

FOOD SECURITY PROVISIONS

IN SANTHAL PARGANA REGION OF JHARKHAND:

WHERE ENOUGH IS JUST NOT RIGHTLY ENOUGH

A

THEME PAPER

Research and Development

By

NEEDS

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BEWARE INDIA !

If **YOU** had put the food where your hungry mouths are and had converted the umpteen novel food security initiatives and schemes in the last 10 years into fully working programmes, rather than let them remain incomplete and largely on paper, you could have avoided the continuing criminal offence of inhuman starvation deaths. The irony is food security has over the years been wrongly equated with food availability only, whereas the need for capacity building as a permanent antidote to poverty has been largely overlooked. Here one need not have to reiterate the unchecked starvation deaths from regions where the problem is everything but food availability, like – access to and control over resources, information entitlement, concentration of resources, etc. Market drives the food to where the money is. Poverty is thus blamed as the root cause of food insecurity

Forget unholy humans, the COW is supposed to be your holy animal. In your 'holy' state of Uttar Pradesh there are now some 2 crores of hungry cows moving astray with no holy soul to care. They are dying. When your 'unholy' humans are dissecting the dead cows stomach they are seeing kilograms of polythene bags, some weighing upto 35 Kg.

Your 'unholy' starved humans in the poorest regions are dying without a grain in their stomachs. Tell them to feed on polythenes rather than mango kernels, unknown herbs and weeds, so that they can at least attain 'holy' deaths like your cows.

and there fore you could do too little or nothing to check the starvation deaths even if some 60 million tones of food stock is lying idle in your state godowns. More than 30% of your population is estimated to be either undernourished or malnourished and its most chronic sufferers happen to be infants and children below the age of 5 years. Are not they your future INDIA. Not to mention the adult men and women whose families have had to live unattended with serious health related problems. Now if you after some 50 long years turn back to say that you have done enough as far as the Food Security Provisions for the below the poverty line (BPL) population is concerned, then better reach to the

BPL households to see for yourself that the **ENOUGH IS JUST RIGHTLY NOT ENOUGH**. For the teeming starved soul's sake please do not measure the 'enough' quantitatively but better measure that in qualitative terms – because the crucial and multidimensional issue of food security needs qualitative development programming, to say the least. Else, **BEWARE** of much more starvation deaths, an issue if unattended for long may lead to civil war in the near future.

BE AWARE INDIA!

World Food Summit 1996, had committed to reduce the number of undernourished people to half by the year 2015. Which means that the respective governments

IRDP was the only self-employment programme since long. A number of allied programmes like, TRYSEM, DWCRA, SITARA and various other yojnas like the GKY followed suit. Now, all are merged into the latest avatar called SGSY. But, on the contrary the number of BPL households in the country just refused to decline. Income generation in the BPL households has to be raised to a minimum level of INR 2000 per month by 2002 end as rightly envisaged under the SGSY scheme of the Government of India but far from being a reality by 2002.

have the onus of securing food for at least 500 million people who are below the poverty line.

1 million tonnes of food is lost annually. 325 million BPL people have to depend on the said PDS system and a conservative estimate puts odd 50 million of such people on the brink of disaster. Given this hard fact, the Off take/Allocated (in tonnes) by the states for BPL were only 145.6/528 for wheat and 326.9/659.8 for rice in the most demanding month of April last year (2001).

Highest incidence of poverty is encountered in South Asia, where close to 50% of the population is BPL, followed by 19% in the Sub-Saharan Africa, 15% in East Asia, 10% in Latin America and Caribbean. The basic problem of poverty in a developing country like India lies in the under-development and under-utilization of the CAPACITY of Human Resources. Unlike the East Asian countries like Japan, this country had been suffering from poor management practices

when it comes to the core issue of poverty-elimination. The Issue of Poverty has to be tackled through a holistic approach to development where the convergence of multi-sector approaches like— Wildlife, Agriculture, Water, Healthcare, Technology, Livelihood, Culture and Society, Biodiversity and Ecology, Education, Laws and myriad other individual sector approaches, should bring together a series of unique participatory exercise towards arresting the poverty locally. So that conducive income generation schemes could be offered to the poor -- facilitating a particular type of income generation provision for those who are totally without any assets and another type of income generation provision for those who are with limited assets comprising say, a small piece of land and some machinery. The disabled poor are also to be brought under a specific income generation provision based on the nature and type of disability.

PDS happens to be the main center for food availability for the ultra poor people in their locality. Food is also made available to them through various programmes like the FFW, Gramin Rojgar Yojna, Annapurna, Antodaya, etc. and yes, also through relief operations only under exigent circumstances. There have also been proven reports of organizations distributing genetically engineered foods in plenty, thereby affecting adversely the 'livelihood earning' productive instincts of the poor and needy people. This type of security of access to food availability is doing more harm than good to the ultra-poor people, **by promoting food-insecurity in the name of food-security,** may be with an ulterior motive

no doubt. PDS, which is the mainstay of securing local food availability for the very poor, just seems to exist physically with either depleted stocks or no stocks at all. Let alone the quality of food available. The dilution in the quality level starts from the day the food from the fields after a prolonged outdoor warehousing finally gets purchased and stored at the state godowns. The said dilution gets further enhanced during the

PDS Reforms should be the call of the day, lest we allow the promotion of under-nutrition and malnutrition and even starvation of the ultra-poor and conveniently pull ourselves away from surviving in a civil society in view of the following:

The massive failure of the "Center-State-District-PDS" food availability chain.

Huge losses incurred by the government given overhead costs of mobilization, management and movement of food stocks vis-à-vis the base ration prices.

