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FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA – CHALLENGES AHEAD

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role of food security in sustainable economic as well as human development. It says that there is a close interlink between food security and socio economic development of the country. India's food security is related to the resources and means of having access to the stock powers of food gains. Lack of food is due to the lack of means to acquire it. The main challenge to food security comes mainly from slow growth of purchasing power of the people rather than food availability. There is a need to rejuvenate Indian agricultural sector which is the backbone of the Indian economy. Neoliberal policies as well as the failures of the policies of the government are also responsible for the emergence of food insecurity.

KEYWORDS

Agricultural Growth, Development, Economic Growth, Food Security, Purchasing Power.

INTRODUCTION

A time would come when growing population would run out of available food and would starve and face Famine after famine" That would be the end of the humanity.

DAVID RICARDO

Indian economy is witnessing a transformational progress with gross domestic product growing at an average of 8 percent per year. But the question ahead is whether this growth is able to sustain for a long run? Or the economy has impressing aggressive economic growth. Development is, above all, a human process and not just a mechanical or technological change; it is the development of people. The goal of development is to enrich the quality of life. In Indi, its high economic growth rate has been failed to improve internal food security, there is a growing internal insecurity with the emergence of a sense of food insecurity, leaving the country to face a crisis in its real economy. The problem is more severe because a large proportion of the population is already malnourished and thereby more prone to debilitating illness and inability to achieve normal growth. India's nutrition indicators are among the lowest in the world. Nearly half of all India's children are underweight, and half suffer from anaemia. This is worse than all countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Jayathi Ghosh). About 41% of the world's underweight children are the future human resources capital of the country (UN hunger taskforce)

Though India is one of the largest producers of the food grains in the world, yet nearly 300 million people still struggle to meet two squares meals a day and 21 percent of the population are malnourished (International Food Policy Research Institute, 2011). According to the International food policy research institute's 2010 Hunger Index, India ranks 67th in a list out of 88 countries. The GHI ranks countries on a scale of 100, with 0 being the best score and 100 the worst. It is composed of three equally weighted indicators: the proportion of undernourished in the population, the prevalence of those underweight in children under five and the under-five mortality rate. The food insecurity is so rampant across the country that India is clubbed with minor economies like Bangladesh, Timor-Leste and Yemen, recording the highest Prevalence of underweight in children under five.

TABLE 1: GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

| COUNTRY | GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX | RANKING |
|----------|---------------------|------------|
| BRAZIL | <5 | NOT RANKED |
| CHINA | 6.0 | 9 |
| S.AFRICA | 7.3 | 17 |
| PAKISTAN | 19.1 | 52 |
| SUDAN | 20.9 | 58 |
| INDIA | 24.1 | 67 |

Source: International Food Policy Research Institute, 2011.

LEVEL OF MALNUTRITION

- Nutrition is important to ensure proper brain formation and development, which starts in the womb. Under-nutrition as a silent emergency haunts the lives of millions of Indian children. Close to two million children below the age of 5 die in India every year.
- Nearly 45% of children below five suffer from malnutrition.
- India is in the sixth position in a global poll that ranks countries where children are most vulnerable.
- Nearly half of the world's hunger and malnourished children are in India.
- Four children dying every minute due to starvation.
- One third of our newborns' weight below WHO cut off of 2.5 kg.
- As per NFHS 2 (1998-99) 47% & NFHS 3 (2005) 45.9% Children below 3 years are underweight. Undernourished 22% 2004-06)
- Under weight in children under five 43.5% (2003-8)

These give India a composite GHI of 24.1, which is classified as alarming in terms of food security.

The term 'food security' entered the broader development policy debate at the 1974 World Food Conference. The most common definition today was first launched at the World Food Summit in 1996. At the World Summit of Food Security in 2009, this definition was reconfirmed, and the concept was extended and specified by adding that the "four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization, and stability" and stated that "the nutritional dimension is integral to the concept". The concept of food security is well-suited to facilitate the discussion and guide action on promising pathways out of hunger and malnutrition (Oliver Ecker and Clemens Breisinger, 2012).

FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION: Food security implies "A situation that exists when all people, at all the times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

FOOD AS A RIGHT: Right to food enshrines freedom from hunger and malnutrition as a fundamental right. The right to be free from hunger and malnutrition is recognised under the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the universal declaration on the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. Right to food includes the production, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption of safe food, as well as parallel measures in the fields of health, education, employment and social security. The Right to food is an essential part of the right to life under the article 21 of the Indian constitution.

SWAMINATHAN'S REPORT on food security in rural India says that "the number of under nourished people is rising, reversing gains made in the 1990s. Slowing growth in food production, rising unemployment and declining purchasing power of the poor India are combining to weaken the rural economy"

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH OF THE STUDY

This analysis utilises data published by the various NSSO Round surveys, census report, Economic surveys, Ministry of agriculture, FAO, Government of India. The period covered by this paper, from 1993-94 to 2008 in which Indian economy is moving towards Globalisation, Liberalisation and Privatisation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literatures on food security contributes to the discussion by synthesizing the pertinent literature and presenting an innovative framework that may help identifying and designing promising pathways to food security and improved nutrition (Oliver Ecker and Clemens Breisinger, 2012). A Study by C. Gopalan :(1995), titled "Towards Food and Nutrition Security", using data derived from the national level surveys such as NNMB (1980, 1991) and NFHS (1993) for the period 1975-1995, found that India is witnessing a cruel paradox of satisfactory buffer stocks of food grains on the one hand and under nutrition on the other hand. Inadequate distribution of food grains and access to it is found on the part of millions of poor households in the country. The 'right to food', 'clothing' and 'shelter' in perhaps the most important of all human rights, being related to human survival itself. He opines that the Nutrition security is much more than food security. So the long term goal of the country must be the achievement of an optimal state of nutrition. In this aspect the ecological as well as the nutritional factors also discussed from the point of socio-economical prospective (used indicators are life expectancy, literacy level and nutrition status of the under five). An attempt is made in this paper to examine the current status of different states with respect to their levels of nutritional status and social development using data derived from NNMB and NFHS. Major findings of this study are the existence of interstate disparities with respect to socio-economic development. Large number of agricultural labourers and small land holders are eating off the land and poor off take of food grains through the PDS are witnessing. Moreover, he argues that there is an interrelationship between improvement of nutritional status of a population and its overall socio-economic development. Therefore nutritional upliftment programmes must be considered in the total context of socio-economic development. For instance HDI takes both social aspects as well as the economic status into the consideration while ranking the states. He concludes by saying that the durable way of ensuring adequate food supplies to poor households will be through improving their capacity to earn their livelihood with dignity is now well recognised. He further quotes that the country has still a long way to go before it can be legitimately claimed that adequate progress towards eradication of inequalities has been achieved, with considering the new emerging challenges in this globalised era.

