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PROGRAMMES STARTED BY GOI FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL POPULATION

1. NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (NSAP)

Introduction

The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) was included in the Central Budget for 1995-96. The details of the Programme have been worked out by a Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Rural Development) in consultation with the representatives of State Governments. The Prime Minister, in his broadcast to the Nation on 28th July, 1995, has announced that the Programme will come into effect from 15th August, 1995.

Main features and objectives of the programme

The NSAP will include, for the time being, three benefits as its components, viz.,

1. National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)
2. National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)
3. National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS).

NSAP is a social assistance programme for poor households and represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Articles 41 and 42 of the Constitution recognizing the concurrent responsibility of the Central and State governments in the matter.

The NSAP is a Centrally Sponsored Programme under which 100 per cent Central assistance is extended to the States/UTs to provide the benefits in accordance with the norms, guidelines and conditions laid down by the Central Government.

In providing social assistance benefits to poor households in the case of old age, death of the breadwinner and maternity, the NSAP aims at ensuring minimum national standards, in addition to the benefits that the States are currently providing or might provide in future. The intention in providing 100 per cent Central assistance is to ensure that social protection to the beneficiaries everywhere in the country is uniformly available without interruption.

Accordingly, it should be ensured that Central assistance does not displace States' own expenditure in this respect and that the States/UTs may expand their own coverage of social assistance independently, wherever they wish to do so.

The NSAP provides opportunities for linking the social assistance package to schemes for poverty alleviation and the provision of basic needs. Specifically, old age pensions can be linked to medical care and other benefits for the old and the poor. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)/ Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY) assistance may be provided in addition to family benefits for the families of poor households on the loss of breadwinner. Maternity assistance can be linked to maternal and child care and provision of better diet to pregnant mothers.

The NSAP shall be implemented by the Panchayats and Municipalities in the delivery of social assistance so as to make it responsive and cost-effective. In the process, the Panchayats and the Municipalities will be strengthened and it may be possible for them to mobilize local resources for supplementing benefits from the Government. Panchayats and Municipalities will be encouraged to involve voluntary agencies to the extent possible in taking these benefits to the poor households for whom they are intended. The responsibility for implementation shall, however, rest on the Panchayats and the Municipalities.

The NSAP will be implemented in the States/UTs in accordance with the General Conditions applicable to all the components of the NSAP as well as the Specific Conditions applicable to each component. These are set out below:

General conditions

The scales of benefit under the NSAP would be as below:

- National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS): Rs.75/- per month per beneficiary.
- National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS): Rs.10,000/- in case of death of the primary breadwinner to the bereaved household
- National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS): Rs.500/- per pregnancy up to the first two live births.

(A) National old age pension scheme

For purposes of claiming Central assistance, the following criteria shall apply:-

- The age of the applicant (male or female) shall be 65 years or higher.
- The applicant must be a destitute in the sense of having little or no regular means of subsistence from his/her own sources of income or through financial support from family members or other sources. In order to determine destitution, the criteria, if any, currently in force in the States/UTs Governments may also be followed. The Government of India reserve the right to review these criteria and suggest appropriate revised criteria.
- The amount of the old age pension will be Rs.75 per month for purposes of claiming Central assistance.

- The benefit under NOAPS should be disbursed, in not less than two installments in a year and if possible the benefit may be disbursed in more installments as per directions of the State Government.

(B) National family benefit scheme

Central assistance will be available for a lumpsum family benefit for households below the poverty line on the death of the primary breadwinner in the bereaved family.

For purposes of determining Central assistance the following criteria shall apply:

- The 'primary breadwinner' will be the member of the household -male or female- whose earnings contribute substantially to the total household income.
- The death of such a primary breadwinner should have occurred whilst he or she is in the age group of 18 to 64 years i.e. more than 18 years of age and less than 65 years of age.
- The bereaved household qualifies as one below the poverty line according to the criterion prescribed by the Government of India.
- The Central assistance under the scheme will be Rs.10,000/- in the case of death of the primary bread-winner.

(C) National maternity benefit scheme

Specific Conditions:-

The maternity benefit will provide lumpsum cash assistance to women of households below the poverty line.

