**Introduction**

In our daily life, we see poverty all around us. They could be landless labourers in villages, people living in overcrowded jhuggis in cities, daily wage workers or child workers in dhabas. According to facts, in India, every fourth person is poor.

Poverty is the most difficult challenge faced by independent India. Poverty is a condition in which a person lacks the financial resources and essentials things to enjoy minimum standards of life. Poor people can be landless labourers in villages, jhuggi and slum dwellers in cities and towns, daily wage workers at construction sites, child , workers in dhabas or even beggars. India has the largest single concentration of the poor in the world, where every fourth person is poor

**Two Typical Cases of Poverty**

Poverty means hunger and lack of shelter, lack of clean water and sanitation facilities, and lack of a regular job at a minimum decent level. Poverty is considered as one of the biggest challenges of independent India. India would be truly independent only when the poorest of its people become free of human suffering.

* **Poverty can be defined** as lack of daily requirements of livelihood like food, clothing, education etc.
* The poor could be landless labourers in villages or people living in overcrowded jhuggis in urban areas.
* Every 4th person in India is poor. India has the largest single concentration of the poor in the world.

The following two cases show the many dimensions of poverty

**(i) Urban Case**

Ram Saran is a daily wage labourer in a flour mill near Ranchi in Jharkhand. He earns around Rs. 1500 per month when employed. He supports his family of 6 persons, besides sending some money to his elderly parents. His wife and son also work, but none of his 4 children can attend school. The family lives in a one-room rented house on the outer areas of the city; The children are undernourished, have very few clothes or footwear and no access to healthcare.

**(ii) Rural Case**

Lakha Singh is a landless labourer in a small village near Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. By doing odd jobs for farmers, he earns Rs. 50 per day. Sometimes, he gets some food grain or other items instead of cash. He is not literate and his family of 8 people lives in a kuchha hut near the edge of the village. They have no access to healthcare, cannot afford new clothes or even soap or oil.

**Poverty as Seen by  Social Scientists**

Social scientists look at poverty through a variety of indicators. Usually, the indicators are used to relate to the levels of income and consumption. But, now, poverty is looked through other social indicators like illiteracy level, lack of general resistance due to malnutrition, lack of access to healthcare, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, etc.

**Social exclusion:**

Asocial exclusion means living in a poor surrounding with poor people, excluded from enjoying Social equality of better off people in the better surrounding. Social exclusion can be a cause as well as a result of poverty which leads to exclusion of individuals or groups from facilities, benefits and opportunities that others enjoy.

In India, the caste system is based on social exclusion. People belonging to certain caste were prevented from enjoying equal facilities, benefits and opportunities. This caused more poverty than the lower income

For analysis of poverty, social exclusion is very useful. As per this concept poverty must be seen in terms of the poor living only in a poor surrounding with other poor people.

**Vulnerability:** Vulnerability describes the greater probability of being more adversely affected than other people, which is done due to earthquake or simply a fall in the availability of jobs.

Measurement of vulnerability to poverty describe the greater probability of certain communities i.e., members of a backward caste or individuals i.e. a widow or a physically handicapped person

Vulnerability is determined by various options available to different communities in terms of assets, education, job, health, etc and analyse their ability to face various risks like natural disasters. The group which face greater risk at the time of natural calamity are called vulnerable groups.

Social scientists, analyze poverty from many aspects besides levels of income and consumption.  
**These aspects are**

* Poor level of literacy
* Malnutrition leading to poor resistance to disease
* Lack of access to healthcare
* Lack of job opportunities
* Lack of access to sanitation and safe drinking water and so on

**Poverty Line**

The poverty line is a method to measure poverty based on income or consumption levels. Poverty line varies according to time and place. In India, the poverty line is determined through a minimum level of food requirement, clothing, footwear, fuel and light, educational and medical requirement, etc. These physical quantities are multiplied by their prices in rupees. In India, poverty is calculated on the basis of the desired calorie requirement. The accepted average calorie requirement in India is 2400 calories per person per day in rural areas and 2100 calories per person per day in urban areas. On the basis of these calculations, for the year 2011–12, the poverty line for a person was fixed at Rs 816 per month for rural areas and Rs 1000 for urban areas. The poverty line is estimated periodically (normally every five years) by conducting sample surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO).

