

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2651
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.12.2021**

PROBLEMS OF AGED PEOPLE

2651. SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM:

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

- (a) the measures and policies implemented by the Government to alleviate the problems of the aged people,
- (b) whether any beneficiaries have taken benefit from these schemes, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to introduce any scheme for ensuring the economic stability of senior citizens, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether there is any proposal to expand the scope of existing schemes and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER
MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR)**

(a) to (d): The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has reviewed the National Action Plan for Sr Citizens (NAPSrC) and renamed it as Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) for welfare of Senior Citizens across the Country. Components of the AVYAY scheme are as under :-

- i. Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC)
- ii. State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC)
- iii. Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana' (RVY)
- iv. Livelihood and Skilling Initiatives for Senior Citizens - (i) Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED) (ii) Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR Groups):Elderly Self Help groups
- v. Promoting silver economy
- vi. Channelizing CSR funds for Elderly care
- vii. Scheme for Awareness Generation and Capacity Building for welfare of Senior Citizens – Training, Awareness, Sensitization, Setting up of National Helpline for Senior Citizens.

So far in the year 2021-22, a total of 96530 and 19431 beneficiaries have been benefited under IPSrC and RVY respectively.

Schemes run by other Ministries/ Departments for Welfare of Senior Citizens are as follows:

I. Ministry of Rural Development:

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)
- Total targeted beneficiaries under IGNOAPS are 221 lakh

II. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:

- National Programme for the Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE)
 - i. Primary & Secondary Geriatric Care Services
 - ii. Tertiary level activities of NPHCE : renamed as 'Rashtriya Varisth Jan Swasthya Yojana' in 2016-17

Overall 61.8 lakhs elderly have been provided OPD care, 2.06 lakhs elderly admitted to indoor wards, 3.21 lakhs elderly provided Rehabilitation sessions and 21.73 lakhs elderly received Lab. Services through the various institutions operationalized for geriatric care services.

III. MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana' (PMVVY)

- A total number of 5,83,208 subscribers are being benefited under the scheme as on 31st December, 2020.

IV. MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS:

- Procurement of **low floor buses** with proper ramps for easy access of the passengers and **proper space for wheelchair**
- **Provision of ramps/lifts to the stations**
- **Priority for allotment of houses to Senior Citizens on ground floor or lower floors**
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) with the aim to reduce poverty and vulnerability of urban poor households on sustainable basis.

V. MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS.

- Concession in fare for Senior Citizens
- Provision of lower berth for Senior Citizens in Passenger Reservation System
- Provision of Wheel chairs/ E-Cars at Stations
- Separate counters at Passengers Reservation System for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities.

The details of the schemes/programmes mentioned above have been given in **Annexure.**

[Reply to Part (a) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2651 for 14.12.2021 regarding 'Problems of Aged People' raised by SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM:]

Details of Schemes and Programmes being implemented by Government of India

Department of Social Justice and Empowerment

Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY)

1. AVYAY brings together articulation of each of the current schemes, future plans, strategies and targets and maps it with schemes/programmes, accountabilities, financials and clear outcomes. This Plan takes care of the top four needs of the senior citizens viz financial security, food, health care and human interaction /life of dignity. It also includes the facets of safety/protection and general wellbeing of the elderly beginning from awareness generation and sensitization of the society.

2. AVYAY is an umbrella scheme, effective since 1st April 2021, has following schemes under it, namely:

- **Scheme of Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):** Setting up of Homes to improve the quality of life of the Senior Citizens, especially indigent senior citizens by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities and by encouraging productive and active ageing.
- **State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC):** The Government of India perceives a major and critical role of all State Governments in partnering and implementing this Action Plan for welfare of senior citizens. Each State/UT is expected to plan and strategize taking into account their local considerations and frame their own State Action Plans for the welfare of their senior citizens.
- **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana' (RVY):** A scheme for providing physical Aids and Assisted living devices to Senior Citizens.
- **Livelihood and Skilling Initiatives for Senior Citizens - Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED);** Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR Groups):Elderly Self Help groups.
- **Promoting silver economy**
- **Channelizing CSR funds for Elderly care**
- **Scheme for Awareness Generation and Capacity Building for welfare of Senior Citizens –** Training, Awareness, Sensitization, Setting up of National Helpline for Senior Citizens.