Insecurity of access to qualitative and quantitative food availability at the PDS resulting in serious malnutrition and slow starvation.

prolonged processes of 'stop-and-start' transport from one location to another and another till it is gets pursued by the PDS centers of the concerned locations. The following associated fact makes the PDS scenario more damning. The PDS centers, by their own admission, get a delayed and

under-weight supply against fully paid orders for the required quantities of food. That apart, they have to arrange for the transportation on their own risk and means to their respective centers, *which is again as per their convenience and not as per the crying needs of the Red/ BPL Card Holders.* And **ultimately, when the food stock enters the PDS centers it is the quality of the food, which goes forever.** Thanks; ‘Quality of Nutrition’ does not carry weight, which is why the PDS centers never bother to care for that. So the end user who happens to be the ultra poor -- for whom a huge ‘Food Availability’ hierarchy derives their cause for sustenance, has to wait long with empty stomachs for an elusive access to the availability of the food in PDS and pay their hard earned money to get that. Well, for the moment food could be secured for the waiting hungry mouths. But the point of protest here is that in the end the said end users **COULD NOT SECURE FOR THEMSELVES NEITHER THE ADEQUATE FOOD NOR ITS NUTRITIONAL SECURITY** as they do not have any other access options with very marginal income sources. **So they have to depend on the food from the PDS at subsidized prices, which quite ironically is only a shade lower from the prevalent nearby market rates.** There are several cases where the economically marginalized are compelled to resort to inferior food like mango kernels and wild tubers for satiating their call of hunger, inviting severe malnutrition and prolonged disruption of their gastrointestinal systems, at times terminating into deaths. If this is the sorry state of the so called mainstay of food availability center called PDS, then it will not be wrong to say that **LOCAL FOOD AVAILABILITY IS HIGHLY INSECURE AS FAR AS HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSABILITY OF ULTRA POOR PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED.**

THEME FOCAL POINT

Food Security Provisions in the Santhal Pargana Region of Jharkhand.

BACKGROUND

The new statehood identity of Jharkhand promises among others things an opportunity to rework and redefine the development perspectives for this region, where most of its population continue to live as underprivileged humans. Tribals have remained as tribals and dalits have remained as dalits. The irony of the fact is that they are now the minimum stakeholders in this newly demarcated region called—Jharkhand, a cause for which they and they only have fought. Any perspective for the region’s development will fall flat which ignores the urgency of equitably reposing the just pride and just place for those marginalized and oppressed; silent majority—Tribals, Dalits, Landless, wage laborers, et.al. Drawing from our research findings based on the most recent primary data available from relevant sources, out of the odd 6.8 million of population of the Santhal Pargana region, 29% are tribals, 11% are *dalits* and some 9% happen to be those who are the (non-tribal and non-*dalit*) Landless.

The ground realities are shocking. Tribal who owned the forestry and agriculture and sustained their livelihoods now form the resource-poorest majority. Whilst their forests were taken over by the government, their arable agricultural land suffered massive divisions and deteriorations leaving them – oppressed and marginalized to the extent that now even a biological living too has become a big luxury for them to carry for long. Not to mention, the severe inhuman status of *Dalits* and Backwards who form a significantly large population too. And the resource-poor farmers and wage

laborers of this region are the hardest hit by the cons of globalization and liberalization. It thus goes without saying that close to 35% of the santhal pargana population is under absolute poverty with more than 2 million people way below the poverty line (BPL). The widespread poverty so very acute in the Santhal Pargana region stems from the repeated mishandlings of the crucial issue concerning-- Sustainable Livelihood Development and Food security. That this region happens to be a part of one of the most natural-resources rich places of the world, adds much to the anomaly in a way that its resource-richest region bears its resource-poorest population. Thanks to the monumental messing up of the whole issue of Poverty Eradication, repeatedly by the successive faceless governments, by resting on Food Availability alone without even an iota of botheration as far as securing the access to and control over the resources, for the BPL population, is concerned. Which is why, millions of resource-poor people suffer from chronic hunger even if the food is available in plenty just because they lack requisite minimal purchasing power to secure it for their households. The whole issue of **food security** has been misunderstood/mishandled by successive governments/planners, by narrowing down the focus to **food availability only** and not giving adequate attention to the more significant issues of accessibility. The result - even though food is available in plenty, it fails to reach the last person because he lacks the requisite minimal purchasing power to secure it for his household. And the food that often reaches him through various government schemes and programs is sub standard and can hardly ensure nutritional security to his family, thus ceases the fundamental **right to live** by the vulnerable population. Food security in its truest sense encompasses not only the quantity but also the quality that is nutritive value of food. Seen from this light the 68% of malnourished children in Santhal Pargana alone reveals the hollowness of the current Poverty Eradication programs. To address the issue in its totality we need to focus on following three basic areas.

Land Alienation

The basic land reforms and the Santhal Pargana tenancy act enabling the tillers alone to own all the agricultural land had been in place perhaps before any other land reforms in the country. The *Santhalis* also had evolved a judicial system of their own based on definite principles of punishments to uphold the truth, may also have been quite a contribution to the judicial history of the country. The 'Santhal Penal System' and the 'Santhal Personal Law' had been imbued with strong Santhal values, which among other things ensured strong social cohesion within their community. This all goes to prove the glorious past of the Santhal Pargana region as far as rights-based dignified living, as humans are concerned. It is a great pity that today the *Santhalis* have been reduced to abject penury and remain the least empowered to realize their basic entitlements.

Major share of the land owned by less than 15% of the population.

75% of the agricultural work being performed by wage laborers most of whom are not from the organized sector. Land alienation, poverty, illegal encroachments, etc. turning the small and marginal farmers as landless agricultural workers.

8% of the working time of agriculture laborers spent on ailments and only 16% of working time is used for productive purposes.