**Poverty Line:** Poverty line is a way which is used to identify the poor. It is a method used to measure poverty. In this method poverty is measured with the help of consumption and income level of the people.

If the level of income and consumption falls below the minimum level of income and consumption of this line, then the person is considered to be poor.

**Organisations Involved in Estimating Poverty Line**

Surveys for determining poverty line are carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). It is an organisation under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation of the Government of India. It conducts surveys at the interval of 5 years. It is the largest organisation in India conducting regular socio-economic surveys. It was established in 1950.

For determining the poverty line in various countries and for their comparison, international organisations like the World Bank use a uniform standard method. As per this method, the poverty line is level of minimum availability of the equivalent of $1 per person per day.

**Poverty Estimates**

In India, there is a substantial decline in poverty ratios from about 45 per cent in 1993-94 to 37.2 per cent in 2004–05. The proportion of people below the poverty line further came down to about 22 per cent in 2011–12.

**Economic Survey 2011–12, Ministry of Finance, Government of India**

The poverty ratio in the year 1973 is 55 per cent and 30 per cent in 2009-10 which shows decline in the poverty ratios. Poverty ratios further came down to about 26 per cent in 2000 and 36 per cent in 1994. Therefore, the poverty ratio is continuously decreased from 1974 to 2000.

**Vulnerable Groups**

Social groups vulnerable to poverty are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, among the economic groups, the most vulnerable groups are the rural agricultural labour households and urban casual labour households. According to a recent study, except for scheduled tribes, all the other three groups (i.e. scheduled castes, rural agricultural labourers and urban casual labour households) have seen a decline in poverty in the 1990s.

**Story of Sivaraman**

The family of Sivaraman, a rural landless labourer has been cited as an example of such a family. There are 8 members in the family and both he and the wife work. His children do not attend school due to poverty. Only his son gets milk sometimes and they find difficulty in managing even two meals in a day.

The story portays the sufferings of Sivaraman who works as an agricultural labourer, that too for just 5-6 months in a year. The sufferings and inequality within the family for women and children »are even more. Girls are not sent to school and not even given milk to drink, while the youngest child, who is a son gets milk to drink sometimes and his parents also plan for his education.

**Inter-State Disparities**

In India, the proportion of poor people is not the same in every state. Bihar and Odisha continued to be the two poorest states, with poverty ratios of 33.7 and 32.6 percent, respectively. Urban poverty is high in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal saw a decline in poverty. Punjab and Haryana have traditionally succeeded in reducing poverty with the help of high agricultural growth rates. Kerala has focused more on human resource development. In West Bengal, land reform measures have helped in reducing poverty. In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, public distribution of food grains is responsible for the improvement.

In India, proportion of people below poverty line is also not same for all social groups and economic categories.

Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe households are vulnerable to poverty in social groups.

In same direction rural agricultural labour households and the urban casual labour households are vulnerable to poverty in economic categories.

The proportion of poor people is not the same in every state. Recent estimates show while the all India HCR was 21.9% in 2011-12, states like Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa had all India poverty level.

Bihar and Odisha continue to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 33.7% and 37.6% respectively. Alongwith rural poverty, urban poverty is also high in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

In states like Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, West Bengal, there is a significant decline in poverty. The states successful in reducing poverty have adopted different methods for doing so.

**Some examples are**

* Punjab and Haryana had high agricultural growth rates due to the effects of the Green Revolution.
* Kerala has developed its human resources by investing more in education.
* West Bengal has reduced poverty by implementing land reforms.
* Public distribution of foodgrains at subsidised prices in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu has helped in poverty reduction.
* Jammu and Kashmir have generated wide-ranging economic activities all across the state and converted potential in various sectors into employment opportunities.

**Global Poverty Scenario**

In China and Southeast Asian countries, poverty declined substantially as a result of rapid economic growth and massive investments in human resource development. In Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty declined from 51 per cent in 2005 to 41 per cent in 2015. In Latin America, the ratio of poverty has declined from 10 per cent in 2005 to 4 per cent in 2015.

