

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5192

ANSWERED ON:08.05.2012

CEILING ON BPL

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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has fixed some ceiling on the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) beneficiaries for individual States;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the State Governments have serious differences with the Union Government and have raised objections over the poverty figures and the number of BPL card-holders;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Union Government to avoid confrontation with the States over fixing the norms for identification of BPL families?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (d): Planning Commission is the nodal agency of the Government of India for estimating poverty at National and State levels. For allocation of foodgrains (wheat and rice) to States and Union Territories (UTs) under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Department of Food & Public Distribution uses the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or the number of such families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by State/UT Governments, whichever is less. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. However, as reported upto 31.3.2012, the State/UT Governments have issued 10.76 crore BPL ration cards which includes 2.43 crore AAY ration cards. A statement showing State/UT - wise number of estimated BPL families including AAY families as on 1.3.2000 based on 1993-94 poverty estimates and the BPL and AAY ration cards issued upto 31.3.2012 by States/UTs is at Annexure.

Requests have been received from some State/UT Governments for increasing the accepted number of BPL families under TPDS. However, as Government of India has been adopting uniform criteria across all States/UTs, the requests from these States/UTs for increasing the accepted number of BPL families could not be agreed to.

However, in addition to normal allocation of foodgrains (rice and wheat), Government is also making additional allocation of foodgrains from time to time depending upon the availability of stocks and requests received from States/UTs.

(e) : Ministry of Rural Development provides financial and technical support to States/UTs for conducting the BPL Census to identify the families living Below Poverty Line in rural areas who could be assisted under various programmes. Ministry of Rural Development constituted an Expert Group in August, 2008 to suggest methodology for conducting the BPL census in rural areas. The Expert Group submitted its Report in August, 2009. Government has launched the combined Rural-Urban Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC-2011) in June 2011.

Government of India will take into account multiple dimensions of deprivation based on data collected in SECC - 2011 for arriving at specific entitlements that rural households will receive under various central government programmes and schemes after the SECC - 2011 survey results are available and analyzed. Ministry of Rural Development and Planning Commission will consult with States, experts and civil society organizations to arrive at a consensus on the methodology which would seek to ensure that no poor or deprived household is excluded from coverage under different government programmes and schemes.