

the primary objective of creation of demand driven community village infrastructure including durable assets at the village level and assets to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustained employment. Its secondary objective is generation of supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural areas. The wage employment under the programme is given to Below Poverty Lines (BPL) families.

From 1.12.1997, Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) is the main poverty alleviation programme in the urban areas. The SJSRY, which has subsumed all the earlier three urban poverty alleviation programmes, viz., Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUEP), seeks to provide gainful employment to unemployed or underemployed urban and educated up to IX standard for setting up self employment ventures or provision of wage employment. The implementation of SJSRY is relying on suitable community structures on the UBSP pattern and delivery of inputs under this programme is through the medium of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and such community structure.

It is not possible to isolate the impact of each of these factors on the income generation of the poor, and hence on the percentage of people living below the poverty line. However, as a result of the joint impact of these two factors, there has been a continuous reduction in the percentage of people living below the poverty line in Maharashtra since 1977-78 as can be seen from the table below.

Percentage of Poor in Total Population in Maharashtra

1977-78	55.88%
1983	43.44%
1987-88	40.41%
1993-94	36.86%

© As the National Sample Survey data on consumer expenditure are not available at district level, and as the Planning Commission estimates the poverty on the basis of the quinquennial consumer expenditure survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), it is not possible to assess the impact of the various schemes on the incidence of poverty at district level.

Hunger Problem

*66. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a recent study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund has revealed that despite huge increase in food production since independence, one-third of India's population is hungry;

[3 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto;
- (c) what reasons have been identified for this contradiction; and
- (d) what strategy is being evolved to save our people from the trap of hunger?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (c) The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), India commissioned a study on Population, Food Production and Nutrition in India to commemorate the World Food Day, 16th October, 1999. The study refers to the FAO Publication "World Food Programme, Country Programme Report — 1997—2002, Reducing Hunger Tackling Poverty — Food Aid Intervention in India, 1999", which inter-alia states that around 1/3rd of India's population — 320 million in 1997 — was food insecure, consuming less than 80% of the energy requirement. The UNFPA study mainly analyses likely future demand for foodgrains in the country and mentions that while demand for foodgrains is expected to increase at a high rate, rate of growth of the foodgrains production is likely to decline. The study concludes that the imbalance between demand for food and supply of food is the cause for concern.

According to the Government estimates, the per capita per day net availability of food in India has increased from 394.9 grams in 1951 to 467.4 grams in 1998.

(d) In order to increase the production and productivity of various foodgrains the Government is implementing centrally sponsored Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in Rice/Wheat/Coarse Cereals Based Cropping Systems areas, Accelerated Maize Development Programme and the Pulses Development Project. Under these programmes/schemes incentives are provided to farmers for use of high yielding varieties of seeds, application of integrated pest management, propagation of scientific water management including micro irrigation, improved farm implements. Besides field demonstrations, training of farmers including farm labourers is organised for effective transfer of technology. Government is also providing price and market support to the farmers by announcing the minimum support prices for major foodgrains crops and making arrangements for procurement through the nodal agencies. The subsidised supply of fertilisers encourages its consumption for maintaining growth of foodgrain production. Further, as per the National Agenda for governance, the Government has given fresh thrust to double food production in next ten years adopting regionally differentiated growth strategies, creation of farming infrastructure and more efficient use of resources.

The Government is also taking steps to increase overall employment through growth of economic activities in the rural areas, by providing gainful supplementary employment through poverty alleviation schemes and by implementing Targetted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS) and selling foodgrains at affordable prices to those living below the poverty line.