

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1708  
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2013  
NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME  
Patel Shri Bal Kumar

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to review the National Social Assistance Programme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is planning to lower the widow pension age to eighteen;
- (d) if so, whether the Government proposes to expand the widow pension to single and divorced women; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a)to(e) On the direction of the Union Cabinet, a Task Force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mihir Shah, Member, Planning Commission to prepare a proposal for a Comprehensive National Social Assistance Programme. The Task Force is considering various issues, demands and suggestions relating to pension schemes under NSAP, received from various quarters which also include lowering the widow pension age to eighteen years and expanding the widow pension to single and divorced women. The Task Force has submitted its report to this Ministry.