* Although extreme economic poverty has reduced in the world from 43% in 1990 to 22% in 2008 (as per the World Bank), still there are vast regional differences. These are stated below
* The proportion of people living under poverty in different countries is defined by the international poverty line (means population below $1 a day).
* In South-East Asia and China, there is a decline in poverty due to rapid economic growth and massive investment in human resource development.
* In Latin America and the Caribbean, the poverty ratio has not changed significantly since 1981.
* In Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty has increased since 1981 due to successive droughts and other reasons. However, it declined from 51% in 1981 to 47% in 2008.

**World Development Indicators 2012, The World Bank.**

Through huge investments in human resource development and rapid economic growth poverty is substantially decreased in China and Southeast Asian countries.

In china number of poors has come down from  85 per cent in 1981 to 14 per cent in 2008.

In Asian countries i.e India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan despite decline in the percentage of the poor the decline has not been rapid.

In India, poverty is higher than the national estimates. It is done because of different poverty line definition.

In Latin America the ratio of poverty has declined from 11% in 1981 to 6.4 per cent in 2008.

**Causes of Poverty**

There are various reasons for widespread poverty in India.

1. Under British control, India had a low level of economic development. New policies of the colonial government ruined traditional handicrafts and discouraged the development of industries. like textiles. A low rate of growth and an increase in population combined make the growth rate of per capita income very low. With the spread of irrigation and the Green Revolution, many job opportunities were created in the agriculture sector. However, these were not enough to absorb all the job seekers.

2. Another feature of high poverty rates has been the huge income inequalities. One of the major reasons for this is the unequal distribution of land and other resources. In India, lack of land resources has been one of the major causes of poverty in India, but proper implementation of policy could have improved the lives of millions of rural poor.

3. Small farmers needed money to buy agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, etc. So, they used to borrow money and were unable to repay the loan because of poverty.

* **Low growth rate**
* During the British colonial administration, the rate of growth was very low which was the basic cause of poverty.
* **Discouragement of development of industries and handicrafts Products**
* Discouragement of development of industries and handicrafts Products is one historical reason of poverty. The policies of the colonial government discourage development of industries, like textile industries which is the basic source of income of the poor. An uneducated person can easily get job in this type of industries as labour and sustains his livehood.
* Discouragement of handicrafts Products is also a major causes of poverty, during the British colonial administration. The households can easily earn money by the way of to produce handicrafts products.
* **High growth rate of population**
* The population is increasing instead of low level of income. Which  becomes cause of poverty.
* **Huge income inequalities**
* There are huge income inequalities between have or have not. For this term, huge income inequalities makes it difficult to properly implement the poverty elimination policies of government. Therefore , it is the major cause of poverty.
* **Lack of land resources**
* Lack of land resources is the also major cause of poverty. Incomes of the villagers are fully based on agriculture income and lack of land resources creates low level of agriculture income which becomes the major cause of poverty.

**Anti-Poverty Measures**

The current anti-poverty scheme is divided into two parts.

1. **Promotion of economic growth**

* According to official poverty estimation, the growth rate jumped from the average of about 3.5 percent a year in the 1970s to about 6 percent during the 1980s and 1990s. With the help of high rate of growth, reduction of poverty is possible.
* It shows a link between poverty reduction and economic growth. Therefore, promotion of economic growth helps to reduce poverty.

1. **Targeted anti-poverty programmes**

Since the eighties, India’s economic growth has been one of the fastest in the world. There is a strong link between economic growth and poverty reduction. Some of the schemes which are formulated to affect poverty directly or indirectly are:

* **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005** – It aimed to provide 100 days of wage employment to every household to ensure livelihood security in rural areas. It also aimed at sustainable development to address the cause of drought, deforestation and soil erosion. One-third of the proposed jobs have been reserved for women.
* **In 1993, Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY**) was started. The main aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns.
* **In 1995, Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP)** was launched. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns.
* **In 1999, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)** was launched. 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.
* **In 2000, the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY)** was launched. 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.
* **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)**  It was launched in September 2005 and it provides 100 days assured employment every year to every rural household in 200 districts. Later, the scheme will be extended to 600 districts. One third of the proposed jobs would be reserved for women. In this Act if an applicant is not provided employment within fifteen days, then he/she will be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance. The central government and state governments will also establish National Employment Guarantee Funds and State Employment Guarantee Funds for implementation of the scheme.
* **Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY)** This programme was launched in september , 2001.The Employment Assurance Schemes and JGSY would be merged with SGRY.The aim of the programme is to provide wage employment and to create durable community, social and economic assets.

