

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1876

ANSWERED ON:04.12.2014

COVERAGE UNDER NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to initiate a social security programme as functional in other countries, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to increase the scope and coverage of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of the Central Assistance provided to the States under the NSAP including Arunachal Pradesh during the last three years and the current year, State/UT wise and year-wise;
- (d) the funds utilized in the implementation of the schemes under NSAP during the said period, scheme-wise and State/UT-wise;
- (e) whether Government has any mechanism to monitor the utilisation of funds under these schemes prudently and if so, the details thereof, scheme-wise and State-wise for the said period; and
- (f) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government for social assistance in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BIRENDER SINGH)

(a) and (b): National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) which comprises of Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Annapurna Scheme is applicable to persons belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households as per the eligibility criteria prescribed by the Government of India. As far as Ministry of Rural Development is concerned, at present, there is no proposal to initiate a social security programme as functional in other countries.

A Task Force constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development under the Chairmanship of the then Member, Planning Commission, considered all the issues, demands and suggestions relating to social assistance / security, received from various quarters and submitted its report, inter-alia, recommending expanding the scope of coverage and increasing the quantum of pension. Further action has been initiated to process the recommendations of the Task Force.

(c) & (d): Till 2013-14, Schemes under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) were under State Plan and funds were allocated by the Planning Commission and were released as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) by the Ministry of Finance to the States and by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Union Territories in a combined manner for all the schemes under NSAP. From the year 2014-15, Schemes under NSAP have become Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and funds are released by the Department of Rural Development to States/ Union Territories scheme-wise. Identification of beneficiaries, sanction and disbursement of pensions is done by the respective State / UTs Governments. A Statement giving details of amounts allocated, released and expenditure reported by the States (UTs) (Scheme-wise) including the State of Arunachal Pradesh during the last three years and the current financial year (till October, 2014) is at Annexure.

(e): The Ministry of Rural Development has put in place a mechanism to monitor the utilization of funds under the schemes of NSAP. Details are as follows:-

The process of implementation of the schemes is monitored by the Ministry of Rural Development through Monthly Progress Reports given by the State / UTs in the prescribed formats. Non-reporting of the physical and financial progress reports is construed as lack of progress and may result in non-release of funds for the last quarter of the financial year. The performance of the programme is reviewed with State Secretaries once in a quarter during the Performance Review Committee (PRC) meetings of the Ministry.

Social Audit and Annual Verification has been introduced under NSAP for improved monitoring, accountability and transparency. All the States are to complete the Annual Verification by 30th June and Social Audit by 30th September, each year.

A checklist for the schemes under NSAP is provided to the National Level Monitors (NLMs) during their field visits. Each NLM is advised to visit the district, block and village level offices and meet the Government functionaries, public representatives and the beneficiaries to get the feedback on the implementation of the schemes under NSAP.

NSAP is included in the schemes to be reviewed by the Vigilance & Monitoring Committees (V&MCs) constituted at the District Level, alongwith other Rural Development Schemes.

(f): No other steps are under consideration of the Government.