

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
PLANNING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1661  
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2011  
SAXENA COMMITTEE PROPOSALS  
Biswal Shri Hemanand

**Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:**

- (a) the current status of poverty across the country in absolute numbers;
- (b) whether N.C. Saxena Committee had proposed a new poverty estimate in recent years;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to implement the recommendations of the report;
- (e) if not, whether the Government proposes to revise the BPL lists in the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a): As estimated by the Tendulkar Committee, 37.2% of the people at all India level were below the poverty line during 2004-05. Taking into account population projection of the Registrar General of India for the year 2004-05, the number of persons below poverty line is estimated as 40.74 crore.

(b) & (c): The Ministry of Rural Development constituted Saxena Committee to recommend a suitable methodology for identification of BPL families in rural areas. While prescribing the methodology for ranking households, the Saxena Committee suggested that the rural poverty ratio be assumed as 50% at the national level as reproduced below:

"The Committee would therefore strongly recommend that the percentage of people entitled to BPL status should be drastically revised upwards to at least 50%, though the calorie norm of 2400 would demand this figure to be about 80%. The figure of 50% in rural areas would correspond to a calories intake of about 2100 k cal which would imply that whatever calories were considered minimum for a healthy living in urban areas in 1973-74 would now be needed for healthy living in rural areas in view of general reduction in hard manual work (though it can still be argued that such reduction has been only marginal for the rural poor, and that too confined to prosperous regions). Our recommendation of 50% is based on a calorie consumption norm of 2100 for rural areas, as well as on a minimum cereal consumption of 12.25 kg per month, which is still less than what the top two quintiles consume despite their sedentary life style and better access to non-cereal food."

It may be pointed out that corresponding to the poverty line of Tendulkar Committee, the monthly per capita consumption of cereals in rural areas comes to 12.22 Kg as per NSSO survey for 2004-05.

(d) to (f): Based on the Saxena Committee Report pilot studies were carried out and the new methodology for identification of BPL households in rural areas has been finalised. Accordingly, a Socio-Economic Census 2011 is being carried out for identification of BPL families in rural areas by respective State Governments and UT Administrations with the financial and technical support of the Ministry of Rural Development.