What stands in the way of securing their long lost legitimate rights is the deep rooted vested-interests driven fact on the ground i.e. the present inequitable concentration of land ownership leading to land alienation of the poorest sections, which makes a vulgar violation of entitlements where the maximum land remains within the ownership control of a privileged few thereby leaving the majority of the resource-poor either as agricultural laborers or as landless. And the latter fact with unchecked stupidity boosts the over usage of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, ground water,

et.al in the lure of producing too much too soon thereby rendering severe damage to the region's eco-stability. To add further insult to injury, the poverty of the resource-poor gets a severe beating. Because, to ensure profit for the owners, labor costs are reduced to the extent possible, affecting adversely their primary sources of income as tillers and other wage laborers.

48% of the critical work in agriculture (per, PRA sample survey) is done by women and who by way of Santhal Women Property rights do not have rights as landowner. The only land ownership that could be ensured should come in form of a gift by her male relative as *taben jom* (a token gift)

Women literacy ratio is one of the lowest in the country at 39.38%. Girl child's access to schools are very poor denying her the right to education.

The sex-ratio of Jharkhand : 941 women per 1000 men

Property Rights of Santhal Women

Women of the Santhal Pargana region find themselves doubly disadvantaged, as their secondary status in the society makes them more vulnerable to deprivation, thus making them more Food and Nutrition insecure. The lack of land entitlement and rights has further jeopardized the food & nutrition security of the Santhali woman.

Public Distribution System

Instruments like the PDS (Public Distribution System); FFW (Food for Work) introduced to ensure Food and Nutrition Right everyone is entitled to, have failed miserably under the current programming. Food naturally goes to where the markets are and not to where the hungry stomachs are. In case the markets are satiated it goes to the godowns and warehouses to rot even overlooking the SOS calls of the hungry population, comprising largely the infants and the children. This inhuman situation can only change by ensuring Food and Nutrition as a Right to which everyone is entitled to-- for a healthy life at all times.

All said and done and come what may-- poverty has to be combated. Respect to human life must reign supreme over any of our other interests. Given the rights-based approach, Food Security will then also mean developing and sustaining friendship with the nature at any cost apart from enforcing the quality of nutrition and the balanced diet in every household. Come the package 'globalization' – GATT, TRIPS, WTO, etc. even with all its cons, the marginalized and oppressed will have to be enabled to fight and secure their rightful entitlements, be it – civil, political, social, cultural and economic.

That the resource-poor vulnerable people are able to exercise all their rights in a sustainable manner has to be ensured by the way of needful empowerments. Areas of empowerment will necessarily include: HRD issues focusing on skill development of poor, Education of the marginalized and the children, Health, sustained access to food and nutrition and Information issues. Rights-based approaches which purport to regard Food

Based on our Food and Nutrition sample surveys in more than 700 households of Santhal Pargana we find 68% of the children who all were malnourished with visible symptomatic effects.

75% PDS shops of Santhal Pargana remained non-functional for as long as 18 months.

The Supreme Court passed a verdict on 3rd Sept'01 declaring that all BPL families to be allotted red cards within three months. But recent study carried out in the Santhal Pargana reveals that till date 29.86% BPL households are without red card and 14.3% have no card whatsoever.

Sovereignty as the core of state, community and household Food Security, has to be vigorously pursued in order to eradicate the scourge of hunger, starvation, malnutrition and inequality from the region. Here it is important to learn the lessons from the past and henceforth venture in crucial and complex multidimensional issue like that of Food and Nutrition Security, with a coordinated, calculated, clear and common understanding of the ground situation, qualitatively backed by sound technical and management information support systems.

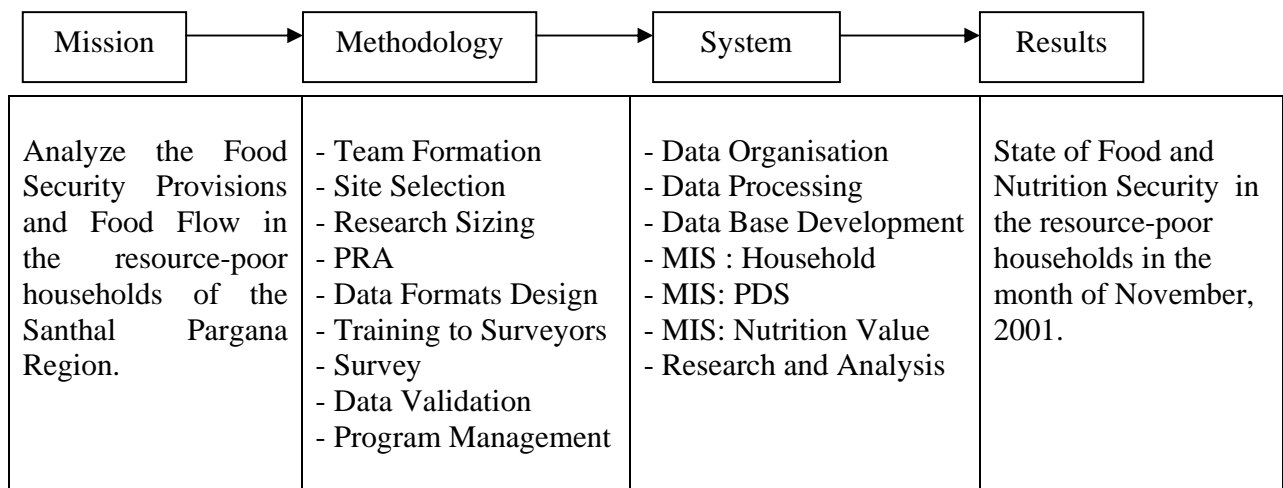
RESEARCH

In the world wide web of uncontrollable Data and Information, it becomes all the more imperative to research on its accuracy from the primary sources rather than banking solely on its authenticity and relevance.

THE BIAS
 NEEDS has been programming the development in these blocks and therefore the bias in the site selection in order to check the distortion of facts to the extent possible vis-à-vis the local realities.

