

**RAJYA SABHA**

Thursday, the 21th April, 1978 the 7th  
Vaisakha, 1900 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr.  
Chairman in the Chair.

**MEMBERS SWORN**

1. Shri N. P. Chengalraya Naidu  
(Andhra Pradesh)
2. Shri Ananda Pathak (West Bengal)

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS****Persons Living below Poverty Line**

- \*91. SHRIMATI MAIMOONA  
SULTAN: SHRIMATI  
KUMUDBEN  
MANISHANKER JOSHI: f  
SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to  
state:

(a) whether any assessment has been  
made recently regarding the number of  
persons living below poverty line in the  
country; and

(b) what is the latest definition of the  
expression 'poverty-line' in the light of the  
ever-declining value of the rupee and soaring  
prices?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI  
MORARJI R. DESAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For the formulation of the Draft Five  
Year Plan (1978—83) the Planning  
Commission has defined the poverty line on  
the basis of recommended nutritional  
requirements of 2400 calories per-person per  
day for rural areas and 2100 calories per per-  
son per day for urban areas. (In rupees the  
poverty line is the midpoint of the  
expenditure class in 1973-74 consumer  
expenditure data) in which the calorie needs  
are satisfied. This works out to monthly in-

†The question was actually asked on the  
floor of the House by Shrimati Kumudben  
Manishanker Joshi.

that aid.

comes per person of Rs. 61.8 and Rs. 71.3 for  
rural and urban areas at 1976-77 prices. Thus  
while assessing the number of persons below  
the poverty line from time to time  
adjustments are made to the changes in the  
price levels.

**श्रीमती कुमुदबेन मणिशंकर जोशी :**  
आदरणीय सभापति महोदय, जनता सरकार  
ने दस साल में जो राष्ट्र में गरीबी हटाने का  
वायदा किया है, इस वायदे को और जनता  
सरकार का जो प्लान है, उसको ध्यान में  
रखते हुए क्या आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी यह  
बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि 1976-77 में  
कितने लोग गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे थे और  
1977-78 में उन आंकड़ों में कितना सुधार  
हआ है ?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Sir, it is  
difficult to give information of how many  
people there were below the poverty line, in  
1976-77. I would not hazard it. Of course,  
some say 40 per cent; some people say 60 per  
cent; some people say 50 per cent. So, I will  
not be able to give an exact figure.

**श्रीमती कुमुदबेन मणिशंकर जोशी :**  
इस देश में जो लोग इस समय बिलो पार्वटी  
लाइन रहते हैं, उनकी रोज-ब-रोज की  
जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिये क्या प्लानिंग  
कमीशन प्रति व्यक्ति खर्च का कोई अंदाज  
लगाया हुआ है ?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I do not  
follow.

MR. CHAIRMAN; Please repeat the  
question,

SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MANI-  
SHANKER JOSHI: What is the per capita  
expenditure on the people who are living  
below the poverty line?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Per capita? He has  
given the figures.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI; We have  
given an estimate of per capita expenditure.

**श्रीमती कुमुदबेन मणिशंकर जोशी :** मैंने यह पूछा है कि प्लानिंग कमीशन ने इस देश में जो लोग बिना पावर्टी लाइन रहते हैं उनकी रोज-ब-रोज की जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिये क्या प्रति व्यक्ति खर्च का कोई अंदाज निकाला है ?

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** प्रति व्यक्ति खर्च का अंदाज निकालना प्लानिंग कमीशन के लिये मुश्किल है और ऐसा करना जरूरत भी नहीं है।

**श्री सतपाल मित्तल :** सभापति महोदय, नेशनल सैम्यल सर्वे आर्गनाइजेशन ने 1964 में सर्वे किया था और बताया था कि 45.6 प्रतिशत लोग बिना पावर्टी लाइन रहते हैं। उस वक़्त स्टेट बाइज सर्वे नहीं हुआ था। क्या प्रधान मंत्री महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि उनके पास ऐसे लोगों का, ऐसी आबादी का स्टेट बाइज सर्वे है जो बिना पावर्टी लाइन रहते हैं ?

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** ऐसी फिगर नहीं है जैसे कि मैंने पहले कहा है।

SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL: In view of the fact that Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai is committed to eradication of poverty...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary is not allowed. He said he has no figures.

SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL: Will the Prime Minister be kind enough to have the figures placed before the House?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I shall try to ascertain the figures.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: The Prime Minister has said that the assessment made by the Planning Commission based on consumption works out to Rs. 61.8 per person per month in rural areas and Rs. 71.3 per person per month in the

urban areas. These figures are based on calorie requirements in rural and urban areas, if I mistake him not. I heard him saying so. Leaving aside 40 per cent or 50 per cent people below the poverty line, the Prime Minister must be aware that there are agricultural labourers whose monthly income at present is about Rs. 20/- according to the National Sample Survey. At the same time, leaving aside the urban elite, there has been a tremendous increase in the income of urban employees. In view of this, to formulate a policy on incomes and wages, the Government have appointed a Committee. To me this is a mirage because no Government in the world has been able to work out a policy based on this. I want to know what is the pragmatic and rational approach to immediately upgrade the poverty stricken people and provide them jobs or resources to earn more.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: The problem can be solved by giving adequate productive work to every person and that is what this Government is seeking to do and for that all the efforts are being made.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH: Since the prices have been going higher and higher and since the Janata Government has slackened the family planning programme the population explosion is getting worse and worse, I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister what is the number of people below the poverty line. The number must have increased during the last one year. What is this big increase that has taken place during the last one year because of the population explosion and rising prices?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: If it gives any comfort to the hon. Member to think that it has increased now, she can have that comfort. I do not think that there is any such increase.

**श्री श्रीकान्त वर्मा :** सभापति महोदय, गरीबी दस साल में समाप्त करने के विषय में प्रधान मंत्री एक बात कहते हैं और योजना आयोग के विशेषज्ञ दूसरी बात कहते हैं और सभाचारपत्रों के लोग विशेषज्ञों की राय को जादा अहमियत देने हैं। मैं प्रधान मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा जब उन्होंने यह बयान दिया कि केवल 10 वर्षों में गरीबी पूरी तरह से समाप्त कर दी जाएगी तो क्या उन्होंने विशेषज्ञों से राय ली थी और अगर वाकई वे उसको समाप्त करना चाहते हैं तो उनके लिए कोई स्पष्ट कार्यक्रम उन्होंने निर्धारित किया है, क्या उनके मन में ऐसी कोई कल्पना है ?

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** अभी एक घंटा पहले मैं एक सेमिनार में कुछ लोगों से भिना था अहाँ ऐसी सभी संस्थाएँ इकट्ठी हुई थीं जो इस काम में लगी हुई हैं कि कैसे इस काम को करना चाहिए, कुछ काम इस संघर्ष में ही भी रहा है इस काम को करने के लिए कैसे व्यवस्था करनी चाहिए उसके बारे में तीन दिन वे चर्चा करेंगे, मैं भी उनके साथ आवां कलंगा। यह सिर्फ चर्चा करने का विषय नहीं है, काम करने का विषय है। इसलिए मैं उस काम को किया जाता है।

**श्री रामानन्द यादव :** यह तो उत्तर नहीं है, प्रश्न कुछ पूछा और उत्तर कुछ मिल रहा है। देश के प्रधान मंत्री को इस तरह का जवाब नहीं देना चाहिये। . . .

*Interruptions*

**श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही :** आपकी समझ में न आये तो उत्तर ही नहीं है।

**श्री शिव चन्द्र झा :** सभापति महोदय, प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा है कि . . .

**श्री पीलू मोदी :** कम से कम जवाब तो मिलना है पहल तो मिलता भी नहीं था।

**श्री शिव चन्द्र झा :** सभापति महोदय, प्रधान मंत्रीजी ने जवाब दिया . . .

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** मैं समझना चाहता हूँ कि क्या समझ में नहीं आया।

**श्री रामानन्द यादव :** प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा कि तीन दिन के लिए एक गोष्ठी हो रही है, सेमिनार हो रहा है, परन्तु उस सेमिनार में क्या प्लानिंग हुई, किस चीज पर विचार हुआ, क्या डिस्कसन हुआ उसका निचोड़ तो आपने बताया नहीं अगर यह गोष्ठी की बात बताते तो यह आपके जवाब का एक रूप होता। आपने छाया रूप में सारी बातें बता दीं कि गोष्ठी हो रही है परन्तु गोष्ठी में क्या विचार हुआ यह नहीं बताया।

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** माननीय सदस्य को कुछ धीरज हो मुझे समझने का तो मैं कह सकता हूँ। मैंने कहा कि आज से तीन दिन तक कुछ चल रहा है। तीन दिन के बाद ही मैं कह सकता हूँ कि इसका क्या परिणाम निकला है। आज मैं कैसे कह दूँ।

**श्री शिव चन्द्र झा :** प्रधान मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि असेसमेंट किया गया है कि लोग पावर्टी लाईन के नीचे हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ प्रधान मंत्री जी से कि क्या यह स्टेट वाइज असेसमेंट हुआ है और यदि हुआ है तो क्या स्टेटवाइज आंकड़े हैं ?

मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि पावर्टी की परिभाषा योजना आयोग के मुताबिक उन्होंने दी है। अतः मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस परिभाषा में और गांधी जी ने जो परिभाषा दी थी उसमें कितना फर्क है ?

