

**KERALA PUBLIC SCHOOL, KADMA**

**ENVIRONMENTAL APPLICATION**  
**(STUDY MATERIAL)**

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**UNIT 1 : Our Main Environmental  
problems**  
**Ch.4: Economic Disparities**

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## **POVERTY**

**Definition** : Poverty is not having enough material possessions or income for a person's needs.

## **TYPES OF POVERTY**

1. **ABSOLUTE POVERTY** : It is the complete lack of the means necessary to meet basic personal needs such as food, clothing and shelter.

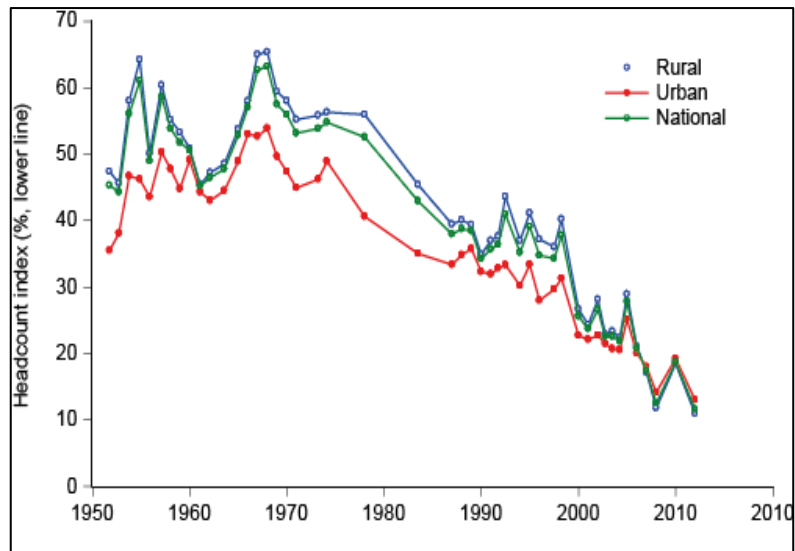
2. **RELATIVE POVERTY** : It is the state when a person cannot meet a minimum level of living standards, compared to others in the same place and time.

## **EXTENT OF POVERTY IN INDIA**

As India is one of the fastest-growing economies in 2020, poverty is on the decline in the country.

There has been a significant decrease in the poverty ratio in the country, from about 55 % in 1973 - 74 to 37 % in 2004 - 05 and to 22 % in 2009 - 10.

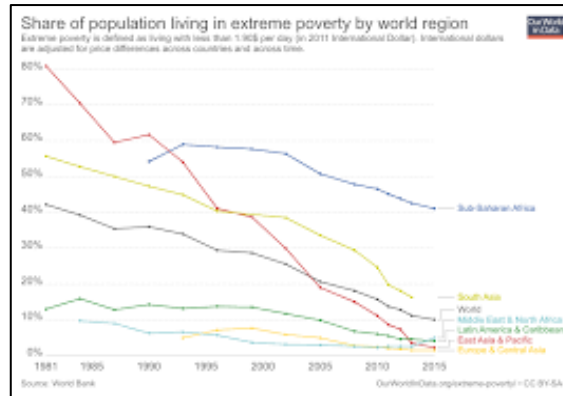
According to Lt. Arun Jaitely, India may become the third-largest economy by 2030 and poverty will fall below 10 per cent by 2025.



Downward trend of poverty in India

### EXTENT OF POVERTY IN THE WORLD

Globally, the number of people living in extreme poverty fell by more than 1 billion during the period; from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 0.73 billion in 2015. On average, the number of people living in extreme poverty declined by 47 million every year since 1990.



## NATURE OF POVERTY IN THE WORLD

### POOR IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

- Do not suffer from starvation or homelessness
- Have full time work and earn more money per week than those in the developing countries would earn per year.
- Suffer from psychological problems and social isolation in case
- Stagnating wages and long term unemployment
- Higher level of antisocial behaviour

### POOR IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The proportion of people in BPL category is not the same for all economic categories and for all social groups in India. The nature of poverty in rural and urban sectors is different.

- In rural sector, the major group of poor consists of landless agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, rural artisans and backward classes and backward tribes. People who are poor in terms of income are the people who belong to the weaker sections of the society. They enjoy a lower social status and are exploited socially. The major economic problem of rural poor is not open unemployment but low production employment.
- In urban area, poor persons comprise mainly unemployed, underemployed, or persons employed in various low productivity occupations such as street peddling, rickshaw pullers, etc., or they are employed in low paid jobs. They live in slums and on pavements in the metropolitan cities. They are, in fact, extension of the rural poverty itself because unemployed people in the rural areas migrate to the nearby towns and metropolitan cities in search of jobs. Most of the poor in the urban areas are either self employed or are working as low paid workers in unorganised manufacturing or service sector of the economy.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY**

Poverty is like a disease that has devastating effects on an individual and his family.

The major effects are as follows:

1. **Effect on Health** – The biggest effect of poverty is poor health. Those who suffer from poverty do not have access to enough food, adequate clothing, medical facilities, and clean surroundings. The lack of all these basic facilities leads to poor health. Such individuals and their families suffer from malnutrition. Further, when these people get ill, they do not have enough money to visit a doctor and buy medicines. Many such poor people die on a daily basis due to prolonged illness etc. Further, these people are unable to afford a clean house for themselves, which also makes them prone to diseases.

### **2. Effects on Society**

a. Violence and crime rate – Occurrence of violence and crime have been found to be geographically coincident. Due to unemployment and marginalization, the poor people often indulge in wrong practices such as prostitution, theft and criminal activities such as chain snatching etc.

- b. Homelessness – Poor people are usually homeless. They sleep on the road sides at night. These makes the entire scenario very unsafe for women and children.
- c. Children living in overcrowded inadequate housing are more likely to contract meningitis, experience respiratory difficulties and have mental health problems, such as anxiety & depression.
- d. Stress – Due to lack of money, poor people suffer from a lot of stress which leads to a reduction in the productivity of individuals, thereby making poor people poorer.
- e. Child labour – Poverty forces poor people to send their children to work instead of sending them to schools. This is because the families fail to bear the burden of their child/ children. Among the poor families, children start earning at an average age of 5 years only.
- f. Terrorism – Youngsters from poor families are usually targeted and involved in terrorist activities. These people are offered huge amount of money in lieu of which they are assigned with a destructive task of terrorism.

### **3. Effect on community**

- a. People living in poverty are more likely to live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and in overcrowded or unsuitable housing.
- b. Children from low income families often miss out on events like school trips, can't invite friends round for tea and can't afford a one week holiday away from home.

**4. Effect on Economy** –Poverty is a directly proportional to the success of the economy. The number of people living under the poverty is reflective of how powerful is the economy.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL PARADIGMS**

Poverty is a great curse. It needs to be removed not only on ethical and humanitarian considerations but also on economic grounds. The entire gamut of economic development would be meaningless unless the benefits of growth reach the masses. Poverty alleviation and uplifting the standard of living of the masses have been the important objective of the government's planning in India.



The main measures undertaken by the government for the removal of poverty are as follows -

### **1. Economic growth**

It was thought that the benefits of economic growth would trickle down to the poor in the form of more employment and more income as a result of expansion of agricultural and non agricultural activities in the rural areas and also in urban areas.

### **2. Agricultural Development**

A very large proportion of population in India is still dependent on the agricultural sector. Therefore, for eradication of mass poverty in rural areas, the government has placed emphasis on the development of agriculture.

### **3. Development of Cottage and small scale industries**

Small scale industries have been given a special place in the industrialisation programme. These industries have played an important role in the generation of employment and in ensuring a more equitable distribution of income.

### **4. Population Control**

To remove poverty population control is essential. This will help in raising the per capita income. In India, the government has adopted the family planning programme to control population.

### **5. Land Reforms**

The government has also pursued the policy of redistribution of assets in the agricultural sector through land reforms. Zamindari system has been abolished.

### **6. Public Distribution System**

The government has launched a scheme of public distribution system (PDS).

*Distribution of food grains and some other essential goods at low and subsidised prices through government regulated fair price shops among poor sections of the society is called PDS.*

The basic objective of this scheme is to provide cheap and subsidised food grains to the poor. The total amount of food grains supplied through PDS constitutes about 10 % of the total

food grains production of the country. India has the largest such distribution network of its type in the world.

## **7. Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPs)**

- The poverty alleviation programmes have been launched by the Indian government with a specific objective of reducing poverty. Most of these programmes are in the form of special employment generation schemes for the poor residing mostly in rural areas and in small towns.
- These special employment programs are of two kinds - one for self employment and the other for wage employment, both in rural and urban areas.
- The important poverty alleviation programs in operation in rural and urban areas are -

### **A. Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojna (JGSY)**

It was introduced in April 1999.

It has two main objectives -

- a. To create durable productive community assets and infrastructure at the village level.
- b. To generate wage employment for unemployed poor in the rural areas.