**The Challenges Ahead**

In India, Poverty has certainly declined in India, but it still remains India’s most compelling challenge. Poverty reduction is expected to make better progress in the next ten to fifteen years. This can be achieved by higher economic growth, increasing stress on universal free elementary education, declining population growth, and increasing empowerment of women and the economically weaker sections of society.

* Poverty reduction remains India’s most compelling challenge despite the progress. Because of unequal distribution of income, increase in population etc.
* The positive situation can be done by the way of higher economic growth, increasing stress on universal free elementary education, declining population growth, increasing empowerment of the women and the economically weaker sections of society, providing health care, education and job security.
* **Unemployment:** Unemployment is a situation where a person have not job despite of he/she able to do job. It is a big cause of poverty. Unemployment is also a situation of being joblessness when people are in condition of without job and in situation of seeking job during recession.
* It is a sign of poverty, where an individual is unemployed. It is a loss of human resources to the  nation and stigma to the society.
* **Child labour:** Child labour is a situation where a child is employed for earning money. Which is mentally, physically and socially dangerous and harmful for the children. Child labour is a basic problem of poverty. Because of doing work, child can not be literate and he/she is unable to make his/her future.
* The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 defines a child as any person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age.
* According to International labour Organization (ILO), the term ‘child labour’ is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.
* **Illiteracy:** Illiteracy is the condition where a person unable to read and write. In India Illiteracy is a major problem of poverty.

### Very Short Answer Type Questions

**Question 1** When the health of a person suffers due to deficiency of nutrients in food as per his daily requirement, he/she is said to be the victim of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Answer: Malnutrition

**Question 2** What helped West Bengal in reducing poverty?

Answer: Land reform measures.

**Question 3** How many people in India live below the poverty line?

Answer: 270 million.

**Question 4** In rural areas in India, the accepted average calories requirement per person per day is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Answer: 2400 calories.

**Question 5** What is the most difficult challenge faced by independent India?   
Answer: Poverty

**Question 6** PMRY was started in 1993, stands for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Answer: Prime Minister Rojgar Yozana

**Question 7** SGSY was launched in 1999 for assisted poor families above poverty line by organising them into self-help groups.

Answer: Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana

**Question 8** PMGY was launched in 2000 to provide rural shelter, rural drinking water, primary health, primary education and rural electrification. It stands for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Answer: Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yozana

**Question 9** What is poverty?

Answer: Poverty is a situation in which a person is unable to satisfy minimum basic necessities of life, i.e., food, clothing, education, shelter, health, etc.

**Question 10** What are the two methods of estimating the poverty line.

Answer: There are two methods of measuring poverty line— Level consumption expenditure method and Income method.

**Question 11** What are the two main causes of poverty in India?

Answer: Low level of economic development under the British colonial administration. A high growth rate of population.

**Question 12** What is the full form of NSSO?

Answer: National Sample Survey Organisation.

**Question 13** Which are the poorest states in India?

Answer: Odisha and Bihar

**Question 14** How is poverty defined by the World Bank?

Answer: Poverty is defined by the World Bank as living on less than $ 1.90 per day.

**Question 15** What is the major reason behind huge income inequalities?

Answer: It is the unequal distribution of land and other resources.

**Question 16** Which organisation carries out survey for determining the poverty line?

Answer: National Sample Survey Organisation

**Question 17** How do you define vulnerability to poverty?

Answer: Vulnerability to poverty is a measure, which describes the greater probability of certain communities or individuals of becoming, or remaining, poor in the coming years.

**Question 18** How does a country measure its poverty?

Answer: Each country uses an imaginary line that is considered appropriate for its existing level of development and its accepted minimum social norms.

**Question 19** How is the food requirement estimated in poverty line?

Answer: The present formula for food requirement while estimating the poverty line is based on the desired calorie requirement. Food items, such as cereals, pulses, vegetable, milk, oil, sugar, etc., together provide these needed calories.

