

Sixteenth Lok Sabha

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Title: Need to revoke order of withdrawing pension under various Central Government Schemes

DR. RATNA DE (NAG) (HOOGHLY): Hon. Madam Speaker, I would like to bring to your notice an important issue concerning the old widows, poor widows of our country.

Though we have different pension schemes, yet, I would like to focus on the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme under which widows aged 40 and above get Rs. 600 per month as pension.

It is to be noted, Madam, that prior to 2005, beneficiaries of the said schemes were selected by the Municipalities/ Gram Panchayats as per the allotted quota. In the case of 3-tier Panchayat System, the recommendations used to come from different meetings held in different tiers of Panchayati Raj System like, Gram Sansad Sabha, Gram Sabha, General Body meetings etc. But since 2005, beneficiaries were selected from the Rural Household Survey Database. The families having score of a 33 or below in the Rural Household Survey Database were treated as eligible for the above-mentioned pension schemes.

Unfortunately, Madam, from 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2017, pensions of many beneficiaries were stopped abruptly stating that 'as per the Socio-Economic Survey, 2011, they may be treated as people having any of the 14 parameters of the automatic exclusion criteria. It is evidently made clear that the survey reports of the SECC, 2011 are not correct. When it is so, how can the Government exclude deserving beneficiaries from the said list which deprives them from receiving pension?

Madam, I would like to mention here that our Chief Minister of West Bengal, Kumari Mamata Banerjee is providing pension for these widows without stoppage.

Under the circumstances, I would like to urge and plead with the Government to revoke the order and restore the pension of these poor widows keeping in view ever growing prices of the essential commodities including vegetables.

Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Rabindra Kumar Jena, Dr. Manoj Rajoria and Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Dr. Ratna De