Radhakrishna and K. Venkata Reddy In the study titled" Food Security and Nutrition: Vision 2020" explain food security from the point of Availability and Accessibility. Using the NFHS, NNMB SURVEY data for the period 1993-2001, found that though the country attained self-sufficiency in food grain production and combated the incidence of poverty, chronic food security still persist in a large proportion of India's population. So that substantial human resources are wasted due to malnutrition related diseases. A distinction was made between Transient and Chronic food insecurity. Transient food insecurity is associated with seasonal fluctuations whereas chronic food insecurity is associated with continuously inadequate diet. Chronic poverty which is wide spread in India can be tackled with raising purchasing power among the people (failure of exchange entitlement). Due to the sluggish growth of agriculture production in a highly populated country like India the per capita availability also decreased. The author opines that at this growth rate Agricultural diversification, Technological innovation, enhanced public investment, rise in the expenditure of Agricultural research is the need of the hour. On the other hand steps should be taken to generate off farm as well as nonfarm employment opportunities through proper utilisation of this vibrant rural non-farm section. He further observes that government should re-focus on PDS, which is the safety net for vulnerable sections because today's food insecurity is mainly due to dietary diversification of the poor. The study project the demand for food by 2020, using Linear Expansion System Model. He concludes that country needs a domestic reform which is able to over lift the country from malnutrition, improve basic facilities and eliminate food Insecurity by enhancing their capabilities to participate in the growth process.

A study by Ananth.s.Panth (1997) titled Social Network and Food Security in Rural Karnataka: made an attempt to briefly describe the strategies of poor households of rural Karnataka to cope with vulnerability. The problems of poverty, hunger and malnutrition are coupled /coexist with predominated Agricultural economy. It takes Mandya which is irrigated area and Nagamangala taluk which is rained area as an example to explain the nature of cultivation. It also made an attempt to point out four means to secure food security namely, Access to land, wage employment, self-employment and finally the combination of all. Cultivators are directly access to food through cultivation and non-cultivators earn their food through wage and self-employment engaging in non-agricultural sector. Thus their consumption levels would dependent on their income and prices of food. Both are subject to fluctuations throughout the year due overdependence in agriculture as well as the non availability of productive nonfarm employment opportunities. Today they are the vulnerable section of the rural society. Under nourishment is mainly due to the lack of purchasing power among the large proportion of the population. The government is responsible to provide food at subsidised rate but it has been failed in its attempt in effectively targeting the poor. PDS has been inefficient in this regard. He opines that Inadequate social security schemes of the government makes it inevitable to the respective households in rural Karnataka to have an alternative mechanisms such as soft loans, barter system, alms, borrowing in kind and wages in kind to satisfy their food requirements. These are the several networks which acts as safety net in maintaining their food security. The study concludes by saying that through stabilizing food grains yield and government policies of wage employment and PDS schemes can surely act as a supplementary to the existing social network in rescuing the vulnerable section.

Another study by KANNAN .K. P, MAHENDRA DEV.S, ALAKH NARAIN SHARMA: (2000) , titled "Concerns on Food Security": mainly focus on the future scenario in relation to the demand and supply of food, role of PDS, the role of R and D and the role of international trade for ensuring food security, micro level experiences. It has explored major findings as follows Present level food grain production may not be sufficient to meet the growing needs in the coming decades. Integration into the world trade will probably worsen the matters. Malfunctioning and non-functioning of the PDS should be redesigned by the central as well as the concerned state government. Food security has diverse connections in different regions, need to understand the scenario of food security at the micro level and devise appropriate strategies that deliver effective results. Recent trends show that there has been a deceleration in public investment in agriculture. Thus he study concludes that to ensure sustainability in food grain production adequate investment in agricultural infrastructure and research and development are needed and PDS should be operationalised by bringing them under the purview of Panchayat Raj institutions.

In another recent study by MAITHREYI KRISHNARAJ :(2006), titled "Food Security, Agrarian Crisis and Rural Livelihoods Implications for Women": attempts to show how the quantity as well as the quality of food consumption and nutrition for the poorer sections has connections with agricultural developments. This study covered the period from 1950-51 to 2003-04 found that despite there being an increase in the quantity of food grains being produced domestically as well as in the imports of food grains; India has been unable to achieve food security. Decline in official estimates of poverty has not eliminated multiple deprivations. It provide a comparative picture of the agricultural dependents in India in which nearly more than half of the population still depending upon agriculture and USA as well as European Union where agricultural dependents are less than 10 percent. He further found that developed countries labour movement is accompanied by transfer of people from agriculture to other sectors, where as in India, the decline in agricultural dependent proportion is modest, on the other hand large number of land less and land poor don't have sufficient livelihood facilities. The study concludes that the solution would be to create urban-like facilities in rural areas and other enterprises should offer off-farm and non-farm employment to the rural poor. Agricultural modernisation with biotechnology and innovative alternatives for agriculture ensure livelihood to the poor. In these areas of improvement the quality of infrastructure as well as agricultural modernisation requires community effort plus state support. The social transformation of rural India should be expected to take place through planned development.

The works cited here cover different aspects of the food security from 1990s to 2006.

BASICALLY FOOD SECURITY HAS FOUR COMPONENTS

- Food availability : it depends on food production.
- Food accessibility : it depends on purchasing power
- Food Absorption : is a function of safe drinking water, primary health care & education & also environmental hygiene.
- Food Stability : it depends on maintaining price stability.

India's food security is related to the resources and means of having access to stock powers of food gains. Lack of food is due to the lack of means to acquire it rather than shortage of food grain production. So, main challenge to food security comes mainly from slow growth of purchasing power of the people.