**Question 20** What is the accepted average calorie requirement in India?

Answer: The accepted average calorie requirement in India is 2,400 calories per person per day in mral areas and 2,100 calories per person per day in urban areas.

**Question 21** Who advocated that India would be truly independent only when the poorest of its people become free of human suffering?

Answer: Mahatma Gandhi

**Question 22** Which scheme was started in 1993 to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns?

Answer: Prime Minister Rozgar Yozana (PMRY).

**Question 23** For how many days MGNREGA provides employment?

Answer: 100 days

**Question 24** Which country of Southeast Asia made rapid economic growth resulting in a significant decline in poverty?

Answer: China

**Question 25** Which social groups are most vulnerable to poverty?

Answer: The social groups, which are most vulnerable to poverty are Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe households.

**Question 26** Which states of India have seen a significant decline in poverty?

Answer: Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal

**Question 27** On which two planks does the current anti-poverty strategy of the government is based upon?

Answer: Promotion of economic growth. Targeted anti-poverty programmes.

**Question 28** What are the biggest challenges before India?

Answer: Providing healthcare, education and job security for all and achieving gender equality and dignity for the poor are the bigger challenges before India

**Question 29** What kind of people in India are considered poor?

Answer: They could be landless labourers in villages or people living in overcrowded jhuggis in cities. They could be daily wage earners at construction sites or child workers in dhabas. They could also be beggars with children in tatters.

**Question 30** What is poverty?

Answer: Poverty is a situation in which a person is unable to get the minimum basic necessities of life, i.e., food, clothing and shelter for his or her sustenance.

**Question 31** Mention any one historical reason for poverty.

Answer: Low level of income under the British colonial rule.

**Question 32** State two consequences of poverty.

Answer: Growth of slums and high level of indebtedness are the two consequences of poverty.

**Question 33** What are the factors of human poverty?

Answer: There are many factors of human poverty like not having job security, discrimination due to caste, having inadequate access to education, shelter or food etc.

**Question 34** Why is the concept of poverty being broadened into human poverty?

Answer: The concept of poverty is being broadened into human poverty as the challenge is becoming bigger and the analysis of poverty is becoming rich through a variety of new concepts like social exclusion.

**Question 35** Mention any one common indicator of poverty.

Answer: Social exclusion is a common indicator of poverty today.

**Question 36** How is the analysis of poverty becoming rich in recent years?

Answer: The analysis of poverty is being enriched through a variety of new concepts like social exclusion and vulnerability.

**Question 37** What is poverty line?

Answer: Poverty line is an indicator of poverty, i.e., it is a level of income which barely meets sustenance.

**Question 38** When is a person considered poor?

Answer: A person is considered poor if his or her income or consumption level falls below the given minimum level necessary to fulfil the basic needs.

**Question 39** Who is an urban poor?

Answer: An urban poor is a person who has an income of ₹ 1,000 per month and in terms of calories, has a requirement of 2,100 calories per person per day.

**Question 40** Which methods are used to estimate the poverty line in India?

Answer: The daily income and consumption method are used to estimate the poverty line in India.

**Question 41** How is poverty line estimated periodically? State the organisation which is responsible for estimating poverty.

Answer: The poverty line is estimated periodically by conducting sample surveys. These surveys are carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO).

**Question 42** Why is the calorie requirement higher in rural areas?

Answer: On account of people in the rural areas engaging themselves in strenuous physical work, calorie requirement in rural areas is higher than in urban areas.

**Question 43** Give the definition of poverty line as defined by the World Bank.

Answer: World Bank defines poverty line in terms of minimum availability of the equivalent of $ 1.90 per person per day.

**Question 44** Which social groups are vulnerable to poverty?

Answer: The two social groups, most vulnerable to poverty, are scheduled castes and scheduled tribes households.

**Question 45** Give any two poorest states in India.

Answer: Odisha and Bihar are the two poorest states in India.

**Question 46** Which states of India has seen a significant decline in poverty?

Answer: There has been a significant decline in poverty in Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal.

**Question 47** Poverty, which was officially non-existent earlier, has resurfaced in which country?   
Answer: Russia

**Question 48** What led to the substantial decline in poverty in China?

Answer: The substantial decline in poverty in China has been a result of rapid economic growth and massive investment in human resource development.

