

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2121

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2011

BPL POPULATION

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Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) the Below Poverty Line (BPL) population of the country as on date;
- (b) whether the Government has conducted any survey recently regarding the people/families living below poverty line in the country;
- (c) if so, the average monthly/annual income of the said people/families; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure overall improvement in the living standard of BPL population?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES(DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a): The Planning Commission is the nodal institution for estimation of the number of poor in the country. The Tendulkar Committee appointed by the Planning Commission in 2005, reviewed the methodology for estimation of poverty and submitted its report in 2009. The report has placed the poverty head count ratio for 2004-05 at 37.2 per cent of which the rural poverty ratio is 41.8 per cent and urban poverty ratio is 25.7 per cent. As per Tendulkar Committee estimates, the Statewise number of people below poverty line is given in Annexure-I. The poverty head count ratio for rural and urban areas is given in Annexure-II.

(b): The Ministry of Rural Development provides financial and technical support to the States/UTs for conducting the BPL Census to identify the households living below the poverty line in the rural areas who could be targeted for getting the benefits under its programmes. The last BPL Census was conducted in 2002.

The BPL Census is conducted by the respective States/UTs and the BPL lists are prepared and maintained by the respective State Governments/UT administrations. The existing criteria/methodology for identification of BPL households i.e. criteria/methodology for BPL Census 2002 was adopted on the recommendation of an Expert Group. The methodology is based on Score Based Ranking (SBR) of each household on socio-economic indicators taken as proxy indicators of poverty. In this method, 13 socio-economic parameters reflecting the levels of living and quality of life of the rural population were used to identify the poor households in rural areas. At present there is no uniform criteria for identification of persons below poverty line in urban areas.

Recently the Ministry of Rural Development has conducted a Pilot survey to field test methodology suggested by the Expert Group under the chairmanship of Dr. N. C. Saxena and alternative options and to arrive on methodology for conducting forthcoming BPL Census. The Pilot survey has been conducted in two stages.

- (i) Stage I: Household Survey has been conducted through Questionnaire Method in 254 villages across the rural areas of the country.
- (ii) Stage II: Participatory Socio-Economic Study (PSES) has been conducted based on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique. PSES has been conducted in the same 254 villages where household survey has been conducted. The results of the PRA are expected to be used for corroborating the findings of the survey.

(c): Information about income of all the households is not collected in the Pilot survey sponsored by Ministry of Rural Development. Therefore, information about average monthly/annual income of households covered in Pilot survey is not available.

(d): Government of India is implementing various schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDM), Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Swarn Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) to alleviate poverty.