

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:325
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2006
NATIONAL POLICY ON OLDER PERSONS
Badiga Shri Ramakrishna

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the salient features of the National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP);
- (b) the special schemes formulated under the said policy for providing financial security to older persons in the country; and
- (c) the further measures taken by the Government to implement the said policy?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SMT. MEIRA KUMAR)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Part (a), (b) and (c) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 325 for answer on 14.12.2006 regarding National Policy on Older Persons by Shri Badiga Ramakrishna, MP(LS)

(a)to(c): National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP) recognizes persons aged 60 years or more as older persons. The Policy seeks to protect and strengthen the legal rights of older persons apart from providing for financial security, healthcare and appropriate concessions. The details of such concessions are contained in the Annexure.

The Central Government contribution under the Old Age Pension Scheme has been enhanced from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 200/- per month w.e.f. 1st April 2006. The State Governments have been urged to atleast match this amount by way of their contribution so as to make a minimum pension amount to Rs. 400/- per month.

Annexure referred to in reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 325 for answer on 14.12.2006 on National Policy on Older Persons by Shri Badiga Ramakrishna

FACILITIES/BENEFITS GIVEN TO SENIOR CITIZENS

1) Ministry of Finance:

- (a) Income tax rebate upto an income of Rs. 1.85 lakh p.a. is allowed to senior citizens who have attained the age of 65 years
- (b) Higher rates of interest on saving schemes of senior citizens.
- (c) A Senior Citizens Savings Scheme offering an interest rate is 9% per annum on the deposits made by the senior citizens in post offices has been introduced by the Government through Post Offices in India doing savings bank work.

2) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

- a) Reservation of two seats for senior citizens in front row of the buses of the State Road Transport Undertakings.
- b) Some State Governments are giving fare concession to senior citizens in the State Road Transport Undertaking buses and are introducing Bus Models, which are convenient to the elderly.

3) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare:

- a) Separate queues for older persons in hospitals for registration and clinical examination.

4) Department of Telecommunications:

- a) Faults/complaints of senior citizens are given priority by registering them under senior citizens category with VIP flag, which is a priority category.
- b) Senior citizens are allowed to register telephone connection under N-OYT Special Category, which is a priority category.

5) Ministry of Railways

- a) Indian Railways provide 30% fare concession in all Mail/Express including Rajdhani/Shatabadi/Jan Shatabadi trains for senior citizens aged 60 years and above.
- b) Indian Railways also have the facility of separate counters for Senior Citizens for purchase/booking/cancellation of tickets.
- c) Wheel Chairs for use of older persons are available at all junctions, District Headquarters and other important stations for the convenience of needy persons including the older persons.
- d) Ramps for wheel chairs movement are available at the entry to important stations.
- e) Specially designed coaches with provisions of space for wheel chairs, hand rail and specially designed toilet for handicapped persons have been introduced.

6) Ministry of Civil Aviation

- a) Indian Airlines is providing 50 per cent Senior Citizen Discount on Normal Economy Class fare for all domestic flights to Indian senior citizens who have completed the age of 65 years in the case of male senior citizens and 63 years in the case of female senior citizens subject to certain conditions.
- b) Air India is offering discount to senior citizens of 60 plus on flights to USA, UK and Europe. Further, Air India has now decided to reduce the age of 60 plus for discount on their domestic routes as well with immediate effect.

7) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

- a) Under the Antyodaya Scheme, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families which also include older persons are provided food grains at the rate of 35 kgs. per family per month. The food grains are issued @ Rs.3/- per kg. for rice and Rs.2/- per kg. for wheat. The persons aged 60 years above from the BPL category were given priority for identification.
- b) Under the Annapoorna Scheme being implemented by the States/UT Administration, 10 kgs. of food grains per beneficiary per month are provided free of cost to those senior citizens who remain uncovered under the old age pension scheme.
- c) Instructions to State Governments for giving priority to the Ration Card holders who are over 60 years of age in Fair Price Shops for issue of rations.