GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PLANNING

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1222
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2021

COMMITTEE TO ASSESS THE BPL PEOPLE

1222 Dr. Kirodi Lal Meena:

Will the Minister of Planning be pleased to state:

(a)   the norms evolved by the Suresh Tendulkar Committee to assess the Below Poverty
        Line (BPL) people in rural and urban areas in the country;

(b)   whether there exists a difference between the Tendulkar Committee and the N.C.
        Saxena Committee in assessing and estimating BPL population;

(c)   if so, the details thereof;

(d)   whether Government proposes to redefine poverty in the light of different poverty estimates; and

(e)   if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS &
PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF
THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

(RAO INDERJIT SINGH)

(a)   The process for estimation of poverty in India included determination of a poverty line by
        an Expert Committee and by using data on the per capita consumption expenditure to
        estimate persons living below the poverty line (BPL). The NSSO tabulates expenditure of
        about 1.20 lakh households. Since these households have different number of members, the
        NSSO for purpose of comparison divides the household expenditure by the number of
        members to arrive at per capita consumption expenditure per month. This is called Monthly
        Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) and is computed on the basis of three
        different concepts: Uniform Reference Period (URP), Mixed Reference Period (MRP), and
        Modified Mixed Reference Period (MMRP). As per Tendulkar Methodology, the poverty
        line has been expressed in terms of MPCE based on Mixed Reference Period. As per the
        methodology recommended by the Expert Committee chaired by Suresh Tendulkar and
        based on the data of Large Sample Survey on Household Consumer Expenditure collected
        by NSSO in its 68th round conducted in 2011-12, all-India poverty line was estimated as
        Monthly Per-capita Consumption Expenditure of Rs. 816 for rural areas and Rs. 1000 for
        urban areas.

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(b) The Expert Group under chairmanship of Dr. N.C. Saxena recommended automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, automatic inclusion in the BPL list and grading remaining households. For automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, the Expert Group recommended indicators such as ownership of land, ownership of motorized vehicles, ownership of mechanized farm equipment, regular employment and Income tax payers. The Expert Group recommended automatic inclusion of rural households from certain groups in the BPL list such as designated `Primitive Tribal Groups`, designated `Maha Dalit Groups`, single women headed households, households with disabled person as bread-earner, households headed by a minor, households dependent on alms for survival, homeless households and households with bonded labourers. The Expert Group recommended that remaining households may be ranked on a scale of ten based on caste, community, religion, occupation, educational status and age of head of Household.

(c) The purpose of Tendulkar methodology is to estimate all India state-wise rural and urban poverty ratio and number of persons living below poverty line in the country. On the other hand Dr. N. C. Saxena committee has recommended automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list and automatic inclusion in the BPL list and grading remaining households for the purpose of identification of beneficiaries for the government schemes for the poor in rural areas.

(d) &(e) Ministry of Rural Development conducts Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census to identify the poor households in the rural areas, to determine the potential beneficiaries under various programmes of the Government of India. The first BPL Census was conducted in 1992 for the Eighth Five Year Plan. Subsequently, BPL census was conducted in 1997, for the Ninth Five Year Plan and in 2002 for the Tenth Five Year Plan period. In 2011, in place of BPL Survey, a Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) was conducted in association with the States/UTs under technical and financial support from the Government of India where besides the Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner and the States/UTs had also participated. The findings of SECC-2011 in rural areas are available on www.secc.gov.in. Ranking of Households in rural areas under SECC-2011 was made through a three-step process involving 13 (Thirteen) Automatic Exclusion parameters for identifying not-poor households, 5 (five) Automatic Inclusion parameters for identifying poorest of the poor households and 7 (seven) Deprivation Criteria for identifying poor households.

Out of 17.97 crore households in rural areas covered under SECC (2011), 48.53% reported incidence of deprivation, 7.07 crore were categorized under automatic exclusion criterion of households as not poor on the basis of 13 parameters, 0.16 crore households categorized under automatic inclusion criterion as poorest of the poor on the basis of 5 parameters and grading of deprivation of 8.72 crore of rural households on the basis of seven criteria.

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