

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a welfare programme being administered by the Ministry of Rural Development. This programme is being implemented in rural areas as well as urban areas. NSAP represents a significant step towards the fulfilment of the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in Article 41 of our Constitution which enjoin upon the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want within its economic means. The Govt. of India launched NSAP as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme w.e.f 15th August 1995 towards fulfilment of these principles.

2. At inception, NSAP consisted of the following three schemes:

i) **National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS):** Under the scheme, destitutes aged 65 years or above were entitled to a monthly pension of Rs.75/-.

ii) **National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS):** The benefit under the scheme to a Below Poverty Line (BPL) household was lump sum amount of money on the death of primary breadwinner aged between 18 and 64 years. The ceiling of the benefit was Rs. 5,000/- for death due to natural causes, and Rs. 10,000/- for accidental deaths.

iii) **National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS):** Under the scheme, lump sum cash assistance of Rs. 300/- per pregnancy was provided as a maternity benefit to women of BPL households up to 2 live births.

3. Over the years changes have taken place in the composition as well as guidelines of NSAP in consonance with the demands of the changing times.

The important modifications are listed below.

a) **1998 :** The amount of benefit under NFBS was raised to Rs. 10,000/- in case of death due to natural causes also. The cash assistance under NMBS was also increased to Rs. 500/- per pregnancy.

b) **2000 :** A new scheme known as "Annapurna" was launched w.e.f. 01/04/2000. Under the scheme, 10 kg of food grains per month are provided free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under NOAPS.

c) **2001 :** NMBS was transferred from Ministry of Rural Development to the Department of Family Welfare w.e.f 01/04/2001 and subsumed under Janasri Suraksha Yojana. Hence NMBS is no longer a part of NSAP.

d) **2002 :** NSAP schemes were transferred to the State Plans from 2002-03. Ever since funds under the schemes are being released as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) to States by Ministry of Finance and to UTs by Ministry of Home Affairs.

e) **2006** : The amount of pension under NOAPS was raised to Rs. 200/- per month per beneficiary, and State Governments were urged to contribute equally towards the pension amount.

f) **2007** : NOAPS was renamed as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and brought into effect from 19/11/2007. Eligibility criteria were revised to include all citizens aged 65 years or above who belong to BPL category.

g) **2009** : Two schemes named Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) and Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) were introduced in Feb '2009. While BPL widows aged 40-64 years are eligible for pension under IGNWPS, BPL persons aged 18-64 years with severe and multiple disabilities are eligible for pension under IGNDPS. In both the cases the amount of central assistance for pensioner is Rs. 200/- per month.

4. Thus, NSAP now comprises of the following five schemes:-

i) **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)**: Under the scheme, BPL persons aged 65 years or above are entitled to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-.

ii) **Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)**: BPL widows aged 40-64 years are entitled to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-.

iii) **Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)**: BPL persons aged 18-64 years with severe and multiple disabilities are entitled to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-.

iv) **National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)**: Under the scheme a BPL household is entitled to lump sum amount of money on the death of primary breadwinner aged between 18 and 64 years. The amount of assistance is Rs. 10.000/-.

v) **Annapurna**: Under the scheme, 10 kg of food grains per month are provided free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under NOAPS.

5. States/UTs implement the schemes under NSAP and deliver the intended benefit to target groups. Ministry of Rural Development on its part monitors the effective implementation of the programme and ensures allocation of adequate funds by Planning Commission, timely release of ACA by Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Home Affairs. Besides, as a step towards e-governance to bring in more transparency and accountability in implementation of the programme, Ministry of Rural Development has rolled out the NSAP- MIS for use by all States/ UTs and has launched the NSAP website.