**Question 49** By which year the new sustainable development goals of the United Nations proposes ending all types of poverty?

Answer: 2030.

**Question 50** How is regular growth of population one of the major causes of poverty?

Answer: High population growth rate increases the rate of depletion of resources. Due to this, pressure on resources increases. People will have to manage with a smaller share of resources, thus bringing more people below the poverty line.

**Question 51** The current anti-poverty programme consists of two planks. Name them.

Answer: The two planks of the current anti-poverty programme are: Promotion of economic growth Targeted anti-poverty programmes

**Question 52** Name the scheme which was launched to create self-employment opportunities for the educated youth in the rural areas.

Answer: The Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana

**Question 54** What is the full form of MGNREGA?

Answer: MGNREGA stands for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.   
**Question 55** What does PMGY stand for?

Answer: PMGY stands for Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana.

**Question 56** When was Rural Employment Generation Programme launched?

Answer: REGP was launched in the year 1995.

**Question 57** What is India’s most compelling challenge?

Answer: India’s most compelling challenge is poverty reduction.

**Short Answer Type Questions**

**Question 1** What are the indicators used by social scientists to understand poverty?

Answer: The indicators used by social scientists to understand poverty are : Levels of income and consumption Lack of general resistance due to malnutrition Lack of access to healthcare Lack of job opportunities Lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, etc.

**Question 2** What do you understand by vulnerability to poverty?

Answer: Vulnerability of poverty means some communities or social groups are more prone to poverty than other sections of the society. Members of a backward caste or individuals such as a widow or a physically handicapped person of becoming, or remaining, poor in the coming years. Vulnerability is determined by the options available to different communities for finding an alternative living in terms of assets, education, health and job opportunities. Further, it is analysed on the basis of the greater risks these groups face at the time of natural disasters (earthquakes, tsunami), terrorism, etc.

**Question 3** How were the British policies responsible for the increase in poverty in India?

Answer: There were a number of causes for the widespread in India. One of the historical reasons is the low level of economic development under the British colonial administration. The policies of colonial government ruined traditional handicrafts and discouraged development of industries like textiles. The low rate of growth persisted until the nineteen-eighties. This resulted in less job opportunities and low growth rate of incomes. This was accompanied by a high growth rate of population. The two combined to make the growth rate of per capita income very low. The failure at both the fronts : promotion of economic growth and population control perpetuated the cycle of poverty.

**Question 4** What does social exclusion mean?

Answer: According to this concept, poverty must be seen in terms of the poor having to live only in poor surrounding with other people, excluded from enjoying social equality of better-off people in better surroundings. Social exclusion can be both a cause as well as a consequence of poverty in the usual sense. Broadly, it is a through in which individuals or groups are excluded from facilities, benefits and opportunities that others enjoy.

**Question 5** How is economic growth linked with poverty reduction in India?

Answer: Till the early eighties, there were little per capita income growth and not much reduction in poverty. Afterwards the growth rate jumped from the average of about 3-5 percent a year in the 1970s to 6 per cent during the 1980s and 1990s. The higher growth rates have helped significantly in the reduction of poverty. There is a strong link between economic growth and poverty reduction. Economic growth widens opportunities and provides the resources needed to invest in human development. This also encourages people to send their children, including the girl child, to schools in the hope of getting better economic returns from investing in education.

**Question 6** How are socio-cultural and economic factors responsible for poverty?

Answer: Many socio-cultural and economic factors are responsible for poverty. In order to fulfil social obligations and observe religious ceremonies, people in India, including the very poor, spend a lot of money. Small farmers need money to buy agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Since poor people hardly have any savings, they borrow. Unable to repay because of poverty, they become victims of indebtedness. So, the high level of indebtedness is both the cause and effect of poverty.

**Question 7** Explain the principle measures taken in Punjab, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh to reduce poverty.

Answer: The measure taken in Punjab, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh to reduce poverty are : The principal measures taken in Punjab to reduce poverty is increasing the agricultural growth rates. Kerala has focused more on human resource development to reduce poverty. Andhra Pradesh focused on public distribution of food grains to reduce poverty.

