

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1814
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30TH JULY, 2025

SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES UNDER ANNAPOORNA SCHEME

1814. SHRI N K PREMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to relax the conditions for selecting the beneficiaries of Annapoorna scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government consider the request of Government of Kerala to exempt the conditions that the beneficiaries are not included in any of the social welfare pension scheme so as to entitle the benefits of Annapoorna and if so, the details of action taken thereon;
- (d) whether it comes to the notice of the Union Government that the deserving poor and eligible families in Kerala is not included in the beneficiary list of Annapoorna due to the aforesaid condition;
- (e) if so, the action taken by the Union Government to provide the benefit to all deserving poor and needed families; and
- (f) whether the Union Government analysed the social welfare pension is meager and not sufficient to ensure food security and if so, the action taken thereon?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) & (b): Existing eligibility criteria, coverage and rate of assistance under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) schemes including that of Annapurnna scheme are approved for a period upto 2025-26. At present, there is no proposal under consideration to revise the criteria under NSAP schemes.

(c) to (e): Annapurna Scheme, a demand driven sub-scheme of NSAP, is aimed at providing food security to meet the requirement of those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) under NSAP. Under the Scheme, 10 kgs of food grains per month is provided free of cost to the beneficiary. As per guidelines of NSAP, the States/UTs are responsible for identification of beneficiaries as per the stipulated eligibility criteria.

With the implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013, the lifting of food grains under the Annapurna scheme has shown a declining trend since 2016-17 and there has been no demand since FY 2021-22 from States including Kerala. Moreover, most of the States also implement similar old age pension schemes which may cover the eligible old age persons beyond the state ceiling under IGNOAPS.

(f): Based on various recommendations and evaluation studies, a proposal for revamp of NSAP, which inter-alia included revision in eligibility criteria, rate of assistance and sharing arrangement with the States was considered during continuation of NSAP for the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-26). However, considering the available financial space, the Government has approved continuation of NSAP schemes in its present form.

As per guidelines of NSAP, the State/UTs are encouraged to provide top up amount of at least equivalent to the assistance provided by the Central Govt. so that the beneficiaries could get a decent level of assistance. At present, the States/UTs are adding top up amounts ranging from Rs. 50 to Rs. 5700 per month per beneficiaries under Pension Schemes of NSAP schemes. As a result, on an average, the NSAP beneficiaries are receiving satisfactory monthly pension of Rs. 1100/- per month in several States.