### **B. Swarnajayanti gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY)**

It was launched on 1 April,1999.

It is a single self employment programme operating for the rural poor.

Its objectives are -

- a. To promote enterprises at the elementary village level.
- b. It assists poor rural families to take up income generating economic activities.

### **C. Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)**

It was started on 2 October 1993.

It is a single wage employment programme.

Its two main objectives are -

- a. To create additional wage employment opportunities during the lean agricultural season. It aims to provide 100 days of work to two members of a rural family.
- b. To create durable productive community assets for sustainable employment and development.

### **D. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojna (PMGY)**

It was introduced in the budget of 2000-01.

Its objective is -

- a. To focus on village level development in five critical areas - health, primary education, drinking water, housing, rural roads.

### **E. Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojna (SGRY)**

It was launched in September 2001.

The objectives of the scheme are -

- a. To provide wage employment along with food security in the rural areas to BPL people.
- b. To create durable community, social and economic assets.

### **F. Food for Work Programme (FWP)**

It was launched in February 2001.

It aims at-

- a. Augmenting food security through wage employment in the drought affected rural areas in 150 most backward districts of the country.
- b. The centre helps the state governments by providing appropriate quantity of food grains free of cost to drought affected states.

#### **G. Krishi Shramik Suraksha Yojna (KSSY)**

The scheme was launched in July 2001.

It aims to provide social security benefits to agricultural labourers.

#### **H. Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**

It is the flagship programme of the government.

It aims at increasing livelihood security to rural households.

#### **I. Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojna (PMRY)**

It was launched on 2 October 1993.

It aims at -

- a. Helping educated unemployed youths in establishing units in industry, service and business sector.

Any youth between the age of 18 and 35 years and belonging to families with annual income less than 24000, are eligible for financial assistance under the scheme.

#### **J. Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojna (SJSRY)**

It came into operation from December 1997 and has been revamped with effect from 1 April 2009.

It aims at providing gainful employment to the urban unemployed or underemployed poor BPL persons through setting up self employment ventures or through provision of wage employment.

**K. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Kaushal Yojna (DDUGKY)**

This scheme empowers the youth in rural regions with the skills and earning capacity on a monthly basis. It's a valuable scheme for the poor in India in which proper training is imparted.

**L. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY)**

This skill India Scheme was launched on July 16, 2015, to upskill around 40 crores Indian youth. This is a booster for poor students to find the new sectors for skill development.

**M. Ayushman Bharat Scheme (ABS)**

Ayushman Bharat Yojna or National Health Protection Scheme was launched on April 14, 2018, by the central government to focus on the wellness of the low income families and providing medical benefits to them.

## INDIA'S POLITICS AND THE POOR

- In India, the poor and disadvantaged castes vote proportionally more than the rich and the upper castes, and often more than those in developed democracies.
- Voter turnout is generally higher in rural areas than in cities.
- The poor have higher expectations of the state than the rich. This faith of India's poor in the democratic process stems from their expectations of the state, which is required by law to provide fair opportunities to every citizen irrespective of caste, creed, religion, and economic status, and to actively work to eliminate these barriers.
- However, the state is also constrained both by the political process of governance and by economic and social institutions. Unlike political institutions, these reflect the existing inequalities and are dependent on the markets. The democratic system does imply some degree of equality in the form of universal franchise irrespective of economic position, giving the poor a space to make their voices heard.
- **Still, the nature of politics in India means that poverty alleviation is not just an economic imperative but a political necessity for elected politicians.** To achieve this, the state needs to mediate between various institutions, ensure fair play through the efficient regulation of markets, and implement transfer and taxation policies to redistribute resources from rich to poor.

## EXERCISE

### I Short answer type questions :

1. Define Poverty. Name the two kinds of poverty.
2. What is the difference between Absolute poverty & Relative poverty ?
3. What is the extent of poverty in India and the world ?
4. What is the politics of poverty in India ? Write in brief.
5. Name any four measures undertaken by the government for the removal of poverty.
6. What are PAP's ? What is its aim ?

7. Explain PDS in brief.

**II Long answer type questions :**

1. Compare the nature of poverty in developed & developing countries respectively.

2. In what ways does poverty effect the social & community life of people ?

3. Which measures taken by the government provides the following benefits -

- a) Food to the poor
- b) Employment in rural areas
- c) Employment in urban areas
- d) Self employment to the unemployed
- e) Social security to the labourers
- f) Wage employment opportunities

Explain each of the measures.

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