3. Under the Scheme of Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC), grants upto 100% of project cost are given for running and maintenance the following projects:-

- (i) Senior Citizens' Homes for 25 destitute Senior Citizens to provide food, care and shelter.
- (ii) Senior Citizens' Homes for 50 Elderly Women including those under Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) to provide food, care and shelter.
- (iii) Continuous Care Homes and Homes for senior citizens afflicted with Alzheimer's disease/ Dementia for a minimum of 20 Senior Citizens who are seriously ill requiring continuous nursing care and respite or those who are afflicted with Alzheimer's disease/ Dementia.
- (iv) Mobile Medicare Units to provide medical care to the Senior Citizens living in rural, isolated and backward areas.
- (v) Physiotherapy Clinics for Senior Citizens for a minimum of 50 Senior Citizens per month.
- (vi) Regional Resource and Training Centres (RRTCs) monitors and provides technical support, advocacy, networking, training and capacity building for effective delivery of service by the Centres for Senior Citizens, funded by the Ministry.

4. Under the Scheme, assistance is sanctioned to the following agencies subject to the terms and conditions laid down by this Ministry:-

- Priority to be given to the State Governments / UT Administrations for supporting the projects under the Scheme of IPSrC through Registered Societies/ Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) / Local bodies, in the vicinity of Hospitals, as far as possible;
- Non-Governmental/Voluntary Organizations;
- Institutions or Organizations set up by Government as autonomous/ subordinate bodies;
- Government Recognized Educational Institutions, Charitable Hospitals/ Nursing Homes, and recognized youth organizations such as Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)

5. Under State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC), the Government of India perceives a major and critical role of all State Governments in partnering and implementing the Action Plan for welfare of senior citizens. Appreciating the critical and significant role of States/UTs, each State/UT is expected to plan and strategize taking into account their local considerations and frame their own State Action Plans for the welfare of their senior citizens. This State Action Plan may comprise a long-term strategy for five years as well as Annual Action Plans and this Department shall release funds to the States/UTs for formulation and implementation of their State Action Plans.

6. Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY): Scheme for providing Physical Aids and Assisted-Living Devices for Senior Citizens

The Scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) has been formulated by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with an objective to provide aids and assisted living devices viz. walking sticks, elbow crutches, walkers/crutches, tripods/quadpods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles, free of cost to senior citizens belonging to BPL category who suffer from age related disabilities/infirmities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and loco-motor disabilities. The Scheme has been revised w.e.f. F.Y. 2020-21. Under the revised Scheme, the criteria of selection of beneficiaries have been extended to include not only those senior citizens belonging to BPL category but also senior citizens with monthly income not more than Rs. 15000/- and who suffer from age related disabilities/infirmities as mentioned above.

Under the revised Scheme of RVY, the number of devices hitherto provided has been increased. At present, following are the items that have been included for distribution:

(a) Generic Items:

- (1) Walking sticks
- (2) Elbow crutches
- (3) Walkers/Crutches,
- (4) Tripods/Quadpods
- (5) Hearing Aids
- (6) Artificial Dentures, and
- (7) Spectacles.

(b) Special Items:

- (1) Wheelchairs,
- (2) Wheel Chairs with Commode,
- (3) Chair/Stool with Commode,
- (4) Silicon Foam Cushion,
- (5) Knee Brace,
- (6) Spinal Support,
- (7) Cervical Collar,
- (8) Lumbosacral Belt (LS),
- (9) Walker/Roalator with Brakes,
- (10) Walking Stick with Seat,
- (11) Foot Care Kit:- (i) Flexi Gel Socks, (ii) Socks Cushion Sandal, (iii) Silicon Insole (Complete Foot/Ankle) and (iv) Insole with Pressure Point Relief.

7. Livelihood and Skilling Initiatives for Senior Citizens- A new scheme with following two components:-

(i) Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED)- Many senior citizens have experience, time and energy which can be used by the business enterprises looking for stable employees with experience. The Human resources cells of many private enterprises seek experienced but stable persons in certain positions. The portal allows bringing these people together by virtual matching of preferences.

