

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO – 2053
ANSWERED ON - 20/12/2023**

ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

2053 # SHRI MITHLESH KUMAR
SMT. KANTA KARDAM

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

- (a) whether Government ensures that senior citizens have access to essential services, financial support and safety measures;
- (b) the manner in which Government perceives the unique challenges and needs of the aging population; and
- (c) the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SUSHRI PRATIMA BHOUMIK)

(a) to (c) The Umbrella Scheme of Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVYAY), being run by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, includes components to provide financial security, healthcare, nutrition, shelter, welfare etc. for senior citizens. Under one of such components, namely, the Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens(IPSrC), Grant-in-Aid is given to Implementing Agencies for running and maintenance of Senior Citizens Homes where basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care, entertainment opportunities etc. are provided free of cost to indigent senior citizens. Under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana(RVY), assisted living devices are distributed free of cost, in camp mode, to senior citizens belonging to the families living below the poverty line or having Rs. 15000/- as monthly income and suffering from age related disabilities. The Elderline: National Helpline for Senior Citizens(NHSC) (Toll-free No. 14567) provides free information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention in cases of abuse and rescues in order to improve the quality of life of senior citizens. The component namely Senior-care Ageing Growth Engine(SAGE) aims to encourage youth to think about the problems of the elderly and come out with innovative ideas for the elderly care and promoting them into start-ups by providing equity support.

Under Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme(IGNOAPS) of the National Social Assistance Programme(NSAP), a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Department of Rural Development, Government of India, monthly pension at the rate of Rs.200/- per month per beneficiary to elderly persons in the age group of 60-79 years belonging to Below Poverty Line(BPL) households, is being paid. The rate of pension is increased to Rs.500/- per month per beneficiary on reaching the age of 80 years. The States/Union Territories are encouraged to provide top up amounts of at least an equivalent amount to the assistance provided by the Central Government so that the beneficiaries could get a decent level of assistance. At present, the States/Union Territories are adding Top up amounts ranging from Rs.50/- to Rs.3000/- per month per beneficiary under the IGNOAPS of NSAP. The assistance under NSAP pension schemes is sanctioned up to the scheme-wise, State/Union Territory-wise cap of beneficiaries under the scheme. At present, the number of beneficiaries under the IGNOAPS in the country is around 2.21 crore and the Scheme has achieved almost 100% saturation in all States/Union Territories. The States/Union Territories have the option to provide pension from their own sources in case there are more eligible beneficiaries over and above the State/Union Territory cap under the NSAP pension schemes.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly(NPHCE) in 2010-11 with a view to provide dedicated healthcare services to senior citizens at various level of State Health Care delivery system i.e., at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary health care, including outreach services. The Programme has two components, namely National Health Mission(NHM) i.e., Primary and Secondary care service delivery through District Hospitals(DH), Community Health Centres(CHC), Primary Health Centres(PHC), Sub-Centre/Health & Wellness Centres, and Tertiary Component i.e., these services are being provided through Regional Geriatric Centres(RGCs) located at 19 Medical colleges in 18 states of India and two National Centres of Aging(NCAs) one in AIIMS, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi and another in Madras Medical College, Chennai. It also includes Research on health issues pertaining to senior citizens. Further, Government launched Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana(PMJAY) to cover 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approx. 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage of up to Rs.5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization. With the launch of the Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana(RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme(SCHIS) have been subsumed in it. All enrolled beneficiary families of RSBY and SCHIS are entitled for benefits under the Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY.
