

کو مجبور کر دینگے۔ میں اس سلسلے میں یہ چاہتا ہوں کہ پردھان منتری جی جو اپنی کوشش جاری رکھے ہوئے ہیں اسکو جاری رکھیں اور پاکستان کے جو لوگ ہیں انکی ذمہ داری ہے انکے جو سفیر ہیں یا انکے فارن منسٹر ہیں ان سے جب بھی ہمارے لوگوں کی ملاقات ہو تو اس بات کی ضرور چرچہ کرنی چاہئے جس طرح سے ہم نے سہولتیں دی ہیں آنے کے لئے۔ آپ بھی ویزہ دینے میں سہولیت کریں۔ یہاں پاکستان کا جو دو تہا واس ہے۔ عام طور سے شکایتیں ملتی ہیں کہ لوگوں کو بہت پریشان کیا جاتا ہے ویزہ دینے میں اور لوگ بہت پریشان ہوتے ہیں اسکی طرف بھی کوشش ہونی چاہئے۔ اگر ہمارے رویہ میں بدلاؤ آیا ہے ہم بہتر تعلقات چاہتے ہیں۔ ہم آسانی چاہتے ہیں تو آپ بھی انسانی جذبہ کو سامنے رکھتے ہوئے لوگوں کی مشکلات کو سامنے رکھتے ہوئے اپنے رویہ میں تبدیلی کریں اور ویزہ دینے میں فراخ دلی کا ثبوت دیں۔

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a suggestion actually. I don't think there is any question. Whatever the Member suggested was his view. So, while negotiating, you may take this into account.

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : जो मेरे आनरेबल दोस्त ने कहा कि मैं उसके साथ पूरा इत्तेफाक रखता हूँ। लेकिन करें क्या? कई दफा मुश्किल ऐसी होती है कि सिर फोड़ने की खातिर सिर को दूढ़ते हैं, सिर मिल नहीं रहे हैं।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: now there are five more people who want to put questions. We have already taken 25 minutes for this.

Absolute Number of poor in the country

*222. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:†
DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the absolute number of poor in the country in 1951 and 1994 and the percentage of population thereof; and

(b) the steps proposed for poverty alleviation to accelerate the development of the country's human resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNAMALA DEHARESHWAR SAVANOR): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Planning Commissioner estimates incidence of poverty at national and state level on "the basis of quinquennial consumer expenditure surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). The first quinquennial survey relates to the period 1972-73, Subsequently, these surveys were conducted in the years 1977-78, 1983, 1987-88 1993-94. the

estimates of poverty for these years are as follows:

Percentage and Number of Poor

Year	% of poor			No. of poor (in million)		
	Rura	urban	Combined	Rural	urban	Combin.ed
1973-74	56.44	49.01	54.88	261.3	60.0	321.3
1977-78	53.07	45.24	51.32	264.3	64.6	328.9
1983	45.65	40.79	44.48	252.0	70.9	322.9
1987-88	39.09	38.20	38.86	231.9	75.2	307.1
1993-94	37.27	32.36	35.97	244.0	76.3	320.3

(b) The Government follows a three-pronged attack on poverty, i.e. (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human and social development through meeting the basic minimum needs, such as education, health, nutrition, elevation of social and economic status of the weaker sections of the society, etc.; and (iii) direct attack on poverty through employment and income generating programmes and asset-building for the poor. The objectives of the Ninth Five Year Plan which seek to achieve growth with equity with various dimensions of state policy on the background aims at eradication of poverty and provision of basic minimum services which are integral elements of strategy to improve the quality of life.

A number of programmes are being implemented to improve the quality of life and income of the poor. These include programmes for raising income and generating employment opportunities such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY), Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY), Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), and Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUEP).

डा०वाई०लक्ष्मी प्रसाद : मैडम, सदस्यों के प्रश्नों का उत्तर का कैसे-कैसे विचित्र समाधान मिलते हैं वह आज के मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर एक ज्वलंत उदाहरण है।

Madam, I put a straight question. My question is, 'What is the absolute number of poor in the country in 1951 and 1994' जो मुझे उत्तर मिला है वह 1973-74 के सर्वे से दिया है, मैडम। मैंने स्टेट 1951 का पूछा है कि तब इस देश में गरीब जनता की संख्या कितनी थी, तो क्या यह सरकार नहीं बता सकती है?