(ii) **Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR Groups):** Elderly Self Help groups - The Senior Citizens are encouraged to form Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which will provide them with a platform to share the time constructively with each other. To attain financial assistance under the scheme SHGs will function as 'Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR Groups)'. Assistance under this Scheme to any SHG will be independent of assistance under any other scheme of the Ministry and an SHG can choose to avail assistance under any one or more Scheme(s).

8. Promoting Silver Economy – This is also a new scheme launched with an objective to encourage the entrepreneurs for to think about the problems of the elderly and come out with innovative solutions The Government aims to achieve the objective by providing upto Rs. 1 crore as financial assistance through equity participation, through an open invitation on a portal namely Seniorcare Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE).

9. Channelizing CSR funds for Elderly care- This is also a new scheme with an objective to channelize the CSR funds in an appropriate manner for elderly care projects. Under Schedule VII of Section 135 of the Companies Act, setting up old age homes, day care centres and such facilities for Senior Citizens is an approved item for CSR funding.

10. Scheme for Awareness Generation and Capacity Building for welfare of Senior Citizens- Components like the National Helpline for Senior Citizens, Research, awareness, sensitization etc. for the welfare of senior citizens, spreading awareness and sensitizing the youth and other sections of the society towards the issues related to the elderly.

Other Initiatives of D/o Social Justice and Empowerment

1. National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP), 1999: National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP) had been announced in January 1999 to reaffirm the commitment to ensure the well-being of the older persons. The Policy envisaged State support to ensure financial and food security, health care, shelter and other needs of older persons, equitable share in development, protection against abuse and exploitation, and availability of services to improve the quality of their lives.

The primary objectives were to encourage individuals to make provision for their own as well as their spouse's old age; to encourage families to take care of their older family members; to enable and support voluntary and non-governmental organizations to supplement the care provided by the family; to provide care and protection to the vulnerable elderly people; to provide adequate healthcare facility to the elderly; to promote research and training facilities to train geriatric care givers and organizers of services for the elderly; and to create awareness regarding elderly persons to help them lead productive and independent live.

2. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007: The MWPSA Act, 2007 had been enacted in December 2007 to ensure need based maintenance for parents and senior citizens and their welfare. The Act provides for Maintenance of Parents/ senior citizens by children/ relatives made obligatory and justiciable through Tribunals, Revocation of transfer of property by senior citizens in case of neglect by relatives, Penal provision for abandonment of senior citizens, Establishment of Old Age Homes for Indigent Senior Citizens, Adequate medical facilities and security for Senior Citizens.

In order to make the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007 more contemporary to the needs of senior citizens at large, amendments, such as, adoption of uniform age criteria to define a 'senior citizens', registration and prescribing minimum standards of service, infrastructure, manpower etc. in Senior Citizens Care Homes/Multi-service Day Care Centres, rating of agencies providing Home Care services to senior citizens etc. have been proposed. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 11.12.2019.

3. Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund (SCWF): In pursuance of the Budget Announcement, 2015-16, a "Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund" has been created to be utilized for such schemes, for promoting financial security of senior citizens, healthcare and nutrition of senior citizens, welfare of elderly widows, schemes relating to Old Age Homes, Short Stay Homes and Day Care of senior citizens etc. , for the promotion of the welfare of senior citizens. The Fund comprises of the unclaimed amounts transferred by every institution holding such fund in the Schemes including Small Savings and other Saving Schemes of the Central Government such as Post Office Savings Accounts, Post Office Recurring Deposits Accounts etc., Accounts of Public Provident Funds and Accounts of Employees Provident Fund, that remain unclaimed for a period of seven years from the date of the account being declared as inoperative account.

4. National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSrC): In pursuance of the National Policy for Older Persons (NPOP), 1999, a National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) was constituted in 1999 to oversee implementation of the Policy and to advise the Government in the formulation and implementation of policy and programmes for the aged. The National Council for

Older Persons (NCOP) has been reconstituted and renamed as National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSrC) in 2012. The mandate of NCSrC is to advise Central and State Governments on the entire gamut of issues related to welfare of senior citizens and enhancement of their quality of life. The Hon'ble Minister, Social Justice and Empowerment, is the Chairperson of the Council.

