

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:168

ANSWERED ON:02.02.2017

National Social Assistance Programme

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government considers that the amount of pension under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is insufficient and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether in a bid to assist a particularly vulnerable sections of society, an expert group has suggested that widows should receive pension from age of 18 instead of 40 as is currently the case;
- (c) whether expert panel has also recommended that widows be eligible for a one time grant for remarriage as well as waivers for educational and skill development fees and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the other recommendations given by the expert group;
- (e) the response of the Union Government on the above mentioned recommendations;
- (f) whether there is a proposal under consideration of the Union Government that pension schemes under the NSAP cover all target households except those which meet the automatic exclusion criteria under the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) and if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the time by which the final decisions are likely to be taken on the above points?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV)

(a) to (d): The Government constituted an Expert Group to suggest objective criteria for allocation of resources to States/UTs and for identification and prioritization of beneficiaries under various parameters using SECC 2011 Data. The Expert Group, inter alia, has recommended :

- (i) That the amount of pension given under NSAP is not sufficient and needs to be increased annually.
- (ii) Pension for widows of the age of 18 years and above
- (iii) To be eligible to receive higher assistance of Rs. 500, the age bracket should be 70 years and above in place of 80 years and above.
- (iv) Assistance to the parents of young disabled up to 18 years also. Presently eligibility for disability assistance is 18 year or above
- (v) Annapurna scheme under NSAP needs to be reviewed with the implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013.
- (vi) Incentivizing one time grant for widow remarriage. Topping it with a further incentive by providing assistance under PMAY and skilling or education fee waiver to elevate social status of young widows.

(e) to (g): Constitution of Expert Groups/Committees and studies is part of a comprehensive multi level and multi tool system of monitoring and evaluation. Corrective measures are taken by the Government, when required, for effective implementation of the programmes and to achieve objectives of the schemes.
