants to Municipal Administration, Water Supply, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Departments, Mr. Stalin said Collectors had conducted public hearings pertaining to requests from various local bodies on upgrading, downgrading, bifurcating and amalgamating them. It had been clarified that the term of office of the present office-bearers would not, in anyway, be affected.

Noting that 172 panchayat unions now came under two or more Assembly constituencies, the Deputy Chief Minister said the government had taken up the reorganisation of panchayat union boundaries to ensure that an Assembly constituency comprised only full panchayat unions.

On implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), he said the average percentage of registration of beneficiaries in districts covered under the phase I and II (10 districts) had crossed 70; it was 45 per cent in 20 other districts covered under phase III. A sum of Rs.1,885 crore was spent on generating 2,400 lakh mandays of employment up to May 31.

Under Mahilar Thittam, a programme implemented in partnership with non-government organisations and community-based organisations affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women, credit linkage to self-help groups touched Rs.2,174.57 crore during 2008-2009 due to positive intervention of the government. In the coming years, the focus of Mahilar Thittam would be on increasing credit linkage to SHGs. A target of Rs.2,400 crore had been set for 2009-2010.

A detailed action plan had been drawn up to restructure, in three years, all panchayat-level federations (PLF), a common platform for SHGs to share their experiences. This year, 1,260 PLFs would be restructured.

The implementation of the Rs.717-crore World Bank-aided Vazhndhu Kattuvom project, aimed at empowering the poorest of the poor, had earned appreciation of the funding agency. A proposal, seeking Rs.950 crore, had been mooted by the government to expand the reach of the project, Mr. Stalin added.