5. **National Award 'Vayoshreshtha Samman':** Every year, this Ministry confers National Award 'Vayoshreshtha Samman' to eminent senior citizens and institutions in recognition of their contribution to the society. This is in order to showcase the Government's concern for senior citizens and its commitment towards senior citizens with the aim of strengthening their legitimate place in the society. The Vayoshreshtha Samman award started since 2005, which was upgraded to the status of National Award in 2013. The Awards are given under thirteen categories. Mementos, certificates and cash awards are presented to the awardees.

6. **Observance of International Day of Older Persons (IDOP):** On 1st October every year, this Ministry observes International Day for Older Persons by conferring National Award 'Vayoshreshtha Samman' to eminent senior citizens and institutions involved in rendering distinguished services for the cause of elderly persons, especially indigent senior citizens. Further, Health Camps, Inter-generational walkathons etc. are organised in different States with active participation of Senior Citizens, Youth, Celebrities and Media-persons etc.

Schemes, Programmes, Concession and Benefits for senior citizens, being provided by other Ministries/Departments:

1. **Ministry of Rural Development:**

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Ministry of Rural Development. NSAP is a social security/social welfare programme applicable to old aged, widows, disabled persons and bereaved families on death of primary bread winner, belonging to below poverty line household. Old age pension is provided under **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)** to aged persons belonging to below poverty line (BPL) household. Central assistance of Rs. 200/- per month is provided to the persons of 60-79 years of age and Rs. 500/- per month to the persons of age of 80 years or more. This Scheme is implemented by the States/UTs. Identification of beneficiaries, sanction and disbursement of benefit under the schemes is done by the States/UTs. A total of 221 lakh is the targeted beneficiaries under IGNOAPS. The Scheme is implemented in all States/ UTs in rural as well as urban areas.

2. **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:**

"National Programme for the Health Care of Elderly" (NPHCE) launched during 2010-11 is State oriented program with the basic thrust to provide comprehensive and dedicated health care facilities to the elderly persons above 60 year of age at various level of primary, secondary and tertiary health care.

I. Primary & Secondary Geriatric Care Services: The program commenced with 100 districts in the 11th plan period. In the 12th plan period 421 districts and in 2019-2020, 114 districts were additionally sanctioned to provide dedicated geriatric OPD, IPD, Physiotherapy and lab services. Presently all 713 Health districts have been sanctioned for geriatric primary & secondary care services of OPD, 10 bedded Geriatric Ward, Physiotherapy and laboratory services.

II. Tertiary level activities of NPHCE: renamed as 'Rashtriya Varisth Jan Swasthya Yojana' in 2016-17. As on date, 19 Regional Geriatric Centres (RGCs) in selected Medical Colleges of 18 States, are sanctioned for tertiary care service delivery under NPHCE in the form of specialized OPD's, 30 bedded wards in RGC including earmarking beds in various specialties like urology, orthopedics, ophthalmology etc, manpower development & research activities. Presently OPD services are being provided through 18 RGCs, inpatient services in 16 RGC's, Physiotherapy in 14 centers & laboratory services in 13 centers.

III. Training Modules: Three sets of Training modules for Medical Officers, Nurses and Community based workers to deliver Comprehensive Geriatric care has been developed. State level Training of Trainers of Medical Officers for Comprehensive Geriatric Care has been conducted at Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Haryana, Punjab Tamil Nadu & Maharashtra generating approx 236 States level Master Trainers and 85 National Master Trainers: 27 for Medical Officer Module, 26 for Staff Nurses Module and 32 for module developed to train Community based workers.

IV. NPHCE Website: - An interactive and dynamic website cum MIS of the NPHCE program has been initiated through Center for Health Informatics (CHI) to provide comprehensive information along with data regarding Geriatric facilities and services available through-out the country. www.nphce.nhp.gov.in

V. IEC: Audio/Video spots on different topics of elder care, print material-folder, posters etc. have been developed. The regional language version of IEC material is being developed. <https://nphce.nhp.gov.in/video-spot/>

3. MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

Ministry of Finance has launched a scheme namely 'Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana' (PMVVY) to provide social security during old age and to protect elderly persons aged 60 and above against a future fall in their interest income due to uncertain market conditions. The Scheme enables old age income security for senior citizens through provision of assured pension/ return linked to the subscription amount based on Government guarantee to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).

PMVVY is open for subscription upto 31st March 2023 and offers an assured rate of return of 7.40% per annum for the year 2020-21 for policy duration of 10 years. In subsequent years, while the Scheme is in operation full month 2023, there will be annual reset of assured rate of return with effect from April 1st of the financial year in line with applicable rate of return of Senior Citizens Saving Scheme (SCSS) upto a ceiling of 7.75% with fresh appraisal of the scheme on breach of this threshold at any point.

The differential return, i.e. the difference between return generated by LIC and the assured returns would be borne by Government of India as subsidy on an annual basis. Pension is payable at the end of each period during the policy tenure of 10 years as per the frequency of monthly/ quarterly/ half-yearly as chosen by the subscriber at the time of purchase. Minimum purchase price under the scheme is Rs. 1,62,162/- for a minimum pension of Rs. 1,000/- per month and the maximum purchase price is Rs. 15 lakh per senior citizen for getting a pension amount of Rs. 9,250/-.

The Scheme is being implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). A total number of 5,83,208 subscribers are being benefited under the scheme as on 31st December, 2020.

4. MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS:

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Urban Development has issued the Model Building Bye Laws, 2016 (MBBL) prescribing standards for creation of elder friendly barrier free environment with reference to buildings, toilets etc. Urban Local Bodies shall implement the Policy by adopting the Model Building Bye Laws, 2016. Further, under Urban Bus Specification-II issued in 2013, the emphasis on buses financed by the Department of Urban Development is on procurement of **low floor buses** with proper ramps for easy access of the passengers and **proper space for wheelchair** to be placed in the bus for the benefit of disabled persons and senior citizens. All metro rail projects implemented/under implementation in the country are having disabled and elder friendly infrastructure such as **proper ramps/lifts to the stations**. There is a provision for reservation of seats in metro rail coaches for differently-abled persons and senior citizens. Further, Housing for All Mission/Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Guidelines have been circulated to State/UTs to meet the demand of housing in their States/UTs, which inter-alia incorporates that 'while making the allotment, families with senior citizens should be given **priority for allotment on ground floor or lower floors**'.

Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs is implementing the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) with the aim to reduce poverty and vulnerability of urban poor households on sustainable basis. The Mission, inter-alia, aims at providing permanent shelter equipped with essential services to the urban homeless in a phased manner under the component of Shelters for Urban Homeless, irrespective of age.

5. Ministry of Railways:

The following facilities have been extended from time to time to Senior citizens:

- i. In the computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) there is a provision to allot lower berths to Senior Citizens, Female passengers of 45 years and above automatically, even if no choice is given, subject to availability of accommodation at the time of booking.
- ii. A combined quota of six to seven lower berths per coach in Sleeper class, four to five lower berths per coach each in Air Conditioned 3 tier (3AC) and three to four lower berths per coach in Air Conditioned 2 tier (2AC) classes (depending on the number of coaches of that class in the train) has been earmarked for senior citizens, female passengers 45 years of age and above and pregnant women.
- iii. Instructions have been issued for earmarking a minimum of 07 seats for senior citizens in 1st and last 2nd class general compartment for entire period of local train services on suburban sections of all zonal Railways.
- iv. Yatri Mitra Sewa has been introduced at major railway stations for enabling passengers to book wheel chairs services cum porter services free of cost through NGOs, Charitable trust, PSUs etc under CSR.
- v. Provision of Battery Operated Vehicles (BOVs) at some important stations for Divyangjans, Senior Citizens, Sick passengers and Pregnant women is being made 'free

of cost' through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and commercial publicity route as well as on chargeable basis.

- vi. After departure of the train, if there are vacant lower berths available in the train and if any person with disability booked on the authority of handicapped concession or a senior citizen or a pregnant woman, who has been allotted upper/middle berth, approaches for allotment of vacant lower berths, the on board Ticket Checking Staff has been authorized to allot the vacant lower berth to them making necessary entries in the chart.
- vii. Separate counters are earmarked at various Passenger Reservation System(PRS) centers for dealing with the reservation requisitions received from ladies, persons with disability, Senior Citizens, Ex. MPs, MLAs, accredited journalists and freedom fighters, if the average demand per shift not less than 120 tickets. In case there is no justification for earmarking of an exclusive counter for any of these categories of persons including ladies, persons with disability or senior citizens, one or two counters depending upon the total demand are earmarked for dealing with the reservation requests for all these categories of persons.
