

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1945
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2006
MILLENNIUM GROWTH TARGETS
Sikdar Smt. Joytirmoyee

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether according to a UN report on India the millennium growth targets can be achieved only if we considerably bring down the below poverty line population;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the present level of population below poverty line and the targets fixed to achieve the millennium growth targets;
- (d) the extent to which National Employment Poverty Act would help in uplifting the population at present living below poverty line; and
- (e) the components earmarked under the Act to achieve the targets set forth under the said Act, vis-à-vis the millennium growth targets?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V.RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) & (b): According to a UN Report entitled `The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005`, sustained growth in China and acceleration of the economy in India are the main reasons for the decline in the number of extremely poor people in Asia in the 1990s. In this context, it may be mentioned that, the MDGs encompass many areas including those relating to eradication of poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment of women, child mortality, maternal health, HIV / AIDS, environment sustainability and global partnership for development etc.

However, achievement of these other targets are not necessarily related to the achievement of reduction of the below poverty line population.

(c) : MDGs aim at reducing the proportion of people living below poverty line by half in the year 2015 as compared to the proportion of people living in 1990. According to the publication of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released in February 2006 entitled `Millennium Development Goals - India Country Report for the year 2005`, in order to achieve the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, India must reduce the proportion of people living below the poverty line from nearly 37.5 per cent in 1990 to about 18.75 per cent by 2015. As on 1999-2000, the percentage of population living below the poverty line was 26.1 percent. The Tenth Five Year Plan document targets the proportion of people living below poverty line to decline to 19.3 percent by 2006-07.

(d) & (e): There is no such National Employment Poverty Act for uplifting the population living below poverty line. However, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act provides employment guarantee for 100 days to every household whose members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The persons working under schemes made under the Act will be entitled to minimum wages as may be fixed by Central Government under the Act or till such time the wage rate is fixed by the Central Government, the workers will be entitled to minimum wages for agricultural workers fixed by the State under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. All rural households including those living below poverty line in rural areas can avail of the benefit. However, there is no estimate of the likely impact of this Act on the number of people living below the poverty line.