

**Title:** Need to remove anomaly arising due to new definition of poverty line as adopted by the Planning Commission.

SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, the definition of poverty line as adopted by the Planning Commission on the basis of the Lakdawala Committee Report affects Orissa adversely. This issue has been taken up with the Government of India repeatedly. The definition of poverty line in 1991-92 for a rural family was an income of Rs.11,000/- per annum. After accounting for inflation, it works out to Rs.19,910/- for 1997-98. The present definition communicated by the Government of India is Rs.249.69 per month per person. Assuming an average of a rural family to be of five members, this works out to Rs.14,982/- per family. It means that a family having an income higher than Rs.14,982/- and lower than Rs.19,190/- will be declared 'non-poor' because of the change of the definition and not because of any real improvement in the quality of their lives.

Because of the change of definition from 'family' to 'per capita', many anomalies arise. For example, a family having two members with an income of Rs.10,000/- per annum in 1991-91 was declared 'poor'. But the same family, even if their present income has been reduced to Rs.7,000/- will be now declared 'non-poor' because of the change of definition.

The new methodology adopts different definitions for different States. For example, a person having a monthly income of Rs.300.90 in Chandigarh will be 'poor' but a person having a monthly income of Rs.249.70 in Orissa will be 'non-poor'. The present definition of poverty line for Lakshadweep is Rs.327.48, for Kerala it is Rs.327.48, for Haryana it is Rs.289.31, all higher than Orissa without any apparent reason. I urge upon the Government of India to correct the anomaly as early as possible and oblige.