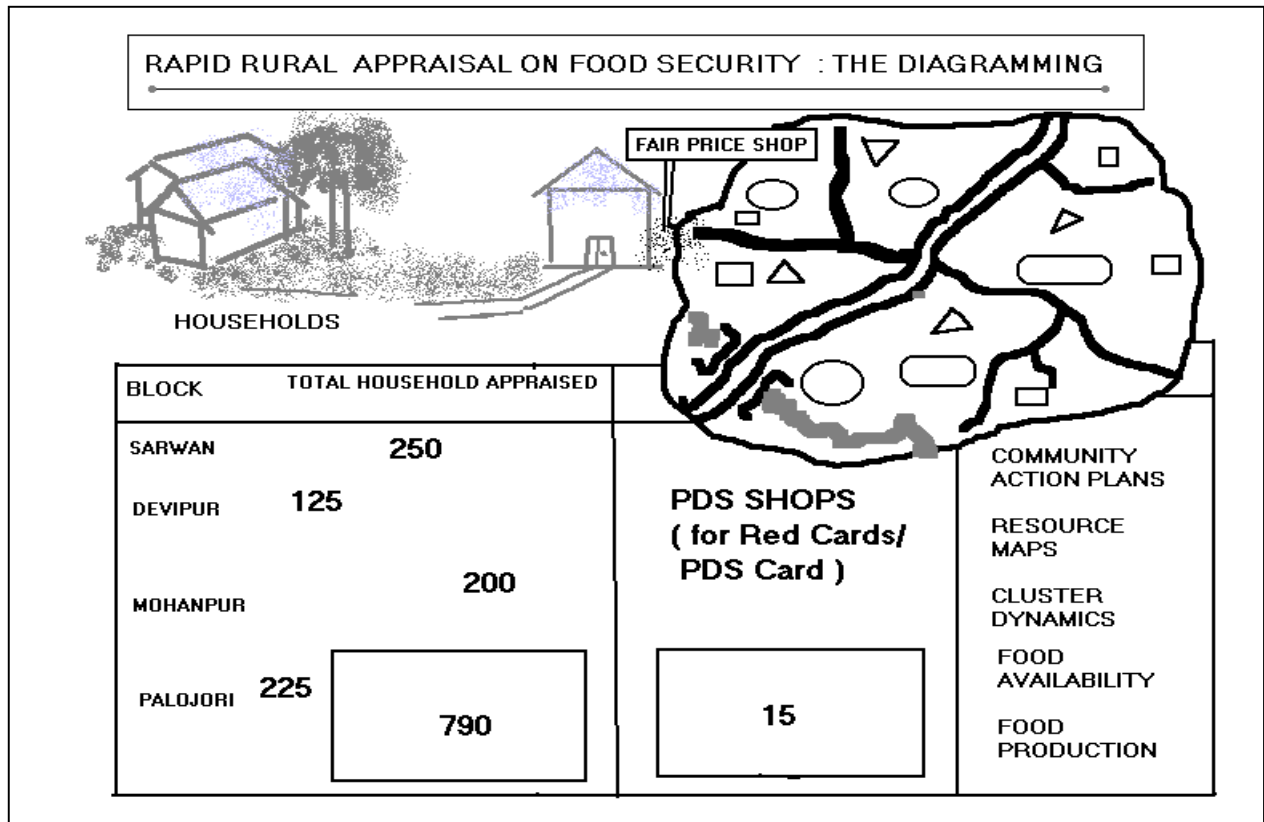
Deoghar, happens to be one of the better positioned districts amongst the aforesaid 7 other districts of the food insecure-- Santhal Pargana Region. Strategically so, 4 blocks of Deoghar were selected for undertaking the research on the said theme, that too in the most food secured months of October-November. The blocks were namely – Sarwan, Devipur, Mohanpur and Palojori. The purpose of the research was explained to the community households in those blocks in order to dispel concerns whatsoever arising in the respondent minds and involve them in the process as responsible participants.

Mechanics



Illustration

A illustration of the research is presented as under highlighting the basic components.



Sample Description: Household

A sample of 345 house holds were randomly selected from the research size of 790 resource-poor households spatially distributed in the aforesaid 4 blocks of the Santhal Pargana Region. The various data formats used for the research and the printout of the sample participants are enclosed as annexure. RDBMS (Relational Database Management System) was developed in-house, where all the sample household data were entered for analysis.

Sample Description: PDS

A sample of 6 PDS shops was randomly selected from the research size of 15 PDS in the Sarwan Block. The Data format along with the printout of the sample participants is enclosed as annexure.

Sample Description: Food and Nutrition (Balanced Diet)

The research perspective on 'food provisions' is concerning the **balanced food provisions** where the nutritional security is foremost. The research-team Doctor, along with other members of the team had to conduct an exhaustive exercise in finalizing the food principals peculiar and particular

to the food flow and food practices of the region. Also selecting the proximate principals and its requisite values were no easier a task. The detailed proximate principals value chart is enclosed as an annexure. The table below was the main sample for deriving the nutritional security status of the household participants.

Sample Food Items (Consumed Kg.)	Energy (Kcal)	Protein (g)	Calcium (mg)	Phosphorous (mg)	Iron (mg)	Fat (g)
Rice	3460	42	61	1186	10	4
Wheat	3460	92	379	2920	53	15
*Chura-Dahi	2735	45	405	1230	116	17
*Sattu	3720	184	465	2978	46	56
Dal	3450	232	854	2980	63	6
Vegetables	400	54	4150	1325	10	7
Meat	1180	205	112	1832	0	36
Milk	670	32	1175	825	2	41
Edible Oil	8350	0	0	0	0	1000

* Chura-Dahi is a local delicacy, which comprises – Rice Flakes, Curd and Sugar.

