

21/11/19

Q.3

The discussions on rural poverty do not factor in the changes on the ground.
Comment.

With only 22% of the Indian population living in cities/towns the remaining 78% of the population live in the villages. The agricultural sector, animal husbandry, handicrafts industry, etc are predominantly dominated and based in rural areas.

Low agricultural income, poor agricultural labour salary, increasing farm mechanization, fragmented landholdings, frequent droughts and floods, etc further affect the income of the household and push the people into poverty while forcing them to move to urban areas in search of jobs.

However, despite the low income the ~~lifestyle~~ life style of the people living in rural areas have consistently improved. Government schemes and welfare programmes have consistently improved the living conditions of the poor in the rural areas.

Some of such empowering initiatives are:

- (i) MGNREGS → gives 100 days of employment to the jobless in rural areas.
- (ii) PM KISAN → Assured Rs. 6000 annually to the small and marginal farmers to aid in agriculture.
- (iii) ~~PM~~ Grameen Sadak Yojana
- (iv) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Grameen
- (v) ~~National Rural~~
- (vi) Ujjwala Scheme
- (vii) Aasha workers.
- (viii) Universal Immunization Programme.
- (ix) Mission Indradhanush.
- (x) PM Matritive Vandana Yojana
- (xi) Banking Correspondents.
- (xii) PM JAY / DBT

→ Aims to improve infrastructure like roads, electricity, housing, provision of cooking gas, etc.

→ Aims to improve the health condition

→ Aims at financial inclusion.

All these initiatives have negated the ill effects of a low income household to improve their quality of living.

However, the spend on such programmes must be reduced and money must be put into the hands of the people to make their own choices. Improved agricultural income, rural entrepreneurship, promotion of SHGs, etc must be accelerated to further increase the living conditions in rural society.