

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL SECURITY PENSION SCHEMES – AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The Directive Principles of the State Policy in the Constitution of India enjoin upon the State to undertake welfare measures within its means, targeting the poor and destitute in particular. Article 41 of the Constitution of India directs the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in the case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement within the limit of the State's economic capacity and development. Social security, invalid and old age pensions figure as Item 23 of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India in the Concurrent List. Social Security is an integral part of the development process and is designed to guarantee long term sustenance with a special focus on the vulnerable and marginal sections of the society. In concordance with these guiding principles, Government of India (GoI) launched (August 1995) the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) as a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme targeting the destitute. In the year 2007/2009, the programme was expanded to cover all eligible persons Below Poverty Line (BPL) and more vulnerable groups such as widows and disabled persons.

NSAP includes five sub-schemes as its components. Of these, three are pension schemes (i) Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), (ii) Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), and (iii) Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS). The other two sub-schemes are (i) National Family Benefit Scheme – a onetime assistance to the bereaved family in the event of death of the bread winner and (ii) Annapurna scheme – food security to the eligible old aged persons who have remained uncovered under IGNOAPS, which are not pension schemes.

The State of Kerala had formulated additional two pension schemes of its own, *viz.*, (i) Pension for Unmarried Women (PUW) and (ii) Agriculture Labour Pension (ALP). Thus the State is implementing five social security pension schemes.

1.2 Organisational set-up

At the Central level, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) exercises overall control over the implementation of NSAP. The responsibility of implementation of all pension schemes including those under NSAP in the State is vested with the Local Self Government Department (LSGD). Social Justice Department is the Nodal Department for administration of all schemes except ALP, which is administered by the Labour Department. The State level and District level Monitoring Committees have to monitor the implementation of the Schemes. The implementation of the schemes including beneficiary selection is carried out by Grama Panchayats (GP) and Municipalities.

1.3 Beneficiaries

The number of beneficiaries covered from 2010-11 to 2014-15 under the social security pension schemes implemented by the State is given below in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Number of beneficiaries covered under various pension schemes

Pension Scheme	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
IGNOAPS	173071	191946	276924	339582	829656
IGNWPS	419038	512672	682763	762371	1009214
IGNDPS	200885	209907	252377	288590	325521
ALP	543144	545604	534408	530962	532404
PUW	40979	45284	50791	51865	67526
Total	1377117	1505413	1797263	1973370	2764321

The number of beneficiaries more than doubled over the five year period, which was ascribed to the State Government (i) relaxing the eligibility criteria of schemes as the pension schemes were applicable to the eligible population not necessarily restricted to the BPL population as long as their family income was within the prescribed threshold, while fulfilling other eligibility conditions; and (ii) launching a ‘Sampoorna Pension’ campaign from November 2013 to February 2014 with the objective of enrolling all eligible beneficiaries in the local bodies. At the end of the three month campaign all GPs were declared as ‘Sampoorna Pension’ GPs.

1.4 Financial outlay

The financial outlay allocated by the State Government to GPs/Municipalities from 2010-11 to 2014-15 for implementing the schemes is given below in **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.2: Funds allocated for various pension schemes

(₹ in crore)

Pension Scheme	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
IGNOAPS	98.72	107.38	237.33	147.74	549.55
IGNWPS	253.61	290.58	544.28	663.51	848.40
IGNDPS	101.20	114.89	197.26	255.78	295.71
ALP	205.94	273.23	263.20	246.10	292.59
PUW	21.31	23.33	38.96	47.51	56.80
Total	680.78	809.41	1281.03	1360.64	2043.05

The annual allocation increased three fold during the five year period 2010-11 to 2014-15 primarily due to increase in the number of beneficiaries and the quantum of assistance over the period.