

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PLANNING

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 429**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2021

**URBAN/RURAL POVERTY LINE IN COUNTRY**

429. SHRI M.V. SHREYAMS KUMAR:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is having any official definition and norms fixed for urban/rural poverty line across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any review has been taken by NITI AYOJ on the norms for poverty; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING  
AND MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF  
STATISTICS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

(RAO INDERJIT SINGH)

- (a) In India, the erstwhile Planning Commission was the nodal agency in the Government for estimation of the poverty in the country and it used a poverty line based on per capita consumption expenditure as the criterion to determine the persons living below the poverty line (BPL) in rural and urban areas. For determination of the methodology to estimate poverty line erstwhile Planning Commission constituted a Task Force from time to time. The most recent Expert Group whose recommendations were accepted by the Government in 2011 was chaired by Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar.
- (b) Based on the data of Large Sample Survey on Household Consumer Expenditure collected by NSSO in its 68<sup>th</sup> round conducted in 2011-12 the poverty lines and poverty ratio were estimated following the extant Tendulkar Committee methodology in 2011-12 and released through a Press Note issued on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. According to this Press Note the poverty line has been defined on the basis of Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) as the criterion. For the year 2011-12, the poverty line at all India level was estimated as Monthly Per-capita Consumption Expenditure of Rs. 816 for rural areas and Rs. 1000 for urban areas.

(c) & (d) A Task Force on Elimination of Poverty in India was constituted by NITI Aayog on 16th March, 2015 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Arvind Panagariya, former Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog. The Terms of Reference for the Task Force inter alia included to “Develop a working definition of poverty”. The report of the Task Force primarily focuses on issues of measurement of poverty and strategies to combat poverty. Regarding estimation of poverty, the report of the Task Force states that “a consensus in favour of either the Tendulkar or a higher poverty line did not emerge. Therefore, the Task Force has concluded that the matter be considered in greater depth by the country’s top experts on poverty before a final decision is made. Accordingly, it is recommended that an expert committee be set up to arrive at an informed decision on the level at which the poverty line should be set.”

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