

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5258

ANSWERED ON:28.04.2010

CALORIES CONSUMPTION AS BASE TO ASSESS POVERTY

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Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the consumption in calories is considered as a base to assess the poverty line in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether different institutes have mentioned different amount of calorie consumption for hardworking people;
- (d) if so, the criteria in this regard, institute-wise;
- (e) the criteria accepted by the Government and the ground on which the acceptance are made thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) to (e): The Task Force on 'Projections of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand' constituted by the Planning Commission in 1977, submitted its report in 1979. The Task Force worked out 2435 kcal requirement for the average individual in rural areas and 2095 kcal for average individual in urban areas. The Poverty line was defined as per capita consumption level of Rs. 49.09 per month in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 per capita per month in urban areas at 1973-74 prices at national level which correspond to a basket of goods and services anchored on a norm of per capita daily calorie requirement rounded off to 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas. The poverty line so defined includes consumption expenditure on food and non food items. Subsequently the Expert Group on 'Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor' (Lakdawala Committee) submitted its report in 1993 and retained the definition of poverty suggested by Task Force. Since 1997, Planning Commission has been estimating the poverty based on the methodology recommended by the Expert Group and the poverty lines for subsequent years are updated using Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Laborers (CPI-AL) for rural areas and Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) for urban areas.

Earlier, Dandekar and Rath of Indian School of Political Economy, Pune (1971) used average calorie norm of 2250 calories per capita per day for both rural and urban areas, as criterion to define the poverty line. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Expert Group (1990) has concluded that the poverty line should be at a weighted average standard for the whole population at 2200 kals per capita per day. FAO's publication titled 'The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008' estimates the dietary energy supply (DES) to be 2360 kcal per capita per day for India.