

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5191
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2014
PENSION FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the pension schemes available for the senior citizens in the country and the salient features of these schemes and the number of senior citizens living below poverty line in the country;
- (b) whether all the States Governments are releasing pension of senior citizens, widows and differently-abled persons in time;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons for States, making inordinate delay in releasing the pension;
- (d) the measures taken by the government for timely release of pension to those categories of people;
- (e) whether the Union Government proposes to introduce a Universal Pension Scheme, to uplift the senior citizens living below the poverty line in villages / rural areas; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), comprises of three pension schemes, namely, Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS). Under these three pension schemes, central assistance/pension is provided to the old aged, widows and disabled /differently-abled persons as per eligibility criteria and belonging to households living Below Poverty Line (BPL). Under NSAP, central assistance is also provided to BPL households under National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Annapurna Scheme.

Salient features and eligibility criteria for pension schemes under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) and the number of beneficiaries under Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) as reported to be covered, by the States /UT Governments during the year 2013-14 are enclosed as Annexure-I and II respectively.

(b) & (c): Funds released by the Central Government are directly transferred to the Consolidated Funds of State / UT Governments. Till 2013-14, the transfer of funds was done on a quarterly basis. Identification of beneficiaries, sanction and disbursement of central assistance is done by the respective State /UT Governments. States have to ensure timely transfer of funds to pensioners. There has been no complaint of inordinate delay in disbursement of pensions.

(d) The Ministry of Rural Development has developed a software viz. NSAP-MIS to enable fund flow in an efficient manner. States and UTs have been directed to use this software.

(e) & (f). There is no proposal for introducing a Universal Pension Scheme for senior citizens. The Ministry has, based on the recommendations of a Task Force on NSAP, prepared a proposal for revamping the scheme to cover the vulnerable and marginalised BPL families by expanding the scope and quantum of pension schemes under NSAP.