**श्री मोरारजी आर० देसाई :** मैंने अभी कहा कि ऐसे आंकड़े नहीं थे मगर हम स्टेट वाइज इकट्ठे कर रहे हैं।

गांधी जी की परिभाषा और प्लानिंग कमीशन की परिभाषा, इनमें फर्क होना संभव है परन्तु जो करना है वह यह है कि हर एक

मनुष्य को पूरा उत्पादक काम मिले जितने कि उनका जीवन बराबर चले और यही उनका स्टैण्डर्ड होगा ।

**श्री आर० डी० जगताप आवरगांवकर:**  
सभापति महोदय, आपके माध्यम से प्रधान मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि ग्रामीण बेरोजगारी को दूर करने के लिए आपकी सरकार क्या क्या ठोस कदम उठा रही है ।

SHRI N. G. RANGA: Sir, he is asking as to how they are going to solve the problem of rural unemployment. That is the question. But there is no answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In his first reply which he has given he has said what is to be done in the rural areas and what is to be done in the urban areas.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Work has to be given to everyone and that will be done through cottage industries, village industries and enriching agriculture.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: Sir, I have a submission to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. You are not to put any question now.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI; I am not asking anything. now. I am just submitting to you that this is a general reply, but we want to know what the positive programmes are. This general reply one can understand.

MR. CHAIRMAN; That is all right. Yes, Mr. Zakaria.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Sir, may I know from the honourable Prime Minister how he proposes or how his Government proposes to tackle the problem of poverty without first ascertaining the facts and statistics? The Prime Minister has admitted that he has not in his possession the facts and figures in this regard This is my first Question, sir it may be that the

facts and figures that are there with him may not be up-to-date. But, Sir, unless some idea is there, unless some facts and figures are there, formulation of any approach in this regard is not possible. So, how does he propose to do that?

SHRI N. G. RANGA: And also he must fix a time-limit.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: I want him to indicate in concrete terms what the approach of his Government is in tackling this problem because this problem is the most important problem today to solving which the Janata Party is committed.

SHRI PILOO MODY: This is the only party committed to this problem.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI; The question whether work for 40 per cent of people work is required or for 60 per cent does not depend on figures. Every person has to be given work, whether it is 40 per cent or 60 per cent. The work is required to be done in the village. Therefore, we say that the work will be given through cottage industries and rural industries and through enrichment of agriculture

AN HON. MEMBER; Food for work?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Food for work is a matter dependent on payment; first, the work has to be given.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA; No Government can function without first knowing what is the financial commitment in this regard...  
(Interruptions) How does the Government propose to tackle this problem without knowing what the problem is, whether it is 40 per cent or 60 per cent or 80 per cent?...  
(Interruptions)

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: It is not our fault if exact figures are not available. We are now ascertaining them. But until we ascertain all the figures, we cannot wait for figures before we proceed with the work. Therefore,

we are trying to provide work wherever it is possible, within the limits of the capacity that we have. That is how we will progressively finish this task in 9 years.

SHRI ANANT PRASAD SHARMA: This Government is voted to power for a maximum period of Ave years. Now, the Government proposes to remove poverty within the next ten years. Perhaps the Government expects to be there for ten years. That is very good. But I want to know, Sir, what are the concrete proposals so far. One year is now past. They say that within the next ten years the problem will be solved. I want to know whether there is any concrete proposal so far, at least to convince the people that they are going to do it.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: We have been here for a year now, no doubt. But what have those, who have been there for all these years, been doing?... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMANAND YADAV: You have also been part of that Government for thirty years.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I was there but was not incharge of it. I say that this question which has to be tackled could not be tackled sufficiently well for want of experience. But we have now gained more experience. Therefore, we can make more progress now. And the thing has already begun. We are now giving milch cattle to people who have no work so that they look after them and then supplement income from work wherever it is possible in cottage industries or rural industries.

SHRI ANANT PRASAD SHARMA: What is the concrete proposal?

SHRI SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: I would request the Prime Minister kindly to explain what this Government understand by 'poverty line'. Where do the Government draw the 'poverty line'?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: It is easy to understand what is 'poverty line'. Those who do not have enough food, enough clothes and cannot fulfil the minimum requirements, are below the 'poverty line'.

#### **Study tour by the Minister of Shipping and Transport**

\*92. SHRI PIARE LALL KUREEL URF  
PIARE LAL TALIB:

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM  
KHAN:† SHRI JAGDISH  
JOSHI: SHRI IBRAHIM  
KALANIYA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he had undertaken a study tour of some countries a few months back;

(b) if so, what was the object of the study and in what way the study tour has benefited the country; and

(c) what steps Government have taken for improving the working of various departments under his Ministry as a result of the study tour?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

#### **Statement**

The object of the tour was to study the latest developments in ship building, port operations as well as for creating good-will. As a result of the visit, it was possible to take quick decisions on purchase of ships from England to utilise the aid extended by the British Government. It was also possible to arrive on an agreement on technical assistance between

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†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Khurshed Alam Khan.