FOOD AVAILABILITY

Availability means existence of sufficient stocks of food to meet demand. Demand and supply prospects of food items become important indicators to the country's food security concerns. The apparent imbalance between food demand and supply is essentially because of the shortfall in supply. India being an agricultural background country, the performance of agriculture is important for availability as well as access to food as more than 52 per cent of total workforce still dependent on this sector. Population trends project India to emerge as the most populous country in the world in the coming decades. The demand for food has been primarily driven by growth in population and income. The rate of agricultural production has increased over the successive years. India achieved self-sufficiency by mid seventies itself. The production rose more than three times since 1950s. Food grain production in the 1960s increased about 20 million tonnes a year on an average. The average annual rise of Production was about 27 million tonnes in the 1970s over the 1960s and more than 37million tonnes the 1980s. Total food grain production in 2010-11 estimated at 232.07 million tonnes (Table 2).

TABLE 2: AVERAGE ANNUAL FOOD GRAIN PRODUCTION (MILLION TONNES)

| Year | Production | Per capita availability |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| 1950-51 to 1959-60 | 65.47 | 432.9 |
| 1960-61 to 1969-70 | 85 | 447.5 |
| 1970-71 to 1979-80 | 111.53 | 444.3 |
| 1980-81 to 1989-90 | 146.55 | 465 |
| 1990-91 to 1999-00 | 188.64 | 475.5 |
| 2000-01 to 2009-10 | 210.53 | 444.6 |

Source: Ministry of agricultural, GOI

Though the food grain increased in successive years, food grain has not been able to keep pace with the increase in population. With raised mismatch between food grain productions as well as rise in the rate of population the per capita availability has gone down from 475.5 grams per person per day in the 1990s to 444.6 grams last decade (Table 2). This shows the per capita consumption of poorest section is far below the recommended level. For instance Annual increase in agricultural production has been at 2.5% in the period between 1950-51-2006-07, which is higher than the population growth of 2.1% during the same period. But it is reversed during 1990-2007, in which food grain production has declined to 1.2% while population has increased at 1.9% rate. Agricultural growth has decelerated from 3.5 percent during 1981-1997 to 2 percent during 1997-2005 (Mahendra Dev.s, 2012)

Past trends in production of selected food items and their average annual growth rates in India (1980-2006/07) as well as outside the India (2006-07) decreased. As a comparative study are presented in the below (Table: 3).

TABLE 3: FOOD GRAIN PRODUCTION TRENDS IN INDIA AS WELL AS THE WORLD

| Food items | India | | World trend |
|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | Annual rate of growth (percent) | | |
| | 1980/81-2006/07 | 2000/01-2006/07 | 2000-2005 |
| Rice | 2.4 | 0.1 | -0.1 |
| Wheat | 2.9 | -0.5 | 0.4 |
| Cereals | 2.2 | 0.2 | 1.0 |
| Pulses | 0.7 | 1.4 | 1.5 |
| Oil seeds | 3.6 | 4.5 | 4.1 |
| Sugarcane | 2.6 | -2.0 | 1.3 |

Source: Agricultural statistics at a glance, 2007, GOI, FAO statistics.

The above statistics indicate that the total production as well as the annual growth rate of some selected food items has decreased over the decades in India and also the global production trends are quite similar to that of India. Mainly Rice, wheat and sugar which are turned negative, pulses as well as cereals production too reduced. This shows that farmers are moving away from Traditional food staples. The world food situation is very serious today with food riots reported from many countries like Egypt, Cameroon, Haiti, and Barkina Faso, Nigeria etc. If the food grain situation doesn't improve then the food riots may spread to other countries. This shows that shortage of food is a global problem; there is no chance to rely on import of food grains. Since Imports can help in improving the country's supply situation only for a short term, but for the long term the country will need to focus on productivity enhancement, through enhancing public investment, which was declined over the years. For instance the share of Agriculture's Gross capital formation of GDP declined from 2.2% in late 1990s to 1.7% (2004-05) (Maithreyi Krishnaraj, 2006). According to a FAO report aid to agriculture has dropped to 4.3% of total assistance in 2008 from 18% in 1979. This shows that in the new liberal era it remained neglected. This would suggest that to ensure adequate food for all, the production of food grains itself has to be increased.

Today agricultural sector has many challenges; there are many factors such as long term as well as short term in nature are responsible for agricultural deprivation.

LAND AS WELL AS CROP DIVERSIFICATION

It is a period of transition for Indian agriculture. The size of land utilized for agriculture purpose is shrinking. The per capita availability of cultivable land has gradually diminished from 0.4 hectare in 1951 to 0.20 hectare in 1981 and further down to 0.51 hectare in 2001 (surinder sue) E.g.: in HP, Orissa, Bihar, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. Share of land under non-agricultural utilization has gone up from 7.8% to 8.5% during the same period. For instance, in the seven years between 2000-01 and 2007-08, the total land utilization has increased by 4.9 lakh hectares; the area under non-agricultural use has increased 20.3 lakh hectares. (Non-agricultural use includes all land occupied by buildings, roads & railways under water, canals etc.). And also the share of net sown area in total reporting area has declined from 46.3% (2000-01) of 46.1% (2007-08) (tushar kanti mahanti) (Table: 4)

TABLE 4: LAND USE PATTERN

| Land use pattern / Million hectares | 1970-71 | 1980-81 | 1990-91 | 2000-01 | 2007-08 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Reporting area for land utilization | 303.75 | 304.16 | 304.86 | 305.18 | 305.67 |
| Area under non-agricultural uses | 16.48 | 19.6 | 21.09 | 23.89 | 25.92 |

Source: Department of agriculture and cooperation, ministry of agriculture, GOI

Indian agricultural sector is also, witnessing crop diversification with acreage diversification. In recent years, this has been diversified towards high value crops (non-food crops) & also diversification from traditional foods which are rich in nutrients or from low priced food grain cultivation to relatively more remuneration crops as well, which may adversely affect food security. In the mean time at the global level, the high global price of oil leads to large scale diversion of grains to ethanol production in advanced countries. Increased area under bio-fuel crops is also resulting in gap between demand and supply of food

grains. Mainly cereals, sugar cane, maize, vegetables are the major food staples used in ethanol production. USA, Brazil, Cuba, South Africa, Japan, Mexico, Australia etc are the major countries which are ahead in this race. For instance in 2006 US diverted more than 20% of its maize production to the production of ethanol, Brazil used half of its sugarcane production to make Bio-fuel and the EU used greater part of its vegetable oil production as well as imported vegetable oils to make bio fuel. This has naturally reduced the availability of land for producing food grains. Along with acreage and crop diversification for bio-fuel production, raising costs of inputs, falling productivity, inadequate public investment in agricultural research, and also the impact of climate changes that have affected harvests in different ways.