श्रीमती रत्नमाला देहरेश्वर सवनूर : मैडम, 1972 के पहले इस प्रकार का पावर्टी लाइन का डाटा बनाने के लिए कोई सर्वे हुआ नहीं। वह सब 1972 के बाद हुआ है।

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) There is no data available. No exercises were undertaken in 1951.

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Madam, it is very unfortunate.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When was the first survey done?

डा०वाई०लक्ष्मी प्रसाद : मैडम जनतंत्र देश में 1951 में गरीबी की संख्या कितनी है, अगर यह सरकार नहीं बता सकती है तो it is very unfortunate. In protest against this I am not putting my second supplementary.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: My hon. Member need not get excited about it. I do not know whether he was born in 1951 or not. The fact is this. I was not in office in 1951. This is one thing. The point is that some Government at that time did not choose to collect data at that point of time.

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: In 1947, Government was formed. Independent India was formed in 1947. (Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: That is not the point. The point is there was a Government. Government is continuous. The First Five Year Plan was formulated. The Government machinery has not taken the trouble of looking into the archives. I challenge it, Madam. When the First Five Year Plan was formulated, it cannot be that Planning Commission did not look into the question of poverty at that point of time.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: My hon. friend is a very knowledgeable person and I respect him for that. The presumption can be right or it can be incorrect also sometimes because he is proceeding on presumption. I am willing to have a second look into this. But my presumption is, data was not collected, but, all the same, if I am wrong, I will come back.

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Madam, then the question may be postponed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; others also want to put questions. How can we postpone?

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: No, no, I am requesting you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you want to put any more questions? If he does not want to....

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: No, no; I do not want to put any question.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister, what the definition is by which the Government proceeds to describe a person as poor. Here you have given figures from 1973 onwards to 1993-94 on the basis of consumer expenditure survey conducted. Probably, such surveys might not have taken place before that. But even then there would have been some material available with Government to indicate the number of poor people because, as is pointed out, for the planning process to commence that would have been the basic data collected. Firstly, I would like to know that data:

secondly, I would like to know the definition on the basis of which the Government is proceeding; thirdly, you have mentioned so many schemes under which you propose to tackle this issue of poverty. How do you assure that the amount set apart for these schemes is actually spent for that purpose? We have a number of instances where so many plans are drawn up, amount is allotted but that amount is not actually expended for that very purpose. Is there any machinery by which the Government becomes satisfied that the amount is really spent for that very purpose for which it was given? These are three aspects on which I would like to have specific replies from the hon. Prime Minister.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, 'poverty line' has been defined from time to time in the sense of per capita income. I have a detailed statement here with me. Since it is a very long time, I am quite willing to lay it on the Table of the House so that the hon. Member can go through it.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: That is one aspect.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Gurudas Das Gupta.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Madam, my question has three aspects. The hon. Prime Minister was pleased to answer only one aspect of it.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I am willing to place this document on the Table of this House which contains the entire data pertaining to all the three aspects that you have made.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajageal, it covers all the three aspects. Now, Shri Das Gupta.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We are celebrating 50 years of our freedom. Looking at the statistics, it is found that poverty is the most lingering, most stagnating and the most basic human issue before the nation. As I understand, the Common Minimum Programme of

planning, the result is that our growth rate even today is almost two per cent per annum which is calamitous. We had made, Madam, three projections, for the population in 2000. The most optimistic was 900 million, the median was 950 million and the disastrous scenario was 1000 million, one billion people and we are going to hit that one billion mark in the year 2000. Madam, I would like to submit that without a real commitment and dedication to population control and family planning, no amount of other progress to three-pronged measures is going to work because where will you get million of jobs.....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Saheb, will you please put your question because I have at least ten names before me.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Agreed, Madam. My question is: will the Prime Minister kindly assure this House that along with the three-pronged measure that he is taking, he will also give top priority to population control and family planning?

