

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2451
ANSWERED ON 10/12/2024**

PENSION TO MARGINALIZED GROUPS

2451. SHRI K C VENUGOPAL:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has periodically evaluated "pension provided to marginalized groups such as the elderly, widows and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)";**
- (b) if so, the parameters used to determine the pension for these marginalized sections;**
- (c) the number of pension beneficiaries from marginalized sections since 2000; and**
- (d) the reasons for meager pension amount being given by Government?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI KAMLESH PASWAN)**

(a) & (b): Rate of assistance, coverage of beneficiaries, eligibility criteria etc. under various pension schemes of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) such as Old Age Pension Scheme, Widow Pension Scheme, Disability Pension Scheme implemented by the Government have been evaluated through impact assessment/evaluation studies from time to time. Major parameter envisaged under these schemes is to provide basic level social security assistance to marginalized and vulnerable category of citizens such as Old age, Divyangjan and Widows

(c): Under NSAP, ceiling/Cap of 1.03 crore beneficiaries was introduced with the inception of the Programme in 1995. The numerical ceiling was revised to 1.33 crore in 1998. In 2000, a new scheme, namely, Annapurna was launched in 2000 to provide food security for eligible senior citizen uncovered under Old age pension scheme and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) was

transferred to Department of Family Welfare in 2001. In 2009, two new pension schemes for widows and the disabled were introduced, namely, National Widow Pension Scheme (Cap-54.8 lakh) and National Disability Pension Scheme (Cap-15.65 lakh). In 2011-12, the ceiling of beneficiaries under NSAP schemes was revised to about 3.27 crore beneficiaries based on the population figure of census 2001 and Poverty Ratio 2004-05. The ceiling of some States//UTs were revised in subsequent years due to non-utilization of the ceiling in some of the schemes and since 2012 the ceiling is continued at about 3.09 crore beneficiaries.

(d): NSAP was introduced to provide basic level social security assistance to most vulnerable category of citizens. As per NSAP guidelines, States/UTs are urged to provide an additional amount of at least an equivalent amount to the assistance provided by the Central Government so that the beneficiaries can get a decent level of assistance. While considering the continuation of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) schemes for the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-26), the revision in beneficiary coverage and rate of central assistance under the schemes was considered by the Government. However, considering the available financial space, the Government has approved continuation of NSAP schemes in its present form.