For purposes of determining central assistance, the following criteria shall apply:-

- The maternity benefit will be restricted to pregnant women for up to the first two live births provided they are of 19 years of age and above.
- The beneficiary should belong to a household below the poverty line according to the criteria prescribed by the Government of India.
- The ceiling on the amount of the benefit for purposes of claiming Central assistance will be Rs.500.

2. SAMPOORNA GRAMEEN ROZGAR YOJANA (S G R Y)

[Effective from 01.04.2002]

Objectives: The Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) will have the following objectives:

- (a) **Primary Objective:** The primary objective of the Scheme is to provide additional wage employment in all rural areas and thereby provide food security and improve nutritional levels.
- (b) **Secondary Objective:** The secondary objective is the creation of durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructural development in rural areas.

Status: The programme will be implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme on cost sharing basis between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 75:25 of the cash component of the Programme. In the case of UTs the Centre would provide entire (100%) funds under the Scheme. Food grains will be provided to the States/UTs free of cost.

Target Group: The SGRY will be open to all rural poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual and unskilled work in and around his village/habitat. The Programme is self-targeting in nature.

While providing wage employment, preference shall be given to agricultural wage earners, non-agricultural unskilled wage earners, marginal farmers, women, members of Schedule Castes/Schedule Tribes and parents of child labour withdrawn from hazardous occupations, parents of handicapped children or adult children of handicapped parents who are desirous of working for wage employment.

Programme Strategy:

- (i) 5% of the funds and foodgrains under the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana will be retained in the Ministry for utilisation in the areas of acute distress arising out of natural calamities or for taking up preventive measures in the chronically drought or flood affected rural areas. Savings from 5% could be allotted by the Ministry to better performing Districts.
- (ii) A certain percentage of the allotted food grains under the SGRY will be reserved for the Special Component to be used in any Central or State Government Scheme with wage employment potential to meet exigencies arising out of any natural calamity.
- (iii) The remaining funds and food grains under the SGRY will be available in two streams from the Department of Rural Development:
 - (a) **First Stream** – The First Stream will be implemented at the District and Intermediate Panchayat levels. 50% of the funds and food grains will be available under the First Stream and will be distributed between the Zilla Parishad and the Intermediate Panchayats in the ratio of 40-60.
 - (b) **Second Stream** – The Second Stream will be implemented at the Village Panchayat level, and 50 % of the funds and foodgrains will be earmarked for the Village Panchayats and distributed among them through DRDAs/Zill Parishads.
- (iv) The Programme will be implemented through the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

FOODGRAINS UNDER SGRY**Foodgrains should be given as Part of Wages under the SGRY**

Distribution of foodgrains as part of wages under the SGRY (First & Second Streams) is based on the principle of protecting the real wages of the workers besides improving the nutritional standards of the families of the rural poor.

Foodgrains should be given as part of wages under the SGRY to the rural poor at the rate of 5 Kg per manday. Should a State Government wish to give more than 5 Kg of foodgrains per manday, it may do so within the existing State allocation (subject to a minimum of 25% of the wages to be paid in cash).

Distribution of foodgrains to the workers under the Programme will be either through PDS or by the Gram Panchayat or any other Agency appointed by the State Government. Distribution of foodgrains will be made to the workers, most preferably, at the work site. In the event of the workers belonging to one Habitation and should they choose to receive foodgrains in their Habitation, the same could be organized. While the State Government would have the option of utilizing the PDS, it will have to be ensured that effective safeguards are in place to avoid leakages. DRDAs/ZPs will make necessary arrangements for distribution of foodgrains among the concerned Agencies.

WAGES UNDER SGRY

Wages Under The Programme: The wages under the programme shall be paid partly in foodgrains and partly in cash.

Minimum Wages: Minimum Wages fixed by the State authorities shall be paid under the SGRY both for skilled and unskilled labour.

Equal wages shall be paid under the programme to both men and women workers.

Payment of wages shall be made on a fixed day in a week preferably a day before the local market day, in the presence of the Village Pradhan/Sarpanch or Panchas.

In case the executing Agencies do not pay the wages for a category of employment at the rate notified for the relevant schedule of employment under the Minimum Wages Act, the Zilla Parishad/Panchayat Samiti shall withhold further release of funds to that implementing agency and inform the fact to the concerned authority for suitable action against the erring official under the Minimum Wages Act and also inform the Central Government.