SHRI I. K. CUJRAL: Madam, if I were to reply in one word, I would say, most important, and definitely. We cannot progress if the rate of growth in population continues like this. My colleague is giving a great deal of attention to this. If you permit me, Madam, can I ask her to intervene?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): I am sure the hon. Member would appreciate the progress that has been made in population control. Successive Governments have contributed their might and it is not such a dismal story as we would like to see it. Three States have their success story. Kerala, Goa and Tamil Nadu had been happy experiments in population control where we have reached an enviable replacement level and other States are quickly coming out of this. We have six States which are

growing in population and the maximum importance and thrust has been given to this area. I am happy to announce in this House that Lok Sabha for the first time Indian Parliament will be discussing population control, giving it the necessary emphasis and direction that it must be given in the Special Session that we will be having on the eve of

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is it being confirmed?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not that we have been informed about it. Not formalised.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, the Speaker has accepted it and we are optimistic that it will be discussed on the 14th. The two-child norm Bill for people in politics will also be discussed on the 14th morning with all political leaders. It is with such valuable input and participation by the respective States which must implement the population policy that there can be a success story. So, it is not in isolation; as Government when we say it, we mean it and we are emphasising on it. But, it is for illustrious people like the hon. Members who should also use their influence and good offices in their respective States, Jammu and Kashmir is one of the States that is lagging in this programme. Thank you.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Madam, we do not know anything about the subjects to be discussed in the Special Session and other Diamond celebrations. The hon. Prime Minister is here. So far, we do not know except bits and pieces from newspapers. We don't know what steps are being discussed. I don't know whether you have been informed about it. Till today, we don't know anything about the golden jubilee celebrations, the detailed break-up of programmes and so on. How do you expect that we should also propagate that message throughout the country.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have not had the time to discuss it with the Speaker. I will talk to him because no official indication has come from Lok Sabha about the subjects which are going to be discussed. If the hon. Minister informs the House, I am sure she must be having the information which is correct. But, I will discuss it with the Speaker and finalise it because we had a meeting we had a meeting of the leaders yesterday and we had no formal information.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, yesterday in Lok Sabha, the hon. Speaker made a mention of this subject when other Members were raising supplementary issues on the question on population control. He had mentioned that this is going to be discussed, so I think...{Interruptions}...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: The hon. Minister is so scared of this House these days that she keeps the other House informed and does not take us into confidence. I don't know why this *bcrukhi*. Why is she now so indifferent to this House?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, I will be very happy if the hon. Members discuss population in this House also.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let us go ahead now. We are not discussing population just now. I am sorry we have got a question on poverty and there are Members who want to ask questions. I will discuss this matter with the hon. Speaker and we will finalise. We will inform you whatever the final result is. {Interruptions}.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Madam, this House should take the decision. You should take the decision. It should not be dictated to by the Lok Sabha.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Madam, yesterday the Parliamentary Affairs Minister informed the Lok Sabha. {Interruptions} We were not informed anything about the decision that has been taken.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let me talk to the Speaker. I cannot arbitrarily say anything. However, I appreciate Dr. Karan Singh's suggestion and I also commit myself to the population control programme. But I am not in the habit of committing anything arbitrarily till I have discussed it with the hon. Speaker because both the Houses run together and both the Houses should have some communication between them to formulate a policy which should reflect the unity of both the Houses. I will discuss it with him. Now, please. {Interruptions}

AN HON. MEMBER: Madam, there is no programme of any kind.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, from poverty we are diverting ourselves. That is why I feel poverty is not being removed in this country. It is because we divert ourselves into political issues.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : उपसभापति महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी से निवेदन करना

