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PART I—Orders and Notifications by the Governor of West Bengal, the High Court, Government Treasury, etc.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

**Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources & Fishing Harbours,
I.T. Building, 31, GN Block, 7th & 8th Floor,
Sector-V, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700 091**

No. 870–FI-99/38/2023

Date : 29th March, 2023

NOTIFICATION

In Annual Financial Statement, 2023, Government of West Bengal has announced a new scheme named ‘Matsyajeebi Bandhu (Death Benefit) Scheme’, which will come to force from 1st April 2023 for providing one-time financial assistant of Rs. 2 lakh to dependant family members of fishermen due to untimely demise, for any reason whatsoever, of a registered fisherman of the age group 18-60 years.

Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours, has been declared as nodal department for the scheme.

Now, Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours, Government of West Bengal hereby notifies the ‘Operational Guidelines’ for implementation of the scheme ‘Matsyajeebi Bandhu (Death Benefit) Scheme 2023’.

‘Matsyajeebi Bandhu (Death Benefit) Scheme 2023’

I. SHORT TITLE :

This Scheme shall be called as ‘Matsyajeebi Bandhu (Death Benefit) Scheme, 2023’.

II. DEFINITION :

In this notification, unless the context otherwise requires,

- a. “Department” means Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours, Government of West Bengal
- b. “Application” means an application for availing death benefit under the scheme on the death of a fisherman registered with Govt. of West Bengal.

- c. "District Officer" means the Assistant Director of Fisheries of concerned district.
- d. "Form" means such form as may be prescribed, by the Government or any appropriate authority on its behalf.
- e. "Government" means the Government of West Bengal in the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours.
- f. "Benefit" means death benefit under the scheme due to death of a registered fisherman.
- g. "fisherman" means a person who is working in the capacity of Fish farmer/ Fish Catcher/ Hatchery owner/ Worker in hatchery/ Crab catcher or are engaged in crab fattening/ fish farms /Fish vendor (whole seller/retailer)/ Khuti worker.
- h. "Registered fisherman" means a fisherman who has registered himself/herself in the fishermen registration portal of Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours, Government of West Bengal.
- i. Nominee: A nominee is somebody who will receive the assured amount upon the death of the registered fishermen. A nominee may be declared as such by the fisherman/woman during Registration. In case, no such declaration has been made by the fisherman/woman during registration, a nominee will be the legal heir of the fisherman/woman i.e. any person, male or female, who is entitled to succeed to the property of a deceased person under a will or as per the succession laws and shall include:
 - i. Spouse of the deceased
 - ii. Son /daughter of the deceased
 - iii. In case of unmarried fisherman, his / her parents. In case of minor legal heir, the claim will be payable to custodian (declared by any court of law) In case there be more than one legal heir, the assured sum shall be divided in equal measure among all heirs.

III. CONDITIONS FOR AVAILING OF BENEFIT:

- (1) A person/s shall be entitled to get the benefit if following conditions are fulfilled, namely: –
 - a. The deceased fisherman was of age between 18 (eighteen) to 60 (sixty) years on the date of death.
 - b. The fisherman has expired on or after 1st April 2023.
 - c. The fisherman was registered as fishermen in the fisherman registration portal of Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours, Government of West Bengal before his/her death.
 - d. Registered nominee of deceased registered fishermen will be eligible to apply.
 - e. In case of death of registered nominee or if nominee was not opted at the time of registration, any eligible claimant will be eligible to apply.
 - f. If the registered nominee/ claimant (s) is/are involved in any criminal trial in competent court of law due to homicide of registered fisherman, he /she will not be eligible for apply.
- (2) The claimant (s) will be eligible for only one death benefit extended by the State Government. The claimant (s) will be at liberty to avail the benefit under this scheme or any other death benefit scheme of State Government in operation (viz., snake bite or lightning death etc.) as may be beneficial to him/her. He/she will have to attach a self-declaration certificate to this effect as per annexure - II.
- (3) Date of birth as recorded in Birth registration certificate/voter card (EPIC) / Driving License/ Passport/ Aadhaar card/ PAN Card or any other Government approved photo identity proof having DOB will be considered for calculation of age of the deceased.
- (4) The application should be submitted within three months of death of the fisherman.

IV. AMOUNT OF BENEFIT:

The amount admissible as one-time death benefit shall be Rupees Two Lakh only per deceased fisherman.

V. SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:

- i. Eligibility Date: Death of fisherman on or after 1st April 2023.
- ii. Applications for the benefit under this scheme should be in Form-1, to be made online through portal, available in the website of Fisheries Department. Requisite documents and photographs are to be uploaded in portal along with the application form.

OR

- iii. Nominee (for registered Fisherman) or eligible claimant (s) should submit the application in prescribed format. Typed/ downloaded/ neatly hand written strictly as per format, with all requisite enclosures, within three months from the date of death of the fisherman, to the Assistant Director of Fisheries of concerned District.

VI. PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED ON RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:

- i. After receipt of the applications, complete in all respect, the Assistant Director of Fisheries of the concerned District, himself or through his authorized officer not below the rank of Fishery Extension Officer (FEO) will cause an enquiry including on spot physical verification to ascertain genuinity of the claim & claimants. The enquiry must be completed within seven working days of receipt of the application.
- ii. After enquiry, Fishery Extension Officer (FEO) will send the application to the Assistant Director of Fisheries of District for sanction.
- iii. Assistant Director of Fisheries (ADF), in turn, will sanction the benefit and issue sanction order.
- iv. In case of submission of application beyond three months of death of fisherman, the application will be sanctioned by Zonal Deputy Director of Fisheries (DDF), instead of ADF concerned.
- v. Assistant Director of Fisheries (ADF) of the concerned district will function as drawing and disbursing officer.

VII. SANCTION OF THE BENEFIT:

- i. The Assistant Director of Fisheries shall issue orders, sanctioning the benefit, on the basis of the recommended applications received from the Fishery Extension Officer.
- ii. Assistant Director of Fisheries of District will act as the Drawing and Disbursing Officer of the fund so allotted.
- iii. The sanctioned list shall be placed on the official website of the District.
- iv. The entire process of sanction of the benefit must be completed within Thirty (30) working days from receipt of completed application by the Assistant Director of Fisheries of concerned District.
- v. After disbursement, the claimant(s) should be intimated regarding date of DBT and amount sanctioned against each claimant.

VIII. FUND MANAGEMENT AND DISBURSEMENT:

- i. The fund for 'Death Benefit Component' under the scheme will be released by the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, Aquatic Resources and Fishing Harbours to the Director of Fisheries who will in turn release the fund to the Assistant Director of Fisheries of Districts.
- ii. The Assistant Director of Fisheries of District and DDO will arrange to raise the bill in proper form with concerned treasury and disburse the benefit through online fund transfer.
- iii. The benefit will be payable to the nominee (of the registered fisherman) or to any eligible claimant (in case of death of registered nominee or if nominee was not opted at the time of registration) on receipt of satisfactory enquiry report of FEO.

IX. MAINTENANCE OF REGISTER AND SUBMISSION OF REPORT:

- i. The Assistant Director of Fisheries (ADF) shall maintain a complete Block wise record of payment of the benefit in an appropriate register in the prescribed format detailed in para IX(ii).
 - ii. The register shall contain the name, address and age of the, deceased fisherman, date of death, number and date of order sanctioning the benefit, details of payees, relations thereof with the deceased, amount of benefit sanctioned to each of such beneficiary, name of the Treasury or Sub-Treasury wherefrom the benefit is paid, cheque details and such other particulars as may be considered necessary.
 - iii. The Assistant Director of Fisheries (ADF) shall submit a report on status of benefit disbursal and fund utilization under the scheme, as per format to be prescribed time to time to the Director of Fisheries on half-yearly basis within 5th of April and 5th of October of each year as on the half year ending on March and September and /or as and when required by appropriate authority.
- (X)** The Director of Fisheries will arrange for wide publicity of the scheme among the fisherman through print and electronic media.
- (XI)** The Director of Fisheries will arrange for uploading of the advertisement along with the prescribed application format and annexures in the portal of the department in a format that can be downloaded.
- (XII)** The Director of Fisheries Government of West Bengal may frame any guidelines and prescribe any form for smooth operation of the scheme.
- (XIII)** This Notification is issued with concurrence of Finance department vide U.O. No. Group A-I/2022-2023/0140 dated 26.03.2023.

By order of the Governor,

AVANINDRA SINGH, IAS
Secretary to the Govt. of West Bengal.