ACCESS TO LAND

It is an important indicator of food security at household level. Between 1970-71 and 2005-06, the total number of operational holdings increased simultaneously operational areas declined. This has resulted in the reduction of the average farm size from 2.3 hectares to 1.4 hectares (FAO year book). Small and marginal holders now cultivate 42% of operational land and constitute 83% of total land holdings. The 50th round NSSO data reveals that the percentages of hunger household are four times higher among the landless households compared to households having four hectare of land. In India nearly 81% (2005) of the farmers holding <2 hectares compared to 70% in 1970s, covering 36% of total cultivated area. Incidence of Hunger and Poverty by Farm Size in Rural India (%) (TABLE: 5)

TABLE 5: ACCESS TO LAND AND HUNGRY

| Land Class | Hungry | Poor |
|------------|--------|------|
| Landless | 49 | 54 |
| <0.5 ha | 32 | 38 |
| 0.5-1 ha | 24 | 27 |
| 1-0.2 ha | 17 | 19 |
| 2.0-4 ha | 12 | 14 |
| >4 ha | 12 | 13 |

Source: IARI / FAO, RAP Study based on 50th NSSO Round (1993-94)

Recent studies reveal that there is no co-relation between landlessness and poverty. Today landless people are leading a better life than those with land than before. China's experience shows that there are ways to eliminate poverty even with high concentration of workforce in agriculture and predominance of tiny holdings. The incidence of poverty in china is reduced drastically as compared to India "between" 1980-2005, because of its high agricultural productivity. In order to increase agricultural productivity modern technologies as well as use of biotechnology, totally modernisation of Indian agriculture are needs of the hour. Indian poverty alleviation lies with shifting the excess workforce out of agriculture into the non agricultural sector where productivity is more. India needs to take serious steps to create productive employment for smallholders. So they can partly work in the farm and partly outside farm. The inclusiveness as well as equity in agriculture can be achieved by increasing productivity in agriculture. The shifting consumption patterns toward non-cereals provide an opportunity for small farmers to diversify their agriculture and increase their income level.

FOOD ACCESSIBILITY

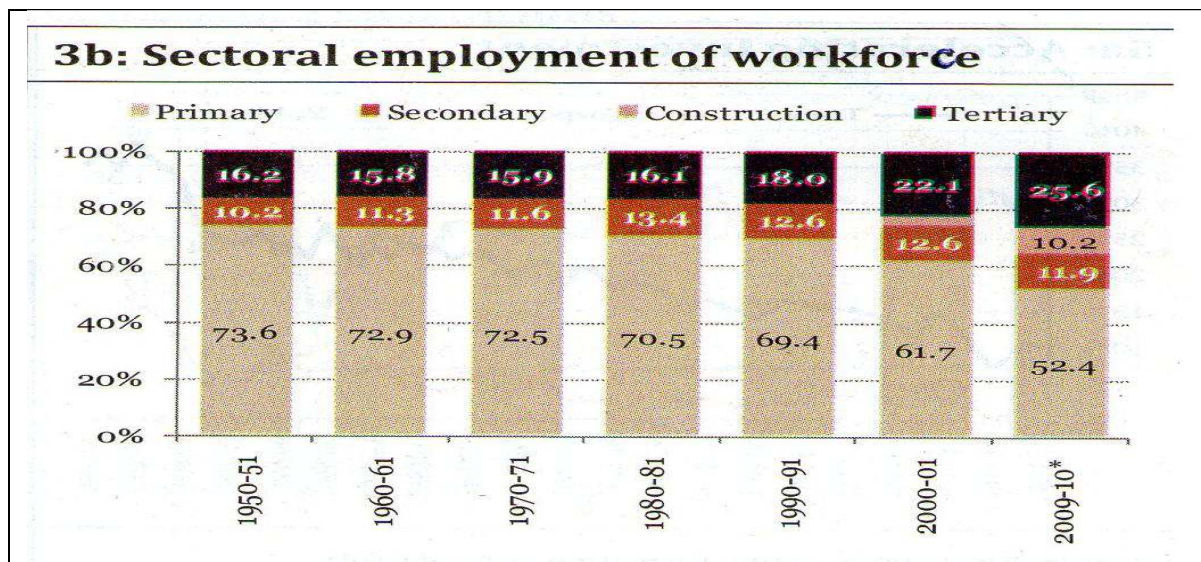
The current problem could not be slowed only through addressing the crisis of Agricultural production alone; at the same time there is a need to stimulate purchasing power among the poor. There is enough food in the country for everyone to be adequately feed, but almost half of the population unable to access enough food to meet their needs. So the crucial problem in India is inadequate supply of food for the person has been dramatically worsened by the lack of purchasing power of a significant proportion of the population. Higher GDP growth in post-reform period failed to improve workers' economic access. As Prof. Amartya Sen has cautioned Jyoti Basu that unless the benefits of growth are distributed horizontally, the rich-poor divide in the country will widen further leading to increasing social unrest. In fact he has demonstrated that the BENGAL FAMINE OF 1943 was caused not because of scarcity of food grains alone but due to lack of purchasing power that people starved to death. Neo-liberal politics have attacked both production and access far farmers, on attack on their production is an attack on their incomes & decline in growth of labourers get employed as well.

