



**UNIT III
POVERTY**

NOTES

- **Poverty** is the situation where a person fails to attain the basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, health and education, etc.
- Inadequate command over commodities is the most important dimension of poverty.
- Many poor people do not have two square meals a day.
- Because of poverty, they do not send their children to school and when they fall sick they do not get proper medical care. Under nourishment weakens them and they are unable to work which make them even poorer.
- The Planning Commission estimated poverty in our country based on a data collected by National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) every fifth year.
- It identified a minimum calorie norm to be fulfilled on food item below which is treated as below the poverty line.
- The norms are **2400 calories per capita per day for rural India and 2100 calories per capita per day for urban India.**
- The Planning Commission has estimated that 27.5% of India's population was living below the poverty line in 2004-05.
- 75% of the poor are in rural areas and most of them are landless agricultural labour households, agricultural labour households with small holdings, small and marginal landowners, the landless rural non-agricultural households.
- The 'very poor' are those who are below 75% of the poverty line and they constitute a large proportion of the poor.
- The poor are not uniformly distributed across the states.
- Some states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have nearly 59% of India's poor population in 2004-05.
- The International Poverty Line is 1 US dollar per day per person.
- Globally, the poverty ratio has declined from 29% in 1990 to 18% in 2004. In absolute terms, it has declined from 1.25 billion to 965 million.
- **Inequality in distribution of resources** is the main reason of poverty.
- Poverty is mainly due to our continued **dependence on agriculture.**



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- To reduce poverty several poverty alleviation, employment generating and basic services programmes are being implemented by both the central and state governments.
- Some of the schemes currently in operation are as follows:
 - a) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
 - b) Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)
 - c) Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNURM)
 - d) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
 - e) Bharat Nirman (BN)
 - f) Mid-day Meal Scheme (MMS) and
 - g) Public Distribution System (PDS), etc.
- The Government makes available to the public highly subsidized food grains, kerosene and sugar through the **Public Distribution system (PDS)**.
- The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) seeks to differentiate the poor sections of the society on the basis of their purchasing power so that the poorest may get their requirements at substantially cheaper prices.
- The maximum annual income level for **BPL families** is ₹ 24,800 for a family of five members.
- The Antyodaya Anna Yojana targets the poorest among the poor.
- Inspite of having all those laudable schemes, the record in implementation has been poor and the fund allocation for such programmes also has been meager.
- The NGO's operating at grass root can play a big role in organizing the beneficiaries to get what is meant for them and in changing the indifferent attitude of the agencies who implement those schemes.



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