* Sattu is also a healthy food with proximate principals equivalent to Bengal Gram.

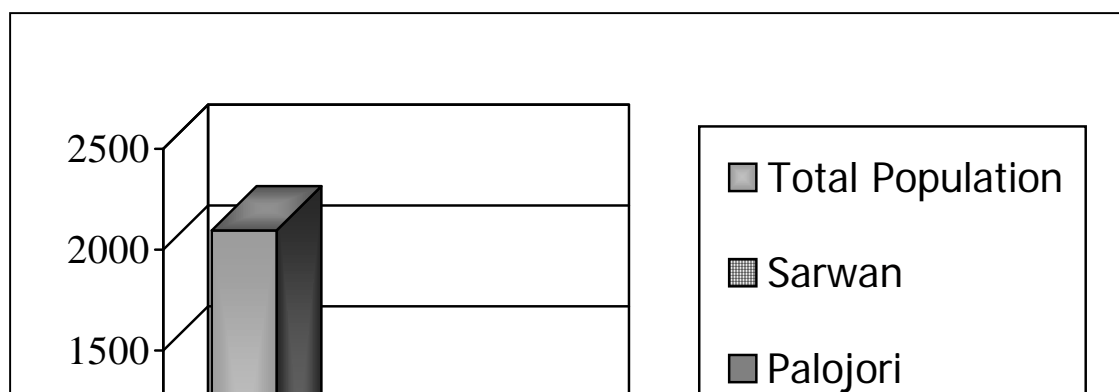
The **Risks** associated in deducing the actual nutritional values of food items are many. The proximate values largely depend on the 'Food Condition' factors and its processing types prior to its consumption. Not the least, it also varies based on the extent of pesticides usages during the food production and the prevalent pollution of external and internal environments.

The **Assumptions** in the sample are mainly in deducing the body weight and the labor type. The body weight, which is an important factor along with the age for deducing the proximate principals requirements in the body, has to be preferably accurate. But in the sample, the body weights have been predetermined as per the age and the available secondary references to the weight statistics and figures of Eastern India. The Labor Type has also been predetermined as per the variation with age.

Given, the above considerations a MIS printout of the nutritional requirements vis-à-vis age of both females and males aged from 1yr. to 95yr is enclosed as annexure.

Findings: Household

Out of the total population (TP) of 2097 in the sample of 345 households, findings are graphically explained as under.



