

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2147  
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2003  
ERADICATION OF POVERTY  
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**Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether it is a fact that poverty eradication is a major objective of Tenth Five Year Plan;
- (b) if so, whether the Union Government and the State Governments have their own set of figures and there is no plan to resolve the differences in this regard;
- (c) if so, the facts thereof;
- (d) whether as per the latest estimates of the NSSO's 55th round survey for 1999-2000, the number of people living below the poverty line is 260 million;
- (e) if so, the reasons for differences in figures between the Union Government and State Governments; and
- (f) the steps being taken to eradicate poverty during the Tenth Five Year Plan?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION ( SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA )

- (a): Poverty reduction is a major objective of the Tenth Five year plan.
- (b)to(f): Planning Commission have reported that the number of BPL families estimated by them and BPL families identified by the State Governments are not comparable. The Planning Commission estimates poverty for the years for which NSS data on household consumer expenditure from the large surveys is available and the latest such data is available for the year 1999-2000 (55th Round). In the Rural areas, the State Governments work out the figures of BPL families through a census at the beginning of the Five-Year Plans. Latest BPL figures made by the State Governments are available for the year 1997. In Urban areas, beneficiaries below the poverty line under the UPA programme called Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana are identified through house to house surveys made by the State Governments. The number of persons living below poverty line estimated from the 55th Round data of NSSO is 260 million in 1999-2000. The differences between the two figures arise for the following reasons:

(i) Planning Commission estimates poverty on the basis of poverty lines which are defined in terms of per person expenditure whereas State Governments' estimation for 1997 is made on a household basis in which the total expenditure of the household is taken along with other criteria.

(ii) Planning Commission estimates are based on the data collected by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) on household consumption expenditure, whereas the State Governments' figures are on the basis of separate BPL surveys.

(iii) The methodologies used in the two estimates are different.

There is a three-pronged action to alleviate poverty in the country.

These are:

- (a) acceleration of economic growth,
- (b) human and social development through literacy, education, health, nutrition, meeting of the minimum needs, elevation of social and economic status of the weaker sections of the society, etc., and
- (c) direct attack on poverty through employment and income generating programmes and assets-building for the poor.