चाहता हूँ कि गरीबी रेखा से नीचे जो लोग रह रहे हैं, उनकी सही जानकारी केन्द्रीय सरकार को नहीं है और इसके चलते केन्द्रीय सरकार ने गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाले लोगों को आधे मूल्य पर राशन मुहैया कराने की जो योजना चालू की है, उसमें भी गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाले लोगों को राशन नहीं मिल रहा है। मैं आपके माध्यम से निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि गरीबी उन्मूलन के लिए बहुत सी योजनाएं सरकार चला रही हैं। क्या प्रधानमंत्री यह बताएंगे कि गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाले लोग हैं, उनको कब तक आप गरीबी रेखा से ऊपर लाएंगे।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, the question which my hon. friend has asked is in two parts. One, of course, is the number. When we talk of percentages, kindly keep in mind the fact that Dr. Karan Singh has pointed out about increasing population. You see, even when we keep on progressing and even when the actual number of those who have moved out of the poverty-line divide keeps on increasing, the percentages etc. get determined by that. It is not as if

something has not been achieved. All the same I must say that all those who are still below the poverty-line should be a matter of first concern to any Government. It is of great concern to me because I feel the achievements cannot be really thought of only in terms of how many people have come into the middle class. The achievements will always be judged by how many people have been lifted above the poverty line. That is the main point and that is the biggest commitment not only of my Government but also of the Common Minimum Programme to which the United Front has committed itself. So far as ration is concerned, we have started a new scheme where we are giving 10 kg. below a particular price, about half of the price, that is, the economic price. Seven State Governments have come back to me to say that this system is not very effective to meet the requirements of those who are still very poor because obviously it is very clear that 10 kgs. cannot meet the needs of a family. They have to buy again from the market and whatever they buy from the market is of a higher price. Therefore, even at half the price subsidy is there that they utilise, but it is not worth it by the time they go to the market. This has come to my notice. The issue has been examined here. Can we come back with a new scheme? For that purpose, I am going to convene a meeting of all the State Food Ministers to finalise this.

SHRI AMAR SINGH: I would like to know what the number of poor people in Uttar Pradesh is. How much assistance has been provided to the Uttar Pradesh Government by the Central Government for each poverty alleviation programme during the last three years and how many people have been actually benefited?

SHRIMATI RATNAMALA DE-HARESHWAR SAVANOOR: 496.17 lakh persons in the rural sector.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is it?

SHRIMATI RATNAMALA DE-HARESHWAR SAVANOOR: 496.17 lakh persons in the rural sector.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So, it is almost five crores.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Madam, I am grateful to you for having allowed me to put a question. While looking at the reply laid on the Table, it is seen that even though efforts have been made by the Government to reduce the incidence of poverty, much progress has not been made so far. From 1973-73 to 1993-94, according to the figures given here, reduction in percentage is only 20, that is one per cent per year. Now the rate is 35.97%. If this trend goes on at this rate, it will take another 35-40 years. That means poverty alleviation programmes that have so far been adopted by the Government are not enough to find a solution to this problem, say within a period of ten years or at the most fifteen years. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government would review the whole thing and chalk out a programme or schemes so that this problem is solved completely within a period of ten years, at the most 15 years.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, with your permission, before I reply to my friend, let me correct the figure given by my colleague about U.P. My hon. friend had asked about U.P. figures.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Amar Singh asked for figures and went out to collect the figures, I think! (*Interruptions*).

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It is 496.17 lakhs for rural areas. In addition to that, there are urban poor also in U.P. It is 108.25 lakhs. Therefore, these two are to be kept in mind together.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: Madam, a minute please. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Prime Minister is on his feet answering a question. You think I should allow you while he is answering! You see, I am not

sitting quietly. I am calling one Member after another. The answer is being given, listen to it. Perhaps, your question may be answered.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, the point raised by my hon. colleague is well taken. I do not think anybody in this House, from this side or that side, can feel satisfied with the rate of development so far as eradication of poverty is concerned. Several programmes have been launched. I cannot say how much they are helping but, I think, there are signals that they are helping. All the same, it is extremely important for us to look at the picture in its totality. Ultimately, all began fifty years ago, which we are celebrating now. I do not want to compare the situation 50 years ago, it was very different in every sense. Dr. Karan Singh has pointed out rightly about negative factor of population growth which is contributing to poverty and poverty keeps on expanding. The Ninth Plan Approach Paper will be discussed in the House soon and is focussing more on this than anything else. I would urge my hon. friends to kindly have a look at that when it is placed on the agenda and come out with positive suggestions and those suggestions, I can promise on behalf of the Government, will be responded to positively and also constructively.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Peter Alphonses, your name has come finally.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: The Prime Minister stated in his reply to the question that he has brought a three pronged attack on poverty. He says that the most important among all of them is direct attack on poverty through employment, income-generating programmes and asset building for the poor. I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister has to how much amount has been spent on the third category, *i.e.*, direct attack on poverty by providing employment, income-generating programmes and asset building. I would also like to know the value of assets that you have