Beneficiary Oriented Individual Programmes for SCs/STs: As indicated above, 22.5 % of the resources released to the Zilla Parishad and Intermediate Level Panchayat shall be used for individual works for SCs/STs. The illustrative list of such Economic Assets/Works which can be taken up for the benefit of identified individuals belonging to SCs/STs are as under:

- (i) Development of allotted land in the case of allottees of ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan land, Government. land.
- (ii) Social forestry works, such as fuelwood and fodder plantations on the private lands belonging to SCs/STs.
- (iii) Agri-horticulture, floriculture, horticulture plantation on the private lands belonging to SCs/STs below poverty line.
- (iv) Work sheds or infrastructure for any self-employment programme.
- (v) Open Irrigation Wells/Bore-wells for irrigation.
- (vi) Pond excavation/re-excavation with primary support for pisciculture and
- (vii) Other sustainable income generating assets.

3. INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA

Introduction: Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) was launched during 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and continued as a sub-scheme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) since its launching from April, 1989. It has been delinked from the JRY and has been made an independent scheme with effect from January 1, 1996.

Objective: The objective of IAY is primarily to provide grant for construction of houses to members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and also to non-SC/ST rural poor below the poverty line.

Target Group: The target group for houses under IAY will be people below poverty line living in rural areas belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and non-SC/ST subject to the condition that the benefits to non-SC/ST should not exceed 40% of total IAY allocation during a financial year.

From 1995-96, the IAY benefits have been extended to ex-servicemen, widows or next-of-kin of defence personnel and para military forces killed in action irrespective of the income criteria subject to the condition that (i) they reside in rural areas; (ii) they have not been covered under any other scheme of shelter rehabilitation; and (iii) they are houseless or in need of shelter or shelter upgradation. Priority be given to other ex-servicemenn and retired members of the paramilitary forces as long as they fulfill the normal eligibility conditions of the Indira Awaas Yojana and have not been covered under any other shelter rehabilitation scheme. The priority in the matter of allotment of houses to the ex-servicemen and paramilitary forces and

their dependents will be out of 40% of the houses set apart for allotment among the non-SC/ST categories of beneficiaries.

3% of the funds have been earmarked for the benefit of disabled persons below poverty line. This reservation of 3% under IAY for disabled persons below the poverty line would be horizontal reservation i.e., disabled persons belonging to sections like SCs, STs and Others would fall in their respective categories.

Priority in Selection of Beneficiaries: The order of priority for selection of beneficiaries amongst target group below poverty line is as follows:

- (i) Freed bonded labourers
- (ii) SC/ST households who are victims of atrocities
- (iii) SC/ST households, headed by widows and unmarried women.
- (iv) SC/ST households affected by flood, fire earthquake, cyclone and similar natural calamities.
- (v) Other SC/ST households.
- (vi) Non- SC/ST households.
- (vii) Physically handicapped.
- (viii) Families/widows of personnel of defence services / para-military forces, killed in action.
- (xi) Displaced persons on account of developmental projects, nomadic semi-nomadic, and de-notified tribals, families with disabled members and internal refugees, subject to the households being below poverty line.

Allotment of Houses: Allotment of houses should be in the name of female member of the beneficiary household. Alternatively, it can be allotted in the name of both husband and wife.

4. SWARNJAYANTI GRAM SWAROZGAR YOJANA

The objective of the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) is to bring the assisted poor families (Swarozgaris) above the Poverty Line by ensuring appreciable sustained level of income over a period of time. This objective is to be achieved by inter alia organising the rural poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs) through the process of social mobilization, their training and capacity building and provision of income generating assets.

SGSY lays stress on the cluster approach. What this means is that instead of funding diverse activities, each block should concentrate on a few select activities (key activities) and attend to all aspects of these activities, so that the Swarozgaris can draw sustainable incomes from their investments. These key activities should preferably be taken up in clusters so that the backward and forward linkages can be effectively established. This would facilitate not only monitoring but more importantly provision of various services required by the Swarozgaris.

5. THE GYANDOOT PROJECT

Dhar district in central India has a population of approximately 1.7 million people, most of whom are poor and marginalized. About 60 per cent of the people live below the poverty line and most are illiterate. People depend on small farm production and are often subject to exploitation by middlemen, local money-lenders and corrupt officials.

