

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4837
ANSWERED ON:12.08.2014
WELFARE OF SENIOR CITIZENS
Premachandran Shri N.K.

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to extend free medical care including medicines and treatment for senior citizens and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the action taken by the Government to ensure the protection and care of senior citizens below the poverty line;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to provide free ration to the senior citizens below the poverty line; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT)

(a) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been implementing the 'National Programme for the Health Care of the Elderly' since 2010-11 to provide dedicated health care facilities to the elderly people through the State health delivery system at primary, secondary and tertiary levels including outreach services. Facilities that are provided under the Programme inter alia, are: Geriatric OPD, 30-bedded Geriatric ward for in-patient care at Regional Geriatric Centres, 10-bedded Geriatric ward at District Hospitals, Bi-weekly Geriatric Clinic at Community Health Centres, Weekly Geriatric Clinic at Primary Health Centres etc.

(b) There is no separate distinction on safety and security aspects of senior citizens below poverty line. However, Ministry of Home Affairs has issued two detailed advisories dated 27.03.2008 and 30.08.2013, to all the State Governments/UTs advising them to take immediate measures to ensure safety and security and for elimination of all forms of neglect, abuse and violence against old persons through initiatives such as identification of senior citizens; sensitization of police personnel regarding safety, security of older persons; regular visit of the beat staff; setting up of toll free senior citizen helpline; setting of senior citizen security cell; verification of domestic helps, drivers, etc.

(c) & (d) Under the Schemes of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, there is no proposal, at present, to provide free ration to the senior citizens below the poverty line. However, under the Annapurna Scheme, 10 kg. of food grain per month is provided free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible under the Indira Gandhi National Older Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) are not receiving old age pension.