

VIDYA BHAWAN BALIKA VIDYA PITH

शक्तिउत्थानआश्रमलखीसरायबिहार

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POVERTY

Question 1:

Why is calorie-based norm not adequate to identify the poor?

ANSWER:

The calorie-based norm is not adequate to identify the poor because of the following reasons:

- a) This mechanism does not differentiate a very poor from other poor. It categorises them into one category that is, 'poor'. Consequently, it indicates whole class of poor and not, especially, those poor who are the most needy.
- b) This mechanism uses inappropriate proxies for income like Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE), etc. These items do not act as suitable and appropriate proxies for income to measure calorie requirements.
- c) This mechanism does not consider various important factors that are associated with poverty. These factors are health care, clean drinking water, proper sanitation and basic education. Mere estimation of calorie intake does not reflect the true economic condition of an individual.
- d) Another shortcoming of calorie-based norm is that it fails to account for social factors that exaggerate and worsen poverty like ill health, lack of access to resources, lack of civil and political freedom, etc.

Therefore, because of these shortcomings in the calorie-based norm, it cannot be used to identify the poor.

Question 2:

What is meant by 'Food for Work' Programme?

ANSWER:

Food for Work (FFW) Programme was started in 2000-01 with the objective of generating ample employment opportunities for unskilled labourers concentrated in the drought-affected states of Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, M.P, Orissa, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttaranchal. This

programme provides food in exchange of work done by labourers. This programme was aimed to protect poor people against reduction in their purchasing power capacity in the natural calamities prone areas. The work done by the labourers includes watershed development works, water harvesting and construction of metal roads connecting rural and urban areas. This programme not only provides labourers with food but also creates semi-durable assets that facilitate economic and social development of the backward areas.

Question 3:

Why are employment generation programmes important in poverty alleviation in India?

ANSWER:

The importance of employment generation programmes in poverty alleviation efforts in India are as follows:-

(i) Direct Relationship between Employment and Poverty Alleviation

There exists a positive relationship between employment and poverty alleviation. If government aims at creating new employment opportunities, then more people will be employed that will raise their income and, thus, will pull them above the poverty line.

(ii) Higher Standard of Living

With the increase in income, consequent to the new employment opportunities, poverty trodden people can enjoy higher standard of living and greater accessibility to education, better health facilities, proper sanitation, etc.

(iii) Reduce Rural-Urban Migration

Poor people tend to migrate from rural to urban areas in sought of better employment and earning opportunities. This creates undue burden on the urban areas to provide ample job opportunities to these migrants. Failure of this leads to formation of informal sector that makes these people more vulnerable in the urban areas. A positive point of employment generation programmes is that it generates ample employment opportunities in rural areas so as to reduce rural-urban migration.

(iv) Creation of Durable Assets

The employment generation programmes aim at creation of durable assets like watershed development works, water harvesting, irrigation facilities, canal building, construction of roads connecting rural areas to urban areas and construction of dams. All these assets play an important role in the social and economic development of the country.

(v) Self-sufficiency and Self-reliant Areas

The creation of these durable assets protects the poverty-trodden areas from natural calamities such as floods and droughts thereby facilitating these areas to be self-sufficient and self reliant.

(vi) Impart and Enhance Skills

Most of the employment generation programmes help in human capital formation by enhancing knowledge and imparting skills to the unskilled labourers. Such skills increase the employment prospect of the unskilled labourers in the industrial and the service sectors. This not only enhances income earning capacities of these people but also alleviates poverty simultaneously.

(vii) Reduce underemployment and disguised unemployment

Indian agricultural sector is characterised by disguised unemployment. This implies that although a labourer is engaged in agriculture but the total output won't be affected even if the labourer is withdrawn. The role of employment generation programmes in reducing disguised unemployment is very important. These programmes engage these extra labourers in economically fruitful activities, thereby, reducing unnecessary burden on the agricultural sector.
