

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1896
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2010
SAXENA COMMITTEE
Singh Shri Bhupendra

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the objective for constituting N.C. Saxena Committee together with its terms of reference;
- (b) whether the Saxena Committee has since presented their report;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether according to the report of Arjun Sengupta Committee 77 percent of the population of the country is reportedly living below poverty line;
- (e) if so, the facts thereof; and
- (f) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT(SHRI PRADEEP JAIN 'ADITYA')

(a) to (c): The Ministry of Rural Development, on 12th August, 2008, constituted an Expert Group, which could advise the Ministry on the methodology for conducting the BPL Census for identification of rural households. The Expert Group under the chairmanship of Dr. N.C. Saxena submitted its report on 21st August 2009. The Terms of References of the Expert Group are:-

- (i) To recommend more suitable methodology to conduct the next BPL Census with simple, transparent and objectively measurable indicators for identification of BPL for providing assistance under the programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- (ii) To recommend institutional system for conducting survey, processing of data validation and approval of BPL List at various levels.
- (iii) To recommend institutional mechanism to address grievances of public on exclusion/inclusion in the BPL List
- (iv) To briefly look at the relationship between estimation and identification of poor and the issue of putting a limit on the total number of BPL families to be identified.
- (v) Any other recommendation to make the exercise of BPL Census simple and acceptable.

The recommendations of the Expert Group include automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, automatic inclusion in the BPL list and grading of remaining households. For automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, the Expert Group recommended indicators such as ownership of land, ownership of motorized vehicles, ownership of mechanized farm equipment, regular employment and Income tax payers. The Expert Group recommended automatic inclusion of rural households from certain groups in the BPL list such as designated 'Primitive Tribal Groups', designated 'Maha Dalit Groups', single women headed households, households with disabled person as bread-earner, households headed by a minor, households dependent on alms for survival, homeless households and households with bonded labourers. The Expert Group recommended that remaining households may be ranked on a scale of ten based on caste, community, religion, occupation, educational status and age of head of Household.

(d) to (f): The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) under the chairmanship Dr. Arjun Sengupta was constituted by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to examine the problems confronting enterprises in the Unorganized Sector and make appropriate recommendation to provide technical, marketing and credit support to the enterprises. According to the report on 'Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganized Sector' submitted by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) at the end of 2004-05, about 836 million or 77 percent of the population were living below Rs. 20 per day.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional issue and various experts/committees and institutions estimate poverty based on different perceptions/definitions. However, Planning Commission is the nodal agency in the Government of India to estimate poverty in the country. The latest poverty estimates released by the Planning Commission for 2004-05, based on 61st Round of NSS consumer expenditure data as recommended by the Expert Group under the chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar, percent of the population living below the poverty line in the country was 37.2% in 2004-05.

