

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, along with the corrective action taken in the matter; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to increase the credit flow to the agriculture sector; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBRAM): (a) The details of target set and achievements made for the credit flow to agriculture sector by commercial and cooperative banks during the last three years and current year are as under:

(Rs. in crore)								
Agency	Credit flow in 2009-10		Credit flow in 2010-11		Credit flow in 2011-12 (Provisional)		Credit flow in 2012-13 (Provisional)*	
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
Commercial Banks	2,50,000	2,85,799.73	2,80,000	3,45,877.29	3,55,000	3,68,616.30	4,20,000	81,561.58
Cooperative Banks	45,000	63,496.85	55,000	78,007.09	69,500	87,962.79	84,000	38,095.27

*Achievement upto 30 June, 2012.

(b) to (d) It may be seen from the above that commercial banks and cooperative banks have achieved agriculture credit target during the last 3 years. The Government of India has increased the target of credit flow to agriculture for 2012-13 to Rs. 5,75,000 crore from Rs. 4,75,000 crore in 2011-12.

New methodology to determine poverty

*179. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the public outcry over low poverty line estimation, the Planning Commission has tried to shelve the poverty debate, by setting up another expert group to take a re-look at the existing methodology to determine the number of poor in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this group would review the poverty estimates used by the Planning Commission;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether this decision can be taken as rejection of the Tendulkar Committee report, based on which the Planning Panel highlighted that poverty had come down by around seven per cent; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission regularly reviews the methodology for estimation of poverty by setting up Task Force/Expert Groups comprising eminent experts in the field of poverty. This is done in order to make poverty line contemporaneous, reflecting the change in income and consumption of the people. In the past, the Planning Commission had constituted Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. Y. K. Alagh in 1977, Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. D.T. Lakdawala in 1989 and Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Suresh Tendulkar in 2005. In conformity with this practice, the Planning Commission, in June, 2012, has constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan to "Review the Methodology for Measurement of Poverty". The Terms of Reference of the Group are as follows:

- (i) To comprehensively review the existing methodology of estimation of poverty and examine whether the poverty line should be fixed solely in terms of a consumption basket or whether other criteria are also relevant, and if so, whether the two can be effectively combined to evolve a basis for estimation of poverty in rural and urban areas.
- (ii) To examine the issue of divergence between consumption estimates based on the NSSO methodology and those emerging from the National Accounts aggregates; and to suggest a methodology for updating consumption poverty lines using the new consumer price indices launched by the CSO for rural and urban areas State-wise.
- (iii) To review alternative methods of estimation of poverty which may be in use in other countries, including their procedural aspects; and indicate whether on this basis, a particular method can be evolved for empirical estimation of poverty in India, including procedures for updating it over time and across States.
- (iv) To recommend how the estimates of poverty, as evolved above, should be linked to eligibility and entitlements for schemes and programmes under the Government of India.

(c) and (d) As per terms of reference, the Expert Group set up under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan would review the methodology for measurement of poverty.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. The Planning Commission accepted the poverty lines and poverty ratios estimated by Tendulkar Committee for 1993-94 and 2004-05 and followed there commended methodology for estimation of poverty for 2009-10, and in order to ensure the contemporary relevance of the poverty line and to ensure that suitable weightage is given to different parameters in computing the poverty line consistent with the ground realities, the Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Rangarajan has been given comprehensive terms of reference for computation of poverty estimates.

Increase in current account deficit

*180. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Current Account Deficit (CAD) increased to four per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011-12 (upto December, 2011) as compared to 3.3 per cent during the same period of 2010-11; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the deficit?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The Current Account Deficit (CAD) increased to 4.1 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011-12 (upto December, 2011) as compared to 3.3 per cent during the corresponding period of 2010-11. The CAD was 4.2 per cent of GDP for full fiscal 2011-12 *vis-a-vis* 2.7 per cent in 2010-11.

The increase in CAD in 2011-12 was due to widening of trade deficit on account of moderation in exports and relatively inelastic imports of petroleum, oil and lubricant (POL) and gold and silver in the wake of rising international prices.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Function of Cabinet Secretary/Secretariat

1241. SHRI RANBIR SINGH PARJAPATI:

PROF. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: