

Minutes of Eighth meeting of National Council for Older Persons held recently at New Delhi

The eighth meeting of the National Council for Older Persons (NCOP), the highest body of senior citizens to monitor implementation of National Policy and programmes/policies of Government for welfare of senior citizens as well as to advise Govt. on various issues pertaining to senior citizens, was held here today under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Shri Mukul Wasnik.

The Council comprise of 50 members which include senior citizens of eminence in the country, concerned Ministries/Departments of Central Government and representatives of 5 States/UTs.

Some of the important agenda items discussed in the meeting are:

- (i) Draft National Policy on Senior Citizens, 2011 of Smt (Dr) V. Mohini Giri's Committee
- (ii) Review of Progress of Implementation of The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 in various States/UTs
- (iii) National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE) of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- (iv) Other emerging issues relating to senior citizens.

Council members while broadly supporting the draft National Policy on Senior Citizens, 2011 has however, emphasised the need for effective implementation mechanism of the policy and also desired that the new Policy be finalised at the earliest. Members also felt the need for massive awareness generation about the various provisions of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 at the State and grassroots level.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment and Chairman of the NCOP in his concluding remarks assured that the views/suggestions submitted by the members on draft National Policy on Senior Citizens, 2011 would be incorporated in the final Policy as far as possible. The Minister also agreed to the suggestion for a time bound action plan for finalisation of the new National Policy on Senior Citizens. He further emphasised that massive awareness generation programme needs to be undertaken among the general public and the officials concerned with the implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. Shri Wasnik also expressed the need for further expansion of the programmes conducted by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) in order to cater the increasing demand for caregivers. He also informed that a new scheme of National Awards for eminent senior citizens and institutions working in the field of ageing would be formulated shortly.