The Gyandoot project installed a computer network in the district, connecting 31 village centres. It made use of information and communication technology to provide online services, including land revenue-related transactions, public grievance redressal, village auction, a matrimonial site, government services and entitlements, expert consultation, a free e-mail facility on social issues, employment news and a village newspaper. The benefits of the project reach over half a million people.

This improved interface between citizens and Government has enabled interaction and dialogue, the formation of new alliances, the development of interpersonal networks and the establishment of cross-sectoral links. Greater access and control over information have empowered the community and has resulted in better governance.

The Gyandoot project has been recognized as a breakthrough in e-government and it has won the Stockholm Challenge IT Award 2000 in the area of public service and democracy. It has given marginalized tribal people in central India their first chance ever to access knowledge.

6. Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)

The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was established in December 1971 to assist illiterate, vulnerable and unorganized self-employed poor rural and urban women, including small farmers and off-farm workers, to escape from exploitation.

The aim of SEWA is to develop leadership capacities among women, paving the way for them to win their rights to security of employment, food, health, childcare, housing and social security. A priority focal area for SEWA is asset-building so that the women can claim their rightful place in the family and the village society.

Primarily in response to the felt needs of the self-employed women, SEWA has evolved considerably over the years. When 1975 was declared the beginning of Women's Decade, membership grew in more and more occupations. SEWA received international recognition when its General Secretary, Ela Bhatt, was awarded the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Membership that was slightly over 6,000 in 1972 exceeded 300,000 by 2000. The SEWA Bank has attained financial viability. Video productions by women workers and the use of videos for

training and policy action have been a very successful activity in SEWA's expansion. SEWAHomenet, with members from every continent, is an international network working towards full recognition of home-based rural and urban workers.

7. PANCHAYATI RAJ

April 24, 1993 is a red-letter day in the history of Panchayati Raj in India as on this day the constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 came into force to provide constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions.

73rd Amendment Act, 1992

The salient features of the Act are:

- To provide 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all States having population of over 20 lakh.
- To hold Panchayat elections regularly every 5 years.
- To provide reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women (not less than 33%)
- To appoint State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards the financial powers of the Panchayats.
- To constitute District Planning Committee to prepare draft development plan for the district as a whole.

Powers and Responsibilities

According to the Constitution, Panchayats shall be given powers and authority to function as institutions of self-government. The following powers and responsibilities are to be delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level:

- Preparation of plan for economic development and social justice.
- Implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice in relation to 29 subjects given in Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- To levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

Gram Sabha: In the Panchayati Raj set up, the Gram Sabha, the general assembly of villagers, has a key role for effective functioning of Panchayats. In the Gram Sabha meeting, the rural poor, the women and the marginalised people would now get an opportunity to join in decision making on matters affecting their lives. Active functioning of the Gram Sabha would ensure a participatory democracy with transparency, accountability and achievement.

- Gram Sabha should meet at least in each quarter preferably on Republic Day, Labour Day, Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti.
- Decide developmental work to be undertaken by Panchayats based on needs assessment.

- Suggest remedial measures for economy and efficiency in the functioning of the Panchayats.
- Question and scrutinise the decisions of Panchayats in the meeting of Gram Sabha.
- Discuss the Annual Financial Statement of Gram Panchayats.

Under the Act, Gram Sabha has been vested with powers for:

- Ownership of Minor Forest Produce
- Development plans approval
- Selection of beneficiaries under various programmes
- Consultation on land acquisition
- Manage minor water bodies
- Control mineral leases
- Regulate/Prohibit sale of intoxicants
- Prevent alienation of land and restore unlawfully alienated land of STs
- Manage village markets
- Control money lending to STs
- Control institutions and functionaries in all social sector.

Training and awareness generation programme: The Ministry of Rural Development extends limited financial assistance to the States in their effort to train and create awareness among the elected members of Panchayats and functionaries. The State Governments are being asked to conduct such training courses. The Ministry has also been providing financial assistance through the Council for Advancement of People's Action & Rural Technology (CAPART) to the non-governmental organisations for conducting training and awareness generation programmes on Panchayati Raj. This Ministry also commissions research and evaluation studies related to Panchayati Raj from voluntary organisations/institutions.

