Pension for widows

3064. DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government proposes to reduce age limit from 40 years to 18 years under the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, in view of girls being married at the age of 18 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, along with the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether Government proposes to start providing pension to abandoned women;

(d) if so, the details thereof, along with the steps taken in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA) : (a) to (e) On the direction of the Union Cabinet, a Task Force was constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mihir Shah, Member, Planning Commission to prepare a proposal for a Comprehensive National Social Assistance Programme. The Task Force considered various issues, demands and suggestions relating to pension schemes under NSAP, received from various quarters including those on lowering the widow pension age to eighteen years and expanding the widow pension to single and divorced women. The Task Force has submitted its report to this Ministry.

Assessment of implementation of MGNREGA

3065. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in many states Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has not been implemented properly;

(b) whether the assessment of implementation of the scheme by Governmental agencies lacks accuracy; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, whether the Ministry would use the services of credible non-governmental agencies to obtain facts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN) : (a) The provisions in Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are effected through schemes formulated by States under Section 4(1) of the Act. The schemes made by the States are required to provide for the minimum features specified in Schedules I & II of the Act for which guidelines are issued by the Central Government. The Ministry receives a large number of complaints about implementation of MGNREGA in the country. The complaints mainly relate to cases of job cards not provided, misappropriation of funds, engagement of contractors, forgery of muster roll, manipulation in job cards, under-payment of wages, corruption and other irregularities, use of machinery, delay in payments etc.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Rural Development organizes concurrent evaluation/ assessment of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on periodic basis through Performance Review Committee (PRC) meetings, Regional Review Meetings and also during Labour Budget Meetings. The last PRC meeting was held in the month of January, 2013. The Regional Review Meetings and Labour Budget Meetings were held with states/UTs in the month of February and March, 2013. The Ministry of Rural Development has also engaged institutions like Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), National Sample Survey organization (NSSO) and other professional institutions to conduct studies and surveys on the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

NGOs involved in rural development schemes in Tamil Nadu

3066. SHRI A.A. JINNAH : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are involved in rural development schemes in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, whether NGOs have been handed over the works related to the scheme of the Ministry;

(c) if so, the details of works undertaken by those NGOs during the last three years and the current year, year-wise and NGO-wise; and

(d) the details of money allocated to them during the said period, year-wise and NGO-wise and the manner in which the same has been utilized?