

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1455

ANSWERED ON:04.08.2006

BELOW POVERTY LINE CENSUS .

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) The year in which last Below Poverty Line (BPL) census has been undertaken by the Government;
- (b) Whether there is any delay in releasing the census report;
- (c) If so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) Whether the number of BPL families has come down during the last five years;
- (e) If not, the reasons therefor;
- (f) Whether series of poverty alleviation programmes undertaken since 1993-94 have made no impact on reducing the poverty of the people;
- (g) If so, the reasons therefor and the fresh steps taken to remove poverty; and
- (h) The new targets fixed to reduce the number of families Below Poverty Line during the Eleventh Five Year Plan and the amount of money estimated to be spent therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL)

(a) to (c): The last Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census has been conducted for the 10th Five Year Plan and instructions were issued in this regard in September, 2002. However, the results of the BPL Census 2002 could not be finalized because of the Supreme Court Order of 5.5.2003 passed in the matter of PUCL Vs. Union of India in a Writ Petition No.196 of 2001 directing the Union of India not to insist upon the State Governments to delete any name from the existing BPL list.

(d) to (f): The number of BPL families is estimated by the Planning Commission on the basis of the Sample Survey of Consumption Expenditure carried out by the NSSO after every 5 years. The last Poverty Estimates made by the Planning Commission for the year 1999-2000 indicate that 26.10% population of the country was living below the poverty line whereas in 1993-94 this percentage was about 36. The Ministry of Rural Development implements a number of poverty alleviation programmes such as self-employment and wage employment programmes etc. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

(NREGA) is a new initiative of the Government to provide at least 100 days employment to one member of the rural household who is willing to take up the manual work. This programme is being implemented in the 200 most backward districts of the country w.e.f. 2nd February, 2006. These programmes are got evaluated by the independent agencies from time to time. The evaluation studies have clearly indicated a positive impact of these programmes on the reduction of poverty in the rural areas.

(g): The reduction in poverty in the country could not be achieved as per the projections made under different Plans. The reason for continued incidence of poverty could be attributed to the frictions and rigidities in the Indian Economy that make poverty reducing effect of growth less effective. On account of unequal agricultural development, slow growth of those sectors where employment opportunities could have been created, the benefits of growth have not trickled down uniformly among different sections and classes of people.

(h): The target to reduce the number of families below poverty line and the money estimated to be spent therefor during the 11th Plan have not been prepared.