

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5503
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2012
MUSLIMS IDENTIFIED AS MOST POOR IN POVERTY ESTIMATES
Sudhakaran Shri K.

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether according to the latest poverty estimates released by the Planning Commission, the Muslims have been identified as the poorest among minority communities;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the estimates of the Commission are based on an estimate of Rs. 32 per capita per day as the poverty line; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): The Planning Commission estimates number and proportion of persons living below the poverty line (BPL) at national and state level using the data from Large Sample Surveys on Household Consumer Expenditure carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).

From NSSO's 66th round data of Household Consumer Expenditure Survey conducted during 2009-10, percentage of Muslim people living below all India poverty line is estimated at 36.2% in rural areas and 33.9% in urban areas as against 11.9% and 14.5% for Sikhs, 23.8% and 12.9% for Christians and 33.8% and 20.9% for all population in rural and urban areas respectively. However, the sample size for minorities other than Muslims is too small for drawing any meaningful comparison among them.

(c) & (d): The Planning Commission defines poverty line on the basis of Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) as the criterion. The Expert Group headed by Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar that submitted its report in December 2009, computed the poverty lines at all India level as MPCE of Rs. 447 for rural areas and Rs 579 for urban areas in 2004-05 carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). NSSO conducts Large Sample Surveys on Household Consumer Expenditure with an interval of approximately 5 years. After 2004-05 this survey has been conducted in 2009-10. The Planning Commission has updated the poverty lines for the year 2009-10 as per the recommendations of the Tendulkar Committee using NSS 66th round (2009-10) data of Household Consumer Expenditure Survey and released poverty estimates. According to this, poverty line at all India level is estimated as MPCE of Rs. 673 for rural areas and Rs 860 for urban areas in 2009-10.

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. 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.