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE PURCHASING POWER

LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT :- (JOBLESS GROWTH)

Another area of concern is that economic growth has not generating the desired number of jobs. In the past two decades, the income growth has not been associated with the generation of productive jobs. India is witnessing poor workforce participation, poor quality of employment, chronic unemployment (8%), shortage of skilled worker, slow rate of shift of employment from agriculture and wide disparities in income because of lack of job creation in the organized sector. For instance, the share of formal employment has declined slightly in the post liberalisation era where as large proportion (94%) of the workforce engaged in the unorganised sector (no employment & social security). The ability of the economy has declined to produce jobs since from the last 1990s. Assessing the employment situation in India has remained relatively tricky because of the complex nature of the labour market characterised by part-time workers, seasonality of work, underemployment and social factors which restrict many women from joining the labour force (NSS Report). A large majority of the female workforce has always remained underutilized. At the all-India level, the work participation rate is 50% for males & about 17% for females. Even among the women who are available in the labour market, a large majority could not find work throughout the year. According to the NSSO studies the period between 1993-94 to 1999-2000, India have witnessed a sharp fall in the employment growth rate but later on in between 1999-2000 to 2004-2005 employment growth rate recovered, but largely in the self-employment as well as casual labour section rather than regular labours. The growth rate of employment elasticity was 0.40 to 0.15 during 1993-94 to 1999-2000, indicating a period of jobless growth. Fortunately, the employment elasticity increased thereafter to 0.51 in 2004-05. According to the 66th round of NSSO's survey nearly 51% of the country's total workforces are self-employed, only 15.5% are regular wagers or salaried employees and 33.5% casual labourers. Today India's unemployment rate is at nearly 8%.

FIGURE 1: SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT OF WORKFORCE



Source: Shivasubramonian (2000), census 20001, Partya Mukhopadhyay, Aditi Gandhi (2012)

TABLE 5: SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT OF WORKFORCE (% OF USUAL STATUS)

| | 1993-94 | 1999-2000 | 2004-05 | 2007-08 |
|---|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Agriculture | | | | |
| Rural males | 74.1 | 71.4 | 66.5 | 66.5 |
| Rural females | 86.2 | 85.4 | 83.3 | 83 |
| Urban males | 9 | 6.6 | 6.1 | 5.8 |
| Urban females | 24.7 | 17.7 | 18.1 | 15.3 |
| Manufacturing | | | | |
| Rural males | 7 | 7.3 | 7.9 | 7.7 |
| Rural females | 7 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 7.4 |
| Urban males | 23.5 | 22.4 | 23.5 | 23.5 |
| Urban females | 24.1 | 24 | 28.2 | 27.5 |
| Construction | | | | |
| Rural males | 3.2 | 4.5 | 6.8 | 7.7 |
| Rural females | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 2 |
| Urban males | 6.9 | 8.7 | 9.2 | 9.5 |
| Urban females | 4.1 | 4.8 | 3.8 | 4.3 |
| Trade, Hotels & Restaurants | | | | |
| Rural males | 5.5 | 6.8 | 8.3 | 7.6 |
| Rural females | 2.1 | 2 | 2.5 | 2.3 |
| Urban males | 21.9 | 29.4 | 28 | 27.8 |
| Urban females | 10 | 16.9 | 12.2 | 12.8 |
| Transport, Storage & communication | | | | |
| Rural males | 2.2 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 4 |
| Rural females | 0.1 | 0.1 | 2 | 2 |
| Urban males | 9.7 | 10.4 | 10.7 | 10.9 |
| Urban females | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| Other services | | | | |
| Rural males | 7 | 6.1 | 5.9 | 5.7 |
| Rural females | 3.4 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.3 |
| Urban males | 26.4 | 21 | 20.8 | 21 |
| Urban females | 35 | 34.2 | 35.9 | 37.8 |

Source: c.p.Chandrasekhar December 2010

Table 5 and Figure: 1 provides the details of which industry workers are engaged in. In the structural growth of (sector wise) employment creation, the share of the primary sector (agriculture and allied activities) workers fell only marginally, from 74 to 52%. IN the period 2004-05 to 2009-1-0, about 21 million people moved out of agriculture leading to a drop in its employment share from 56.5% in 204-05 to 51.76% in 2009-10. With the secular decline in the importance of agriculture sector in the overall economic structure, work opportunities that are lost in traditional agriculture have to be replaced by work opportunities in some other sectors. Subsequently Economists emphasised the crucial role of the secondary (manufacturing) sector as well as the service sectors potentiality to create high paid & high-productive employment growth much faster than agricultural sector during this transition stage of the economy. However, in the post reform period the growth of these sector has failed in its absorptive capacity to observe workforce which has been pushed out of agriculture is the primary failure of the Indian economy. As in a share of total employment, manufacturing sector share remained below 22%. The declined share of the workforce in agriculture was mainly absorbed by the secondary sector, whose proportionate share increased from 18.71% in 2004-05 to 21.89% in 2009-10. But the recent (2000s onwards) increase in manufacturing employment is more in informal (often in the form of self-employment) sector rather than formal sector. e.g.: construction, textile etc. Bulk of the job created in the in the construction sector, which added nearly 10 percent of the total workforce (Figure 1). However the share of trade & hotels seems to be stagnating. So the burden of employment creation has fall on services. Services now account for nearly two-third of the GDP with less than one-third of the employment creation. Unfortunately sub-sectors like IT & ITES, finance, BPOs, education and health had relatively much lower levels of informal

employment, but their share in the employment is limited to some extent & also these sectors provide employment only to skilled manpower. These are not conducive to absorb the unskilled workforce but supportive in creating indirect semi-skilled employment in the country and these activities are concentrated mostly in a few large cities which have basic infrastructure & large concentration of educated workforce. As a result most of the people who are unskilled workers in service sector are actually employed in low paid (outside the purview of minimum wages) & low productive informal sector. For instance today's employment diversification away from agriculture is being largely driven by construction, trade, hotel, transport etc. As Himanshu (2007) points out, manufacturing, trade, hotel and restaurants and transport and communication were also sub-sectors which saw the most informalisation in employment. Again as Himanshu (2007) says therefore the leading sub-sectoral generators of new jobs by contract type in the urban non-farm economy were dominated by self-employment (small and marginal farmers, hawkers, street vendors, rickshaw pullers, and small traders in cities) or regular employment alongside significant increasing informalisation of employment in the urban economy. As we have noted earlier, in rural non-farm employment the leading generators of new jobs were created only casual wage & self-employment dominated (Table: 6). the casual labour (Agricultural labourers) constitutes the single largest segment of the total workforce, where as there wage rate is very lower than non-Agricultural wages.

