

survey of 2004-05 that only 17 per cent farmers families in rural areas of the country maintain their families through the products of their farms;

(b) if so, Government reaction in this regard;

(c) whether there is a need for other sources of income in rural areas in such situations; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the proposals laid down by Government for it during the Twelfth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) On the basis of the source of major income, 35.9% of the rural households were engaged in self-employment in agriculture in 2004-05 and further 25.8% of the rural households are engaged as agricultural labour according to the Statement 3.4 of National Sample Survey (NSS) Report No. 515 of the 61st Round. According to the Statement 5.9.2 of the same Report, 72.7 % of the usually working persons (principal status + subsidiary status) among rural persons are engaged in agriculture and allied activities.

(c) and (d) Various Ministries/Departments/Organisations in the Government of India are implementing schemes for enhancing rural employment for farming families viz. (i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) by the Ministry of Rural Development, (ii) Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)/National Rural Livelihoods Mission by the Ministry of Rural Development and (iii) Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), and (iv) National Horticulture Mission and related Development Schemes/Programmes being administered by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Government supports improved vocational training and skill development as a critical part of the employment strategy.

The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), renamed as Aajeevika is being implemented in a mission mode. Aajeevika will support creation of strong institutions of the rural poor and livelihoods as well as diversifying into new livelihoods. Aajeevika will help the rural people through end to end solutions by ensuring forward and backward linkages. A new scheme Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) has been initiated as a sub-component of the Aajeevika to meet the specific needs of women farmers and achieve socio-economic and technical empowerment of the rural women farmers, predominantly small and marginal farmers.

Widening cealth disparities

392. SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan,

GDP growth has averaged over 8 per cent per annum in the past five years, but the rate of poverty alleviation over the last eleven years has remained at under 0.8 per cent per annum; and

(b) if so, how does Government propose to tackle the question of widening income and wealth disparities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes Sir. As per the Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan, the economy is likely to achieve an average GDP growth of around 8.2 percent over the Eleventh Plan Period and the percentage of population living below the poverty line has declined by about 0.8 percentage points per annum between 1993-94 and 2004-05.

(b) Reduction of economic inequalities has always been one of the primary policy objectives of the development planning in India. The Eleventh Five Year Plan adopted the strategy of inclusive growth to ensure that the benefits of growth reach all the sections of the society. To achieve the inclusive growth, 27 monitorable targets reflecting multi-dimensional and social objectives of inclusive growth were identified, 13 of which could be disaggregated at the level of individual States. The high rate of economic growth that India witnessed recently has contributed significantly to the expansion of India's economy which has blunted the incidence of acute poverty throughout the country. In addition, the government is implementing a number of flagship programmes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Rural Drinking Water Supply and Total Sanitation Campaign, Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) etc. towards this end. These interventions are expected to yield better results over time in terms of reduction of poverty and improved access to basic amenities etc. The Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan emphasizes the need to build upon the achievements of Eleventh Five Year Plan and strive for sustainable and more inclusive growth in order to reduce wealth disparities.

Kochi Metro Rail Project

393. SHRI P RAJEEVE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the approval for the Kochi Metro Rail Project: and

(b) the reason for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Planning Commission has reiterated its *in-principle*