

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:55

ANSWERED ON:22.11.2012

RELAXATION IN NORMS UNDER NSAP

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji; Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba; Dharmshi Shri Babar Gajanan; Ganeshamurthi Shri A.; Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

**Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether an expert committee constituted by the Government to relax norms and eligibility under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) has submitted its report to the Union Government;
- (b) if so, the details of the recommendations given by the said Committee;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to reduce the eligibility age for widow pension from forty years to eighteen years and to include single and divorced women for widow pension;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken by the Union Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA)

- (a): Yes Sir. A committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, was constituted comprising of representatives from related Central Ministries and four State Governments to make recommendations on the criteria for grant of benefits under various schemes of NSAP. Committee has submitted its report in the last week of October 2012.
- (b): Committee has suggested relaxation of certain eligibility criteria and increase in amount of pension to various categories of vulnerable sections under schemes of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP).
- (c)&(d): The Committee has suggested to reduce the eligibility age for widow pension from forty years to eighteen years for separated, divorced and widowed women since the minimum age for marriage is eighteen years for women. Suggestion has also been made to include single women aged forty and above under widow pension scheme as they may not have any support at this age and would require assistance.
- (e): Presently no time limit has been set in this regard.