TABLE 6: WORKFORCE SHARE IN PERCENT

| period | self-employment | regular wage & salarised | casual labour |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1999-2000 | 52.6 | 14.6 | 32.8 |
| 2004-05 | 56.4 | 15.2 | 28.3 |
| 2009-10 | 50.7 | 16.4 | 32.9 |

Source: NSS reports from different rounds.

As a matter of concern employment elasticity of organised sector is shrinking and there is a fast rate of growth of informal sector is recording. On the basis of these trends, there could be a needy diversification of agriculture and there is a strong need to restructure the rural economy by promoting non-farm activities. In this scenario, the predominance of informal sector, which is crucial for economic development but unfortunately which is today a vulnerable section, need to be attend. In India largest chunk of the poor comes from the ranks of the self-employed. The main reason for being self-employed is not the Entrepreneurial confidence, distress/ the absence of decent paying work the main reason behind the growing number of the self-employed. (NSSO report). When looked at the international comparison majority of self-employed in India constitute unorganized sector, but where as in developed countries majority of self-employment are mostly in the organized sector (Table:7) .

TABLE 7: PERCENTAGE OF SELF EMPLOYED

| Countries | Percentage of self employed |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| USA | 10.90% |
| Brittan | 14% |
| Japan | 10% |
| Germany | 12% |

It is worth recalling that the employment in the formal economy is dominated by regular waged jobs. Therefore it would seem that significantly high (relatively) level of education is a necessary. We have already seen there has been a significant increase in the informalisation of formal (organised) economy in terms of employment, including regular waged jobs.

As NCEUS (National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector) (2007) points out that relatively high levels of education are a sufficient condition to be a member of the urban formal job holder (10.1 years average) or regular waged informal job (9 years average). Therefore education appears as an important discriminator between employment in the formal and informal economy is also suggested by Fagnäs (2007). On the other hand, urban biased growth of the formal economy driven by manufacturing and business services has resulted in a shortage of an educated skilled workforce and inflationary rise of wage rates. This would then also help explain the rising domination of regular waged jobs and the contraction of self- and casual employment in urban formal employment (with relatively high education levels) alongside an informalisation, driven by self-employment and casual employment. On the other hand, outside this narrow band of education and skills for which there is a labour shortage, at lower levels of education and skills there is a huge increase in labour participation ratio. A part of the employment problem is also the lack of skill development and inadequate creation of sufficient opportunities in the non-agricultural sectors. The Indian chronic poverty report (Mehta and others, 2010) draws attention to the role of ill health and the lack of education as being two important factors that lead to persistence of poverty. further ,it is not any more just literacy that would be needed to get the poor emerge out of poverty but is the vocational skills that would fetch them jobs that pay better wages. A critical requirement for this is public expenditure, especially in the social sectors as well as in the rural development. Public expenditure in the social sector is typically much more productive employment generating than several other economic activities (government short-term oriented employment generation programmes), and therefore also has substantial multiplier effects. Spending on the provision of proper health facilities, ensuring good quality and universal school education, have great employment generating potential. When we look at the social sector spending, India is witnessing a partial growth with widening Income growth with dismal social spending. India lags behind in social sector ranking lower than other developing countries. As Peter Duker says that the 21st century will be the century of the social organization. The share of social sector as % of GDP has slightly increased over the decades. The share of social sector in central budgetary expenditure, its allocation slightly increased from 5.49 % to 7.29 % of gross domestic production in between 2005-06 to 2009-10 financial years. The share of health and education as percent of GDP are presented below table (table: 8).

TABLE 8: HEALTH AND EDUCATION AS PERCENT OF GDP

| Year | Health(%of GDP) | Year | Education(% of GDP) |
|-------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------|
| 1990-91 | 1.3 | 1981-82 | 2.5 |
| 1995-96 | 1.2 | 1991-92 | 3.4 |
| 2001-02 | 1.3 | 2001-02 | 3.5 |
| 2005-06 | 1.2 | 2005-06 | 3.2 |
| 2008-09(re) | 1.4 | 2008-09 | 3 |

Source: Government of India, Economic Survey

The above table reveals that the share of education as percent of GDP increased from 2.0 %(1991-92) to 3.0 %(2008-09) where as the share of health as % of GDP has increased from 1.3 %(1990-91) to 1.4 %(2008-09). From the above statistics it is prove that India lacks quality education as well as quality health, which are crucial to make people productive human capital, who are much more able to earn their own food. At the same time the Government expenditure of rural development programme is also dismal. Out of total expenditure, the share of rural spending is stagnant around less than 1% of the GDP.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Skill development is crucial for economic development. Rapid economic growth in the country is expected to generate millions number of jobs in the forthcoming years but lack of suitable skilled candidates poses a major threat. Skill plays a vital role in making youths into productive citizens. India has one of the largest youth force in the world but the least number of skilled labours. Dynamics of Indian economy has been changing over time from agricultural economy to industrial economy, industrial to service economy. Agricultural economy absorbs all types of labour force whether semi-skilled or unskilled. However industrial as well as service sectors need skilled workers. India is facing serious man power crunch in the industrial sectors. There is huge gap between demand and supply of skilled man power requirement. The skilled workers comprise only 5% of the total industrial workforce. Nearly 17 million of workforce enters every year, out of them only 0.5% gets observed in organised sector (NSSO). According to the Assocham report, the principal reason behind India's growth is its youth force, the largest in the world. Millions of young Indians are jobless, though a large numbers of white collar jobs are waiting for them (suitable candidates)

because they don't have proper vocational training, so Indian youth are not only unemployed but unemployable. It further said that though 90 percent of jobs in sectors like information technology (IT) and IT Enabled Services (ITES), biotechnology and the services sector are skill-based and requires training; but in real only six percent of the total workforce receives such training India's skilled labour forces constitute only 5% compared to South Korea's 95%. Recent data reveals that our educational system and vocational training programmes have not been able to provide adequate size of skilled man power. Our educational system is not oriented towards attaining demand-driven marketable, soft skills, vocational skills, which are in demand but India lacks in it. Too many colleges still imparting outdated educational techniques, just turning them into certified employable professionals. So due to low level of skill acquisition, their purchasing power also remains at low level. The NSS survey (2004-05) which collected information on the skill profile of youth (15-29) found that only 3.9% of them received formal training. This indicates that very few young persons with formal vocational training enter the workforce. This proportion of trained youth is one of the lowest in the world. Over dependency on scared urban talent creating wage inflationary situation. There is a need to identify the skill gaps. The key challenge before government is the preparation of skill development plans to raise the proportion of trained youth significantly to enable India to emerge as global leader.

