GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 508
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.07.2025

CALORIE AND EXPENDITURE BASE POVERTY LINE

508. SHRI SUDAMA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the report published in the Indian Express dated 01/06/2025 highlighting that calorie/expenditure-based poverty lines hide widespread food deprivation, as up to 40% of rural and 20–30% of urban households cannot afford two basic meals daily;

(b) the details of reason for continuing to rely on poverty indicators that ignore key household expenses like healthcare and education that reduce food consumption, details of any alternative method in place;

(c) whether the Government has considered adopting a Thali based consumption to check real deprivation for targeted welfare scheme, if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of the steps that have been taken since the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023 report to reform poverty measurement to include tangible food access and dietary quality; and

(e) the details of the bodies/committees responsible for poverty data collection to ensure poverty reduction along with the data on poverty during the last ten years, State and district-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE [RAO INDERJIT SINGH]

(a) to (e): Sir, the Indian Express dated 01/06/2025 does not contain any report which highlights that calorie/expenditure-based poverty

lines hide widespread food deprivation, as up to 40% of rural and 20–30% of urban households cannot afford two basic meals daily.

In 2021, the Government of India has developed a comprehensive index known as Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to measure poverty by capturing overlapping deviations in dimensions such as health, education and standard of living, covering 12 indicators. It measures both the share of people in poverty and the degree to which they are deprived. The second edition of the index was released in 2023. As per the National MPI Report, 2023 released by NITI Aayog, the proportion of population in multidimensional poverty declined from 24.85% to 14.96% between 2015-16 and 2019-21, indicating that about 135.5 million persons have escaped poverty during the period. Further, as per the discussion paper 'Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06' published by NITI Aayog, multidimensional poverty in India is estimated to have declined from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23 indicating that 24.82 crore people have escaped poverty during this period. It is a major contribution towards achieving SDG target 1.2 that aims to reduce "at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions" . This indicates that India is well on course to achieve the SDG target 1.2 much ahead of 2030.

National Statistics Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) conducted two back-to-back surveys on Household Consumption Expenditure during August, 2023-July, 2024 and August, 2022-July, 2023 wherein information on consumption of around 405 food and non-food items by the household have been collected including education, medical, etc. The reports of HCES 2022-23 and HCES 2023-24 have been released in June 2024 and January 2025 respectively.

Robust and well-defined mechanisms are employed in surveys of MoSPI which undergo periodic improvements based on evolving needs, feedback, and advancements in methodologies to enhance their effectiveness. For the purpose of reviewing and validating official statistics, MoSPI has constituted Committees/Working Groups (WG) which consist of expert members from various spheres such as Central Ministries/Departments, State/UTs, academia, research, economics, finance, etc.

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