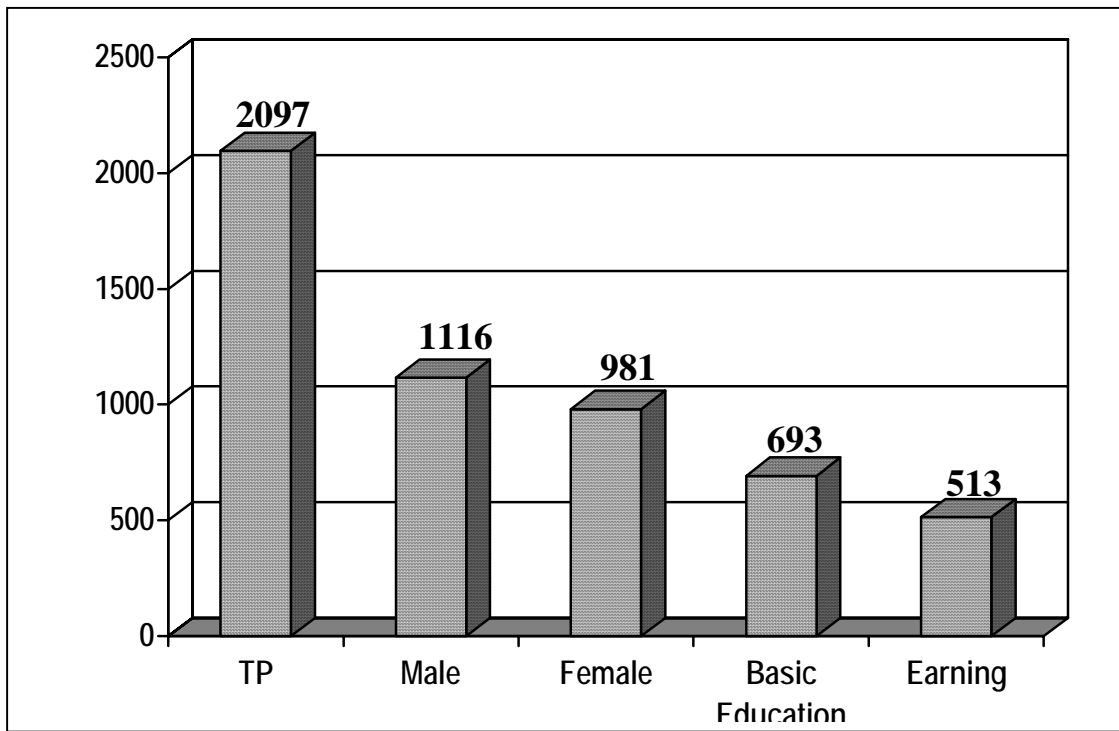
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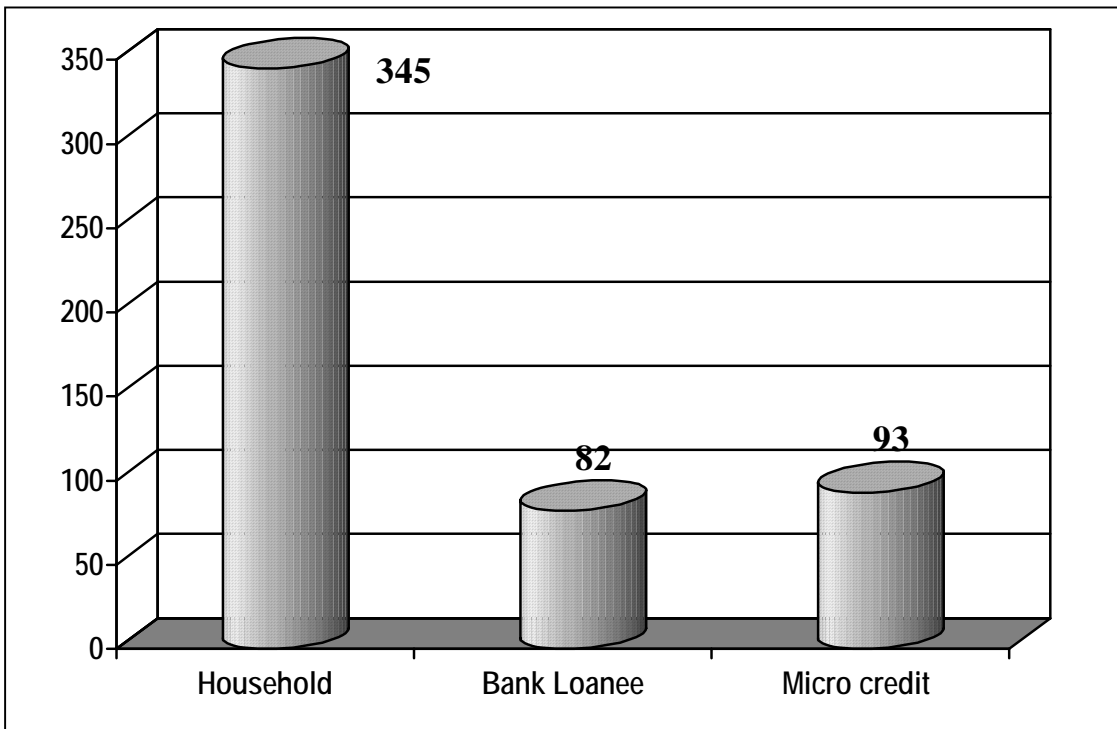
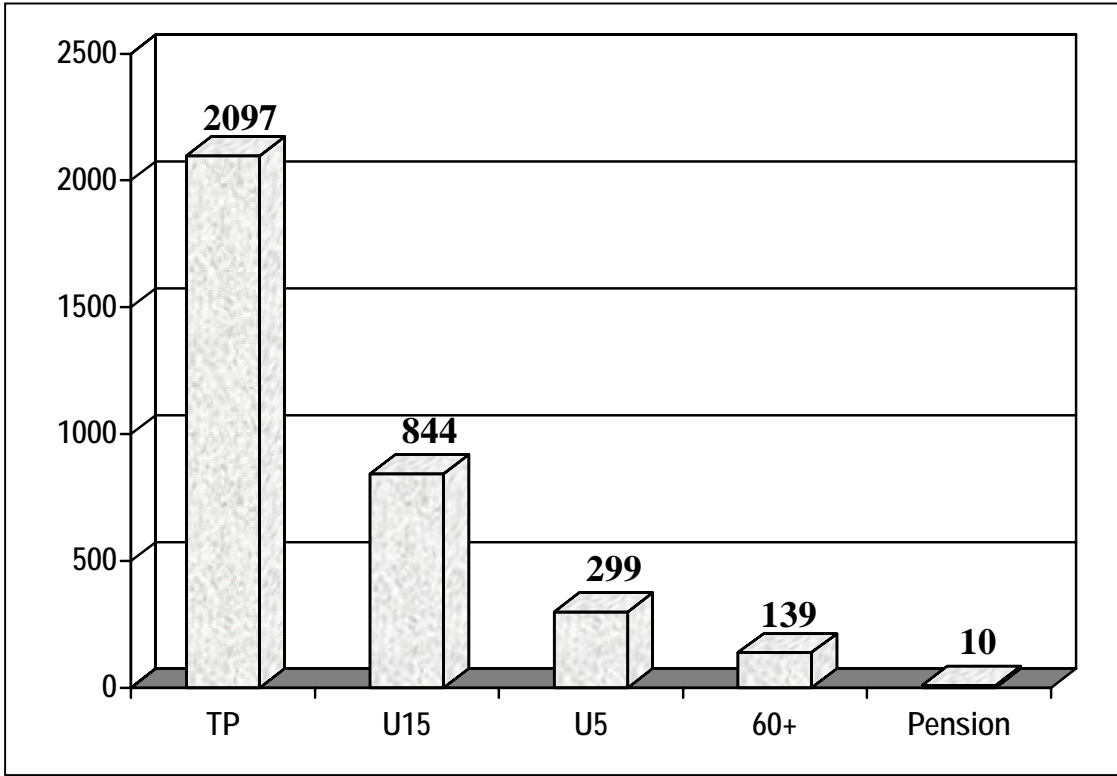
