

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
PLANNING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4468  
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2011  
CRITERIA FOR BPL  
Mandlik Shri Sadashivrao Dadoba

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

- (a) whether there is a proposal to enhance the limit of Rs.1500/- per annum for declaring the family Below Poverty Line;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the criteria fixed for declaring the family below poverty line; and
- (d) the number of families previously declared below poverty line in the country and in the State of Maharashtra?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (d): The poverty line is presently defined in terms of Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) as the criterion. The Planning Commission as the nodal agency for estimation of poverty at the national and state level reviews the methodology for estimation of poverty from time to time. Accordingly, the Planning Commission constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar in December, 2005 which submitted its report in December, 2009. The Planning Commission had accepted the poverty ratios and the poverty lines computed by this Committee for the year 2004-05. As per Tendulkar Committee Report, the national Poverty line at 2004-05 prices is monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs.446.68 in the rural areas and Rs.578.80 in urban areas. These poverty lines vary from state to state because of price differentials.

The Planning Commission estimates poverty lines and poverty ratios for the years for which Large Sample Surveys on Household Consumer Expenditure have been conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). These surveys are conducted quinquennially. After 2004-05, this survey has been conducted in 2009-10, the results of which are being processed. The methodology for measuring poverty in future will be reviewed on the basis of 2009-10 NSSO survey and by taking a holistic view on all relevant indicia of poverty, as identified by experts.

No criteria has been fixed by the Planning Commission for declaring 'family' as unit, below poverty line. As per Tendulkar Committee, the percentage of persons below poverty line is estimated as 37.2% at all India level and 38.1% in Maharashtra 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 in the country and 3.93 crore in Maharashtra. Assuming an average family size of five persons this amounts to about 8.1 crore families in the country and about 0.79 crore families in Maharashtra being below poverty line in 2004-05.