**Question 8** Illustrate the seriousness of poverty in India?

Answer: In our daily life, we come across many people who we think are poor. They could be landless labourers in villages or people living in overcrowded jhuggis in cities. They could be daily wage workers at construction sites or child workers in dhabas. They could also be beggars with children in tatters. We see poverty all around us. In fact, every fourth person in India is poor. This means, roughly 270 million (or 27 crore) people in India live in poverty 2011-12. This also means that India has the largest single concentration of the poor in the world. This illustrates the seriousness of the challenge.

**Question 9** Is it correct that poverty line may vary with time and place?

Answer: A person is considered poor if his or her income or consumption level falls below a given “minimum level” necessary to fulfill the basic needs. What is necessary to satisfy basic needs is different at different times and in different countries. 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.

**Question 10** Explain how the low level of education of the poor people can be held responsible for poverty in India.

Answer: Low level of education of the poor is a major cause behind their poverty. Poor people do not have access to education. Because of illiteracy, the Indian farmers have failed to learn new methods of cultivation. Even the village moneylenders succeed in cheating them quite easily. Moreover, poor parents are not able to send their children to schools. So, the poor people are employed as unskilled workers and are paid low wages due to low level of education.

**Question 11** Describe the aims of Swarnajanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yozana.

Answer: Swarnayanti Gram Swarozgar : Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) 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. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yozana : The Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yozana (PMGY) was launched in 2000. Under this scheme, additional central assistance is given to states for basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and rural electrification.

**Question 12** What are the major reasons for less effectiveness of anti-poverty measures?

Answer: The major reasons for less effectiveness of anti-poverty measures are : One of the major reasons for less effectiveness is the lack of proper implementation and right targeting. Moreover, there has been a lot of overlapping of schemes. Despite good intentions, the benefits of these schemes are not fully reached to the deserving poor. Therefore, the major emphasis in recent years is on proper monitoring of all the poverty alleviation programmes. Poverty as a Challenge Class 9 Extra Questions Long Answer Type Questions

**Question 1** How does rapid growth rate of population increase poverty in a country?

Answer: Rapid growth of population in comparison to the rate of growth of resources hampers the process of economic development. Increase in population reduces the per capita income and lowers the standard of living in an economy. In India, rapid growth of population has put in more stress on its economic and social infrastructure and thereby, aggravating the problem of poverty and unemployment. Due to enormous population, a large portion of national income is used on consumption and less is left for saving which, in turn, reduces the capital formation. As a result of low capital formation, enough employment opportunities cannot be created which further aggravate the problem of poverty. Poor people in India are ignorant, illiterate and has very less means of entertainment. So, they end up adding more to the population.

**Question 2** What is poverty? What are the dimensions of poverty?

Answer: Poverty is a situation in which a person is unable to get the minimum necessities of life. Due to poverty poor people are in a situation in which they are ill-treated at almost every place. The dimensions of poverty are : Poverty means hunger and lack of shelter. It is a situation in which parents are not able to send their children to school or a situation where sick people cannot afford treatment. Poverty also means lack of clean water and sanitation facilities. It also means lack of a regular job at a minimum decent level. : Poor people are in a situation in which they are ill-treated at almost every place, in farms, factories, government offices, hospitals, railway stations etc.

**Question 3** Discuss the various groups that are vulnerable to poverty.

Answer: The following groups are vulnerable to poverty : Social Groups: Social groups, which are most vulnerable to poverty are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe households. Although, the average for people below poverty line for all groups in India is 22, 43 out of 100 people belonging to Scheduled Tribes are not able to meet their basic needs. Economic Groups: Among the economic groups, the most vulnerable groups are the rural agricultural labour households and the urban casual labour households. Inequality of incomes within a family: There is also inequality of incomes within a family. In poor families, all suffer, but some suffer more than others. In some cases, women, elderly people and female infants are denied equal access to resources available to the family.

**Question 4** How can poverty be reduced in future in India?

Answer: Poverty can be reduced in the following ways : Increasing stress on universal free elementary education Increasing empowerment of the women and the economically weaker sections of society. Declining population growth. Avoiding caste and gender discrimination. Improving healthcare, education and job security. Removing inequality of wealth among people.