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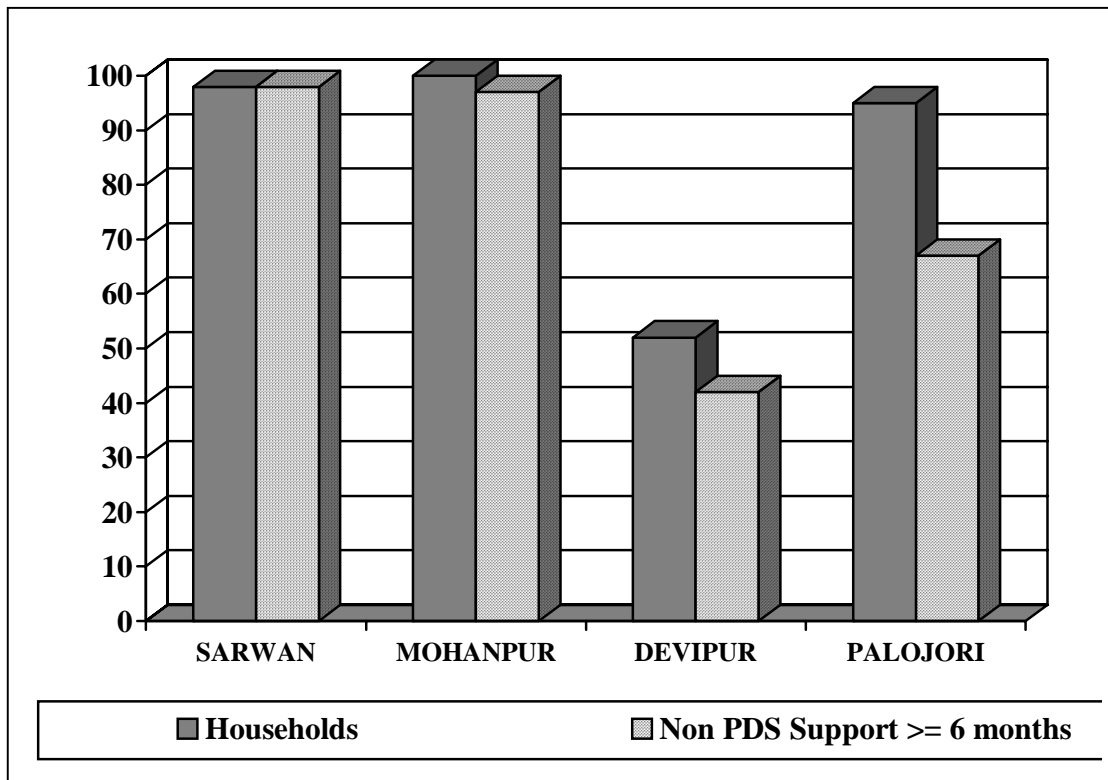
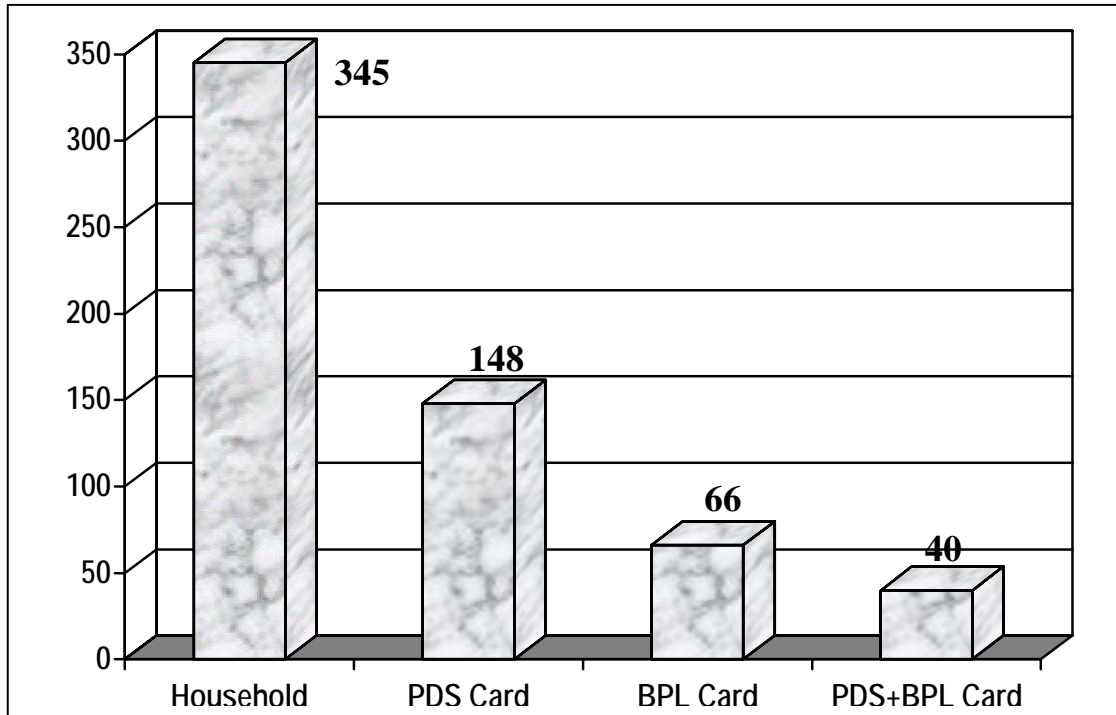
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Findings: PDS

