

Date: 22 July 2026

Andhra Pradesh Pension Rolls Fall by Nearly 3 Lakh in Two Years

LibTech India brief finds closed enrolment, weak safeguards against cancellations and serious coverage gaps in remote Adivasi areas

ANDHRA PRADESH — A new public brief released by LibTech India finds that Andhra Pradesh's social-security pension rolls have declined substantially over the past two years.

Key findings

- **Pension rolls fell by 2,98,689:** The number of pensions sanctioned declined from 65,18,496 in July 2024 to 62,19,807 in July 2026, a fall of 4.6%.
- **Regular enrolment remains closed:** No fresh pensions under the regular categories have been sanctioned since January 2024, beginning under the previous government and continuing during the present government's tenure.
- **Most additions did not expand coverage:** The main additions were spouse pensions transferred to widows of deceased pensioners. These generally continued an existing household entitlement rather than bringing new households into the pension system.
- **Announced widow pensions have not materialised:** In April 2026, SERP estimated that about 1.53 lakh widows qualified for inclusion, and the government announced that pensions would begin from June 2026. However, these pensions had not been added even by July 2026.
- **Entitlement holders lack an accessible appeal mechanism:** There appears to be no transparent, pension-specific process through which people can locally challenge cancellations and receive a written, reasoned decision.
- **Disability pensioners face additional barriers:** The 2025 disability re-verification exercise raised concerns about transparency, communication of disability assessments, access to appeals and the difficulties faced by people who must travel from remote areas to assessment centres.

Serious gaps in Adivasi areas

- **Alluri Sitharama Raju district**, the state's most heavily Adivasi district, has a pension-to-ration-card ratio of 39.64%.
- ASR ranks sixth-lowest among 27 comparable district units, despite Scheduled Tribe residents becoming eligible for old-age pensions at 50, ten years earlier than the general eligibility age.
- **Parvathipuram Manyam** has the highest district-level ratio, at 48.45%, but this average hides major internal inequalities.
- High-Adivasi mandals such as Seethampeta, Gummalakshampuram and Kurupam do not have correspondingly higher pension reach.
- **Seethanagaram**, which does not contain notified Scheduled Area villages, records a much higher ratio of 60.8%.

What the brief recommends

The Andhra Pradesh government should:

- Reopen applications under regular pension categories.

- Conduct proactive, door-to-door identification and enrolment in remote habitations.
- Establish and publicly monitor coverage benchmarks for Scheduled Areas.
- Ensure that no pension is cancelled without prior notice and an opportunity to respond.
- Create an accessible local grievance and appeal mechanism.
- Restore wrongfully cancelled pensions and arrears within a fixed time frame.
- Publish monthly mandal-level pension data, disaggregated by category and Scheduled Tribe status for social audits.

The brief acknowledges Andhra Pradesh’s substantial financial commitment to pensions, including the **₹27,719 crore allocation** to the NTR Bharosa pension scheme in the 2026–27 state budget. However, high spending has coexisted with a shrinking beneficiary base, closed regular enrollment and unequal coverage across regions.

The report

A Shrinking Safety Net

Andhra Pradesh’s pension rolls have fallen by nearly 3 lakh in two years — while serious coverage gaps persist in the remote Adivasi interior.

Media contact

Karthik Reddy Panditi, LibTech India

+91 79896 93192 • karthik@libtech.in

Chakradhar Buddha, LibTech India

+91 92465 22344 • chakradhar@libtech.in

ABOUT LIBTECH INDIA

LibTech India is a multidisciplinary team of engineers, social workers and social scientists working to improve public-service delivery in India. Inspired by the Right to Information movement, we use data, field research and digital tools to examine the implementation of public programmes, promote transparency and support people-centred policy design. We work closely with citizens, civil-society organisations and governments to make public information more accessible and strengthen accountability.

###