

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:612

ANSWERED ON:08.07.2009

POVERTY LIST

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Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the poverty estimate of the Planning Commission for each State has always been at variance with the State list of beneficiaries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Union Government proposes to conduct a new survey to revise poverty list;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the norms/criteria followed by the Union Government for allocation of subsidized foodgrains and the basis on which the foodgrains are distributed by the States to the beneficiaries; and
- (f) the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS(SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) & (b): The Planning Commission estimates the number and proportion of persons living below the poverty line (BPL) for states as well as for the country as a whole by using a poverty line that is based on per capita consumption expenditure. The estimates do not identify the beneficiaries for any specific programmes and/or schemes. However, the Ministry of Rural Development conducts the BPL Census through the State Governments and UTs to identify the rural households living Below the Poverty Line who could be assisted under its various programmes. These two estimates are, therefore, not comparable.

(c) & (d): The BPL Census to identify the rural households living Below the Poverty Line is generally conducted at the beginning of a Five Year Plan. The last BPL Census was conducted in 2002 based on the methodology of Score Based Ranking of rural households based on 13 socio-economic parameters. For conducting the next BPL Census, an Expert Group has been constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development in August, 2008 to suggest suitable methodology. The Terms of Reference of the Expert Group is as under:-

(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 of 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.

(e) & (f): The norms/criteria followed by the Union Government for allocation of subsidized foodgrains and the basis on which the foodgrains are distributed by the States to the beneficiaries are revised from time to time. The norms/criteria being followed presently are given in Annexure-I.

Annexure-I

Norms for making allocation of foodgrains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)

BPL/AAY category: Allocation of foodgrains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is made for the BPL, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families on the basis of 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission projected on the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000 or the number of families actually identified and ration cards issued by the state governments, whichever is less. Accordingly, allocations of foodgrains for AAY and BPL categories are made @ 35 kg per family per month to all accepted number of 6.52 crore families in the country. Additionally, 7.42 lakh families in KBK districts of Orissa are also allocated at the same scale.

APL category: Allocations for APL category are made depending upon the availability of stock of foodgrains in the Central Pool. In view of the constraints on availability of rice in the Central Pool due to lower procurement of rice during Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2006-07 and KMS 2007-08 than overall demands from States/UTs, allocations for APL category to States/UTs were rationalized during last three years based on earlier off take levels. However, subsequently, in view of higher availability of food grains in the Central Pool, additional allocations were made for 2008-09. Presently, these allocations range between 10kg and 35 kg per family per month in different States/UTs.

Distribution of foodgrains allocated by Central Government to States and UTs under TPDS is done by the State/UT governments. While they are distributed @35 kg per family per month for AAY category in all States & UTs, those to BPL families are distributed at varying scale by State and UT governments., which have issued BPL ration cards in excess of the number accepted by Government of India. In others, they are distributed @ 35 kg per BPL family per month. The scale of distribution to APL families is different in States and UTs depending upon the allocations received and APL ration cards issued.