

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
PLANNING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3244

ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012

CALORIES INTAKE

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

- (a) whether two-third of the population in the country are eating less than what is needed as revealed in a recent report of the NSSO as reported in the media;
- (b) if so, whether the Planning Commission has adopted 2,400 Kcal (rural) and 2100 Kcal (urban) as the minimum daily requirement norm;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether about 90% of the poorest tenth of population in both urban and rural areas consume food that gives them less than just 2160 Kcal;
- (e) if so, whether this may raise a question about reported decline in poverty as claimed by the Planning Commission; and
- (f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

**Answer**

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

(a): An article published in Times of India on 1st April 2012 entitled "Poverty 'down', but not the hungry" mentions that two-third of the country's population is eating less than what is required.

(b) & (c): The 'Task Force on Projections of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand' (1979) defined the poverty line as per capita per month consumption expenditure level which corresponded to a basket of goods and services yielding per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas. It used the age-sex-activity specific calorie allowances recommended by the Nutrition Expert Group (1968) to estimate the average daily per capita requirement for rural and urban areas using the age-sex-occupational structure of their respective population.

The methodology for estimation of poverty followed by the Planning Commission has been based on the recommendations made by the experts in the field from time to time. An Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar recommended monthly per capita consumption expenditure (MPCE) of Rs. 447 for rural areas and Rs 579 for urban areas as the poverty line at 2004-05 prices, which was accepted by the Planning commission. The Tendulkar Committee, which submitted its Report in 2009, has incorporated adequacy of expenditure from the normative and nutritional viewpoint.

(d) to (f): As per NSSO Report No. 540 on 'Nutritional Intake in India' which is based on survey data of 66th round conducted by NSSO during 2009-10, the poorest tenth of the population in both urban and rural areas consume food that gives them less than 2160 Kcal.

The reduction in calorie intake may be on account of change in consumption pattern and change in life style. Tendulkar Committee moved away from calorie based anchoring of poverty line. While moving away from the calorie norms, the poverty lines have been validated by checking the adequacy of actual private expenditure per capita near the poverty lines on food, education and health by comparing them with normative expenditures consistent with nutritional, educational and health outcomes.