been able to build so far. I would also like to know from the hon. Prime Minister—he has listed many programmes here like the IRDP, PMRY, etc.—whether he is aware of the fact that young people are to wait at the counters of nationalised banks even after the task force sanctions the loans. The banks reject them. I would like to know from the Prime Minister whether he will come forward with a new system of granting cheques or drafts directly by the task force instead of routing them through the banks.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, so far as the total expenditure incurred on the various schemes is concerned, I need a notice and I will give the figures. So far as the question of banks not performing their duties is concerned, that has also been brought to our notice. I am willing to look into it. But, you see, the difficulty, to be very candid in this matter is that many of these programmes which ultimately touch the poor do get defeated by this bureaucratic approach, if not wholly, at least partially. I recall the concern of my honourable predecessor, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, expressed in this House or the other House regarding how much actually trickles down to the poor. Ultimately it is very little. That is where I think this House, the other House and all of us who are in public life have to come forward and see how to debureaucratise the whole thing. We cannot assist the poor in getting their due unless we make it a sort of social pressure. I see that the States in which it is reaching comparatively better are the ones where the political parties are taking a more vital interest. And that is where the situation is improving better, and in a way comparatively better. But, I must confess with a great deal of concern and fear that the amount which is spent on these programmes is not really reaching the people, the poor people who should get it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have ten questions...(Interruptions)

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Just a minute. Madam. The figures which he was asking

for have come to me. The total amount up to 1996-97 that we have spent on these three schemes is Rs. 5,750 crores.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have ten questions here and seven minutes. I think the issue relating to poverty programmes cannot be discussed in the Question Hour. It has many ramifications I suggest that if Members give notice, then we can have a full-fledged discussion on it. In this way, we can go to all aspects, including population and other things. So, I come to the next question. We have finalised two questions.

*223. [The Questioner (Shri Iqbal Singh) was absent. For answer vide col. infra.]

*224. [The Questioner (Shri Ajit P. K. Jogi and Shri Moolchand Meena) were absent. For answer vide col.a.infra.]

*225. [The Questioner (Shri V. Hanumantha Rao) was absent. For answer vide col.:infra.]

Shutting down of Two Units of Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant

*226. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY:

Will the Minister of PRIME Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are proposing to shut down the two units of Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant as they require urgent repairs;

(b) the reasons why repairs have not been carried out inspite of the defects having been known for quite some time; and

(c) the nature of defects developed in these atomic plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUB-RAMONIYAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. A difficult heavy water leak from the Over Pressure Relief Device, located in an inaccessible area due to which Unit-1 of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station was shut-down, was fixed using indigenously developed technology and robotic toolings. The Unit was restarted in April, 1997.

The second unit is shut-down for en-massc coolant channel replacement and upgradation of systems. The Unit is expected to be restarted by the middle of 1998.

SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Madam, two atomic power plants were set up in Rajasthan by a Canadian firm. It is feared that the pressure tubes of these atomic power plants are in a ll, danger of getting ruptured. That firm has offered to repair these tubes. But, they say that they are not able to take up the work because of politicisation of the non-proliferation issues. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is a real danger of a rupture in the tubes. I would also like to know as to what kind of politicisations standing in the way of repairs.

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Madam, it is not correct to suggest or to say that it was built by the Canadians. The first unit at Rawatbhata, in Rajasthan, was built with the technical collaboration of Atomic Energy (Canada) Limited. The first unit was commissioned in 1972. The unit had, at that time, developed water leakage in the south end-shield of the reactor in September, 1981. The unit was sealed and the unit was operated at a derated capacity of 100 MW. In 1994, again, it was shut down. But unit was restarted in April, 1997. The first unit had started working from April, 1997.