WAGES

Another indicator of purchasing power is wages. Being employed alone doesn't guarantee of out of poverty, because nearly 41.6% of the population earn less than the international poverty line of \$1.25 a day in PPP terms. Higher GDP growth in post-reform period failed to improve workers' economic access. For instance the share of employees' earning in GDP has in fact declined steadily over the years down from 30.4% (2002-03) to 27.6% in (2007-08). (CSO, GOI). Today India's rich earn 7 times higher than its poor. Over the years, agriculture's share in GDP has declined but the proportion of the workforce is relatively static. So the value added per worker per year was very low in agriculture among all sectors. For instance agricultural labourers, who are the part of casual labours constitute largest segment of total labour force, where as their wage rates are very lower than non-Agricultural labourers. Hence, the rural agricultural wage rate is considered as one of the most robust indicators of economic well-being, not only of agricultural labourers, but also of the overall rural population (Deaton and Deaze, 2002). The other sector which employs a substantial workforce but has low value addition per worker is trade, hotels, insurance etc. The reason is the overwhelming employment in these sectors is in the form of unorganised workers. While 99% of the employment in agriculture is unorganised, the corresponding figure for trade, hotels and restaurants is also 99%. Even manufacturing, with 88.5% of employment in the unorganised sector, in which more number of workforce was observed in the period 2004-05 to 2009-10. Due to the existence of large chunk of informal sector they are low paid workers. In addition to the lower wages for casual workers, there is also a gender bias in wage payment. As 66th round NSSO's survey found that the per day wage rates for casual labourers in works other than public works in rural areas was Rs 93, against Rs 122 in urban areas. In rural areas, male casual labourers engaged in such activities received an average of Rs 102 per day. However, it was only Rs 69 for women. In urban areas, the wage rate for casual labourers engaged in work other than public Works was Rs 132 for males and Rs 77 for females; whereas today per Indian per capita income is above 50,000 Rs.

INFLATION

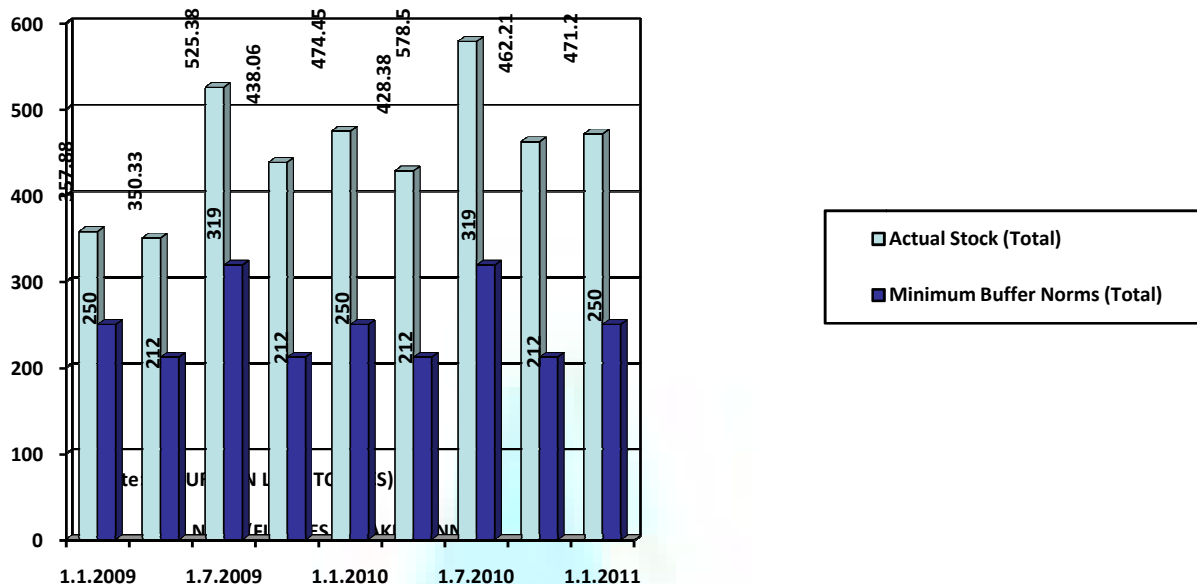
Inflation is the principle economic problem. Today India is facing multi-headed inflation. The current bout of inflation is not originated in the manufacturing sector but in the agriculture sector. Initially inflation is led by food prices, later on it shifted to non food items, mainly to Fuels and minerals led to further rise in prices. India was getting into growth induced inflation. Inflation is pressurised both from the input cost side as well as demand side. It is a Demand and supply side phenomenon, supply crunch is the main cause for today's inflation. Food and fuel prices are the main culprits to the surging inflation figures. The food inflation reached even 18% within a few months. According to the recent NSSO report India's consumption pattern has changed over the last two decades. The share of cereals out of total expenditure on food declined and at the same time the demand for non cereals raised. The recent national sample survey (NSS, 2011) reveals that large proportion of Indian poor still getting their daily calories from cereals. But due to the crop and land diversification the mismatch between demand and supply is widening over the years. Today, large numbers of small and marginal farmers moving away from traditional crop cultivation towards high value commercial crops cultivation. So the significant increase in food prices due to raised mismatch between demand and supply further worsened the livelihood of the most vulnerable sections by eroding their already limited purchasing power. On the other hand, due to the partial growth of the some sub-sectors of manufacturing as well as service sector some proportion of skilled human resource drawing lump sum of money. With the inflationary rise in the wages, they are demanding more non cereal and high protein food items such as milk, egg, meat, fish, fruits and vegetables. With consequent raise in the demand for some selected food items causing inflationary situation in the recent past in the country. In the mean time, in the rural area the portion of expenditure spent on non food items are raising mainly on durable goods and fuel and light. Expenditure on fuel and light now accounts for roughly 10% of the total consumption basket, while the durable goods category now accounts for almost 5%. This indicates that rural India is worst hit by the current inflation. For instance the current galloping inflation pushed consumption Expenditure 3, 70,000 crore in 2010-11, more than 8th fold rise over an additional expenditure of 45,000 crore in 2008-09 (CRISIL) & also the financial savings by Indians tipped below 10% of GDP for the First time in 15 years. The rising inflation adversely affect the economic activities, it would lead to the reduction in the Tax-GDP ratio, which would have an adverse impact on social sector as well as rural development and further affect on social protection programmes. It may have long term adverse impact on human capital development, curb economic growth and damage development. This situation can be tackled through proper distribution system and also increasing purchasing power among common people. The absence of appropriate action for addressing supply bottlenecks especially in food and infrastructure is the main cause for food inflation. It is all because of government short term oriented programmes, diversification of agricultural land, crop diversification as well as government unproductive injection of money into the economy.

