

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1356
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2010
IDENTIFICATION OF BPL
Singh Kunwar Rewati Raman;Singh Shri Bhupendra

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the reports of various committees and Human Development reports on the basis of Multidimensional Poverty Index released by Oxford Poverty and Human Development initiative and United Nation Development Programme have indicated that poverty is rampant in many States and the number of Below Poverty Line is far in excess of the official estimates;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to increase the number of Below Poverty Line families and make allocations on the basis of the increased number; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (d): As per information available in the public domain (<http://www.ophi.org.uk>), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s 2010 Human Development Report provides a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), an international measure of poverty in 104 developing countries. MPI shows the number of people who are multidimensionally poor and the deprivations that they face on the household level. The MPI report, inter-alia, provides MPI Rank and the number of MPI Poor in 28 States of India.

Planning Commission is the nodal agency of the Government of India for estimating poverty at National and State Level.

For allocation of foodgrains (wheat and rice) to States and Union Territories (UTs) under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Department of Food & Public Distribution uses the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and the population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or the number of such families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by the State/UT Governments, whichever is less. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. However, the State/UT Governments have reported (upto 30.9.2010) issue of 11.04 crore ration cards for BPL families, including 2.43 crore AAY families. The higher number of BPL ration cards issued by them is due to improper targeting of the poor households and have inclusion as well as exclusion errors.

Planning Commission constituted an Expert Group to review the methodology of estimation of poverty under the chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D Tendulkar. The Expert Group submitted its report in December, 2009. As per Planning Commission, the Expert Group has, inter-alia, estimated all-India rural poverty headcount ratio for 2004-05 at 41.8%, urban poverty headcount ratio at 25.7% and All India level at 37.2%.

Requests have been received from some State/UT Governments for increasing the accepted number of BPL families under TPDS. However, as Government of India has been adopting uniform criteria across all States/UTs, the requests from these States/UTs for increasing the accepted number of BPL families could not be agreed to. However, in September, 2010, Government has allocated to State/UT Governments an additional quantity of 25 lakh tonnes of wheat/rice on adhoc basis at BPL prices for the next six months.