

Long Answer Questions

Q.1. Mention some anti-poverty programmes undertaken by the government.

Ans. (i) The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed in September 2005. The act provides 100 days assured employment every year, to every rural household, in 200 districts.

(ii) The central government will also establish National Employment Guarantee Funds. Similarly, state governments will establish State Employment Guarantee Funds for implementation of the scheme.

(iii) Under the programme, if an applicant is not provided employment within 15 days he or she will be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.

(iv) Another scheme is the National Food for Work Programme (NFWP) which was launched in 2004, in 150 most backward districts of the country. The programme is open to all rural people who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual unskilled work. Under this scheme, foodgrains are provided free of cost to the states.

Q.2. State the various Poverty Alleviation Programmes introduced by the government to remove poverty.

Ans. (i) Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY): It is a scheme started in 1993. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns. They are helped in setting up small businesses and industries.

(ii) Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP): It was launched in 1995. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns. A target for creating 25 lakh new jobs has been set for the programme.

(iii) Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): It was launched in 1999. The programme aims at bringing the assisted poor families above the poverty line by organising them into self-help groups through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy.

(iv) Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY): It was launched in 2000. Under this programme, additional Central assistance is given to states for basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and rural electrification.

Q.3. What is the concept of poverty line? How does it vary with time and place?

Ans. (i) A poverty line is an indicator of poverty, i.e., it is a level of income which barely meets sustenance. A common method used to measure poverty is based on the income or consumption level.

(ii) A person is considered poor, if his or her income or consumption level falls below a given 'minimum level' necessary to fulfil basic needs.

(iii) What is necessary to satisfy basic needs is different at different times and in different countries.

(iv) Therefore, poverty line may vary with time and place. Each country uses an imaginary line that is considered appropriate for its existing level of development and its accepted minimum social norms.

(v) For example, a person not having a car in the US may be considered poor. In India, owning of a car is still considered a luxury.