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

PDS as an instrument of welfare and it did help to get essential goods at discounted Prices when the incomes of the rural poor households fluctuate considerably; just because of insecurities in the labour market it ensures food to them. Approximately 5,00,000 fair price shops are scattered across the nation. The major objectives of PDS are to maintain food stability in the economy, acts as an Anti-inflationary, Ensure food supply to the vulnerable, Avoid distress sale among farmers etc with several reasons PDS has been introduced. The government totally dependent upon the Public Distribution system Scheme to make subsidized food grains to the needy people but every time it failed to ensure justice. But unfortunately, today it is one of the most important factors causing threat to our Food Security. It has turned out to be the mechanism for grabbing and selling, most of the grain meant for needy and poorer section of the society into the black market. There is a rampant corruption in it. The main problem is the existing margin between the price of PDS grains and open market price is very big. Through middle man's GREED the grains go to the black market and government subsidy will shifted to the pockets of the middleman. Over the years, uneconomical rise in the central pool stock of food grains at recorded quantity more than minimum buffer norms with FCI is nothing but economic burden. Being a country with a huge population it cannot wait every time for a Good monsoon .so it has to rely on huge stockpile at the same time it should be well distributed.

The table below shows that the widening gap between minimum buffer stocks needed and central pool stock Position.

FIGURE 3: STOCK POSITION OF FOOD GRAINS IN THE CENTRAL POOL VIS-À-VIS MINIMUM BUFFER NORMS



Existing problems in PDS as follows

- The cost of food procurement is nothing but sunk cost
- Selection of beneficiaries differ among central and state governments
- Research estimate shows that only 27 paise of every rupee reaches the needy
- Government differentiates between APL and BPL beneficiaries
- Lack of proper storage facilities Food grains are rotting in the government godowns etc. These are the many reasons behind poor functioning of the PDS in India.
- The share of Gross Capital Formation in agriculture and allied sectors share relative to over all GDP has remained stagnant at around 2.5 to 3 % over the years, which should be corrected through public private partnership.
- States such as Punjab, Haryana, UP which constitute the heartlands of the green revolution, are in the state of economic and ecological distress. Economical indebtedness is growing among farmers and ecologically, groundwater table is decreasing by 2 to 2.5 feet annually. To maintain food stability need to save these heartlands of green revolution.
- According to IFPRI 2010 report put Gujarat among the five worst hunger performing states along with Bihar, MP, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. This shows that there is no correlation between GSDP and level of poverty and hunger. Still being a state with 10.3% of GSDP (2004-05 prices) it is in the category of alarming hunger states. Its position is 13th in ranking.
- The data show lower employment growth in the period 2004-05 and 2009-10 against the period 1999-2000 and 2004-05. Moreover, category-wise shifts in the workforce is more towards casual labour and distressed self-employed labour force which needs attention by the YOJANA BHAVAN.
- Schemes like the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) have increased work participation rates and to some extent also levelled the gap between male and female workers. But the NREGS is limited to a maximum of hundred days and it mainly focuses on unskilled manual workers, it is not imparting any marketable skill among the workers.
- There is a great need to impart employable, marketable, soft skills, communicational skills through providing proper schooling & vocational training among the youths, which is the future asset of the Nation.
- Sectors like IT, construction, transport and communication, education, healthcare, tourism, banking and insurance are expected to register high growth and hence create sizeable employment. The benefits of these new jobs can occur only if people with the relevant skills are available.
- Wage spiraling is being reported now a days due to over dependency on scared urban talent with soft skills, where as large chunk of youths lack with it.
- The much talk about 'demographic advantage' of a large working population will be wasted if employment opportunities are not increased in the same proportion.
- Vibrant Informal sector should be properly utilised with capacity development programmes.
- Providing food grain storage is not a solution, there is a need to be redesign the mechanism of how to acquire and release food in the market.
- Along with the cooperation of NGOs as well as corporate sector support government should increase its spending on social sector and rural development programmes which is stagnant around less than 1% of the GDP till today.
- In the long run, Agricultural production and productivity should be increased in a sustainable manner to match the increasing demand with growing population.
- Proper coordination between various departments, for example department of Agriculture, Rural development, HRD, Finance is needed, which is lacking at present.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

To sum up, chronic food insecurity which is rampant in India is primarily associated with chronic poverty and due to inadequate dietary system. The reason for today's starvation not only the scarcity of food grains alone, but also the lack of purchasing power what Amartya sen calls this as a failure of exchange entitlement. This lack of purchasing power is the main reasons for decreasing demand for food grains, which are rotting in government godowns. To restore purchasing power government should concentrate on long term oriented development programs other than vote bank policy oriented short term policies. However, India is still at an early stage of transitional growth. Current ongoing Indian structural changes should be redirected towards creating high valued jobs in Non-formal sectors which are the engines of future economic growth. There is an urgent need to create quality employment for inclusive growth process. At the same time, the government should realize that the overtteriarization is not going to solve the problems of a highly populated nation. There is a need to rejuvenate Indian agricultural sector which is the backbone of the Indian economy. Technology may be a kingpin of solutions. Everyone in the country should be entitled with adequate amount of food; otherwise the purpose of the welfare state would be survived. It has to be remembered that nothing can substitute human hunger and once hunger goes beyond a point then the whole democratic system will not survive.

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