



Economist Reveals Disturbing Trends In Iran's Poverty Landscape

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With one in three Iranians living in absolute poverty, a renowned economist has said authorities are using statistics in a power struggle instead of solving the problem.

Farshad Momeni, a professor at a Tehran university, highlighted the distressing reality of widespread poverty, as per recent official data analysis but warns that some government officials are misusing and manipulating the data in the name of justice.

"This has given rise to a situation where individuals assert their ability to eradicate absolute poverty within 14 days, while others escalate these assertions, leading to a disconcerting competition among segments of the power structure to outdo one another with baseless statements," he said.

He also pointed to a dramatic decline in middle-income levels over recent years, which has narrowed the gap between those living above and below the poverty threshold.

In Iran, the "poverty line" signifies the income threshold necessary to meet a household's essential needs, with incomes falling below this mark labeled as "absolute poverty." Iranian authorities report that the poverty line for Tehran residents stands at around 300,000,000 rials (approximately \$600) per month, which is three times the country's minimum wage.

However, figures alone are not enough to grasp the complexities of the poverty landscape, Momeni said. He argued that it is essential to grasp the dynamics of development to appreciate the precarious position of the middle-income class and reiterated that using the stark statistics to gain popularity in government would do little to help the actual problem.

In a society grappling with these challenging realities, the economist's candid and sobering analysis serves as a wake-up call, emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive and informed policy responses to address the multifaceted issue of poverty in Iran.