The findings based on the sample of 6 PDS shop in a research size of 15 PDS shops in the Sarwan block are graphically put as under.



Household Food Provisions data for balanced diet of 2017 population in 345 households for the last 7 days were analyzed as under.

#	FOOD ITEM	Kg. Consumed in the last 7 days
1.	Rice	4040. 8
2.	Wheat	1262. 1
3.	Vegetables	632. 72
4.	Sattu (gram powder)	260. 33
5.	Milk	193. 75
6.	Dal (pulses)	167. 31
7.	Edible Oil	112. 17
8.	Chura Dahi (thatched rice and curd)	97. 731
9.	Meat	29. 723

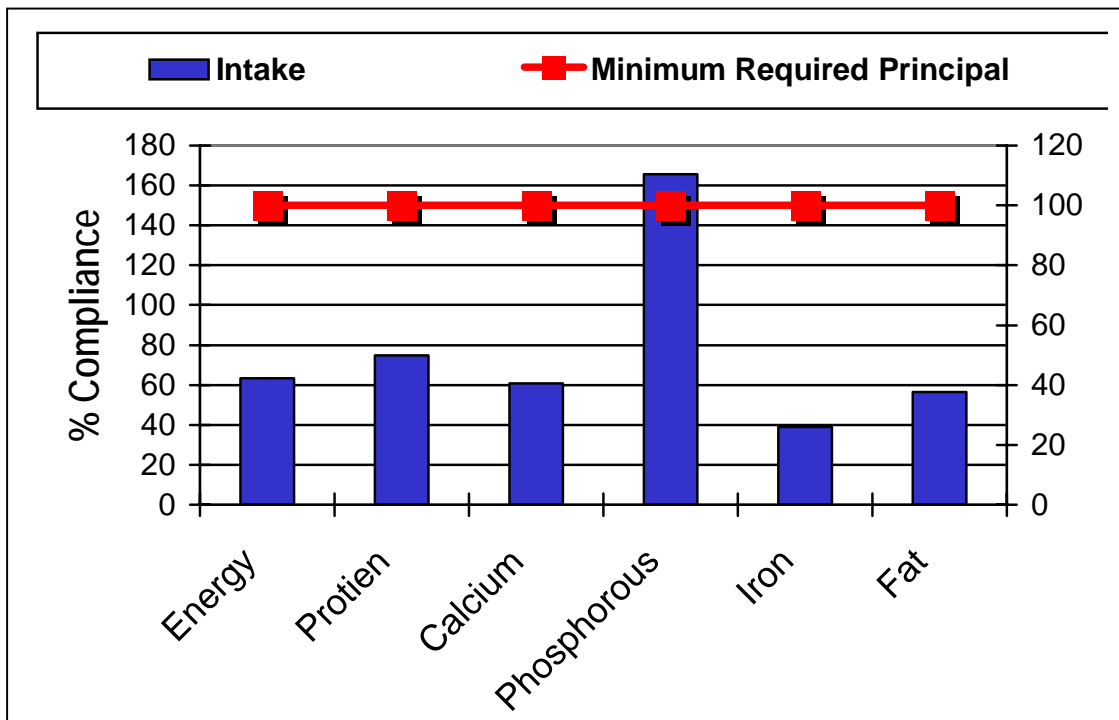
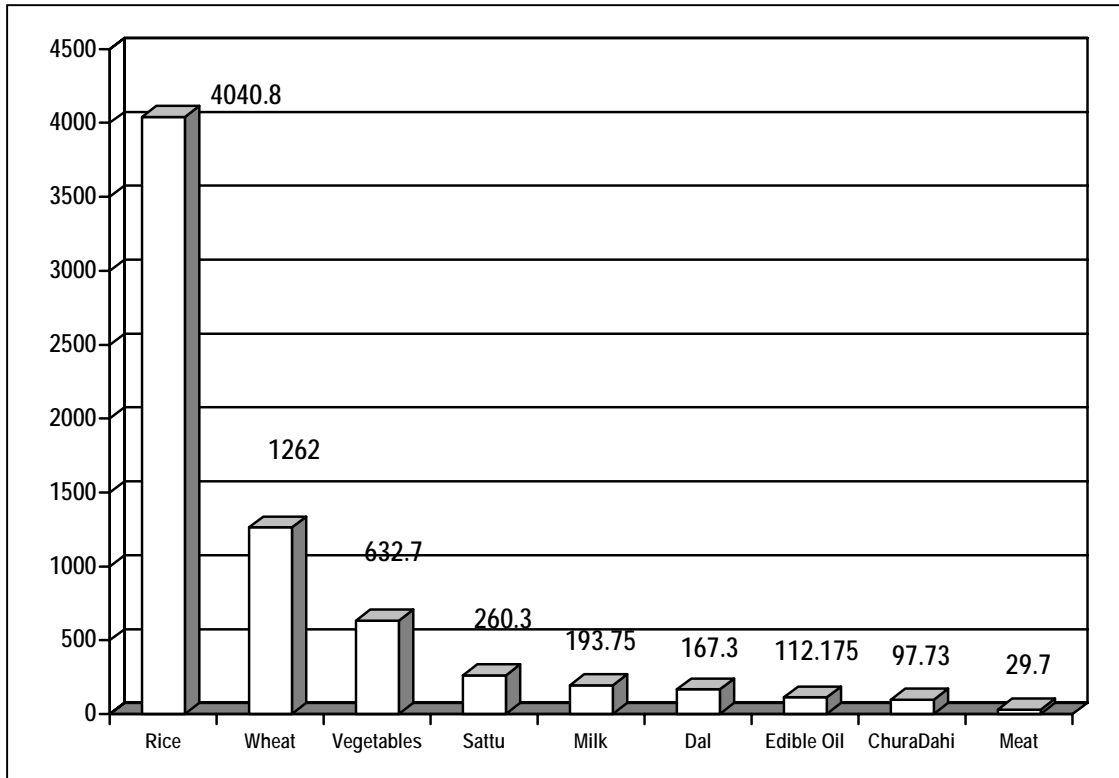
Based on the food consumption as above, the proximate principal values were calculated and matched with the Requisite Minimum proximate principal intakes for a balanced diet as under for the 7 day period.

Proximate Principal	Required	Actual Intake
ENERGY (Kcal)	33897661	21515152.25
PROTIEN (g)	565243	423380.61
CALCIUM (mg)	6397300	3884981.17
PHOSPHOROUS (mg)	6599250	10923985.25
IRON (mg)	378959	147861.51
FAT (g.)	314398	177952.43

The **daily compliance to minimum nutrients** was then calculated as under.

Proximate Principal	Required	Actual Intake	% Compliance
ENERGY (Kcal)	4842523	3073593	63.47
PROTIEN (g)	80749	60483	74.9
CALCIUM (mg)	913900	554997	60.73
PHOSPHOROUS (mg)	942750	1560569	165.5
IRON (mg)	54137	21123	39.02
FAT (g.)	44914	25422	56.6

Nutrient Compliance less than 95 % for a prolonged period leads to severe vitamin deficiencies causing serious damages to health. The compliance in case of Phosