

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3314
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012
HUNGER AND POVERTY
Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of recent study at Oxford University, which reveals that there are more poor in the eight poorest States of India than in the 26 poorest nations of Africa;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government will be able to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, as per its millennium development goal; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. The Human Development Report (HDR) 2010, 20th Anniversary Edition entitled "The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development" has introduced a new measure developed by Oxford University to capture what is described as multidimensional aspect of poverty called Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). It is mentioned in HDR-2010 that eight Indian states, with poverty as acute as the 26 poorest African countries, are home to 421 million multidimensionally poor people, more than the 410 million people living in those African countries combined.

Planning Commission has estimated poverty on the basis of yardsticks recommended by various expert committees in the past including Tendulkar Committee which submitted its report on poverty estimates in 2009. Government has since decided to set up a Technical Group to revisit the methodology for estimation of poverty and identification of poor taking into account multiple dimensions and indicators of poverty so that the poor and deprived households can obtain the benefit of different government programmes and schemes. The composition of the Technical Group and its terms of reference are being finalized.

(c) & (d): The millennium development goal relating to poverty is to "Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the Percentage of Population below the National Poverty Line". This implies reduction of poverty ratio from about 47.5 percent in 1990 to about 23.75 percent by 2015. In 2009-10, the poverty has come down to 29.8%. With continued growth in GDP and a more rapid growth in agriculture, the poverty Head Count Ratio is expected to be close to the MDG target by 2015.