NEW INITIATIVES

1. **Paradigm shift in the strategy for rural development:** Emphasis towards participation of people through panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), Self Help Groups in the planning, formulation and execution of the Programmes.
2. **Enhanced allocation of funds:** To ensure adequate budgetary support, allocations for Rural development Programmes enhanced to Rs. 13670 crore in 2002 - 2003 from Rs. 12265 crore in 2001-2002. Allocations further increased to Rs. 14070 crore for the year 2003-2004.
3. **Promoting decentralization to ensure participatory development:** Ministry is striving to make Panchayat Raj Institutions an effective and vibrant forum for decentralized planning and implementation of rural development programmes in consonance with the people's hopes and aspirations.
 - On 25th December, 2002, a new initiative '**swajaldhara**' launched to empower panchayats to formulate, implement, operate and maintain drinking water Projects.
 - In order to further involve PRIs in development process, a new initiative '**Hariyali**' launched on 27th January, 2003 to strengthen and involve Panchayati Raj Institutions in the implementation of Watershed Development Programmes.
4. **Capacity Building of Rural Poor through Strengthening of Infrastructure:** The incidence of poverty is not only because of absence of requisite economic development, but also due to absence of opportunities to the poor for their capacity building such as lack of avenues for employment and access to basic amenities like drinking water, housing, education and roads. Various Programmes of the ministry strive to address these issues.
5. **Rejuvenating Wastelands/degraded lands:** Through Area Development Programmes such as Integrated Wastelands Development Programme, Drought Prone Areas Programme and Desert Development Programme being implemented on watershed development basis.
6. **Facilitating participatory development through awareness generation:** Communication planning is an integral part of planning for development. Concerted efforts made to disseminate information to people in rural areas about nature and content of Rural Development Programmes.

INDIA'S POSITION IN WORLD AGRICULTURE

Item	India's Position			
	India	World	% Share	Rank
1. Area ** (Million Hectares)				
Total Area	329	13387	2.5	Seventh
Land Area	297	13048	2.3	Seventh
Arable Land	162 F	1379	11.8	Second
Irrigated Area	57 F	268	21.3	First
2. Population (Million)				
Total	982	5901	16.6	Second
Agriculture	549	2565	21.4	Second
3. Economically Active Population (Million)				
Total	429	2865	15.0	Second
Agriculture	260	1308	19.8	Second
4. Crop Production (Million Tonnes)				
(A) : Total Cereals	219	2054	10.7	Third
Wheat	66 *	589	11.2	Second
Rice (Paddy)	122 *	563	21.6	Second
Coarse grains	31	902	3.4	Third
Total Pulses				
(B) : Oilseeds	14 F	57	24.6	First
Groundnut	8 *	31	25.8	Second
Rapessed	5 *	34	14.7	Third
5. Fruits & Vegetables (Million Tonnes)				
(A): Vegetables & Melons	56 F	606	9.2	Second
(B): Potatoes	25 F	296	8.5	Fourth
(C): Onion (Dry)	4 F	40	10.0	Second
(D): Fruits excluding Melons	38 F	435	8.7	Second
6. Commercial Crops (Million)				
(A): Sugarcane	265	1252	21.2	Second
(B): Tea	0.87	2.96	29.4	First
(C) Coffee (green)	0.23 *	6.46	3.6	Seventh
(D) Tobacco Leaves	0.64	7.06	3.6	Seventh

7. Livestock (Million Heads)				
(A): Cattle	209 F	1318	15.9	First
(B): Buffaloes	92 F	162	56.8	First
(C) Camels	1.03 F	19.08	5.4	Fifth
(D) Sheep	56 F	1064	5.3	Third
(E) Goats	121 F	700	17.3	Second
(F): Chicken	343 F	13478	2.5	Seventh
8. Animal Products				
(A): Total Milk (000 tones)	68044 F	544180	12.5	Second
(B) Eggs Total (Million)				
(C) Total Meat (000 tonnes)	1612 F	53129	3.0	Fifth
	4589 F	216201	2.1	Sixth
9. Implements (Thousands numbers)**				
Tractors-in-use	1450 F	26335	5.5	Fourth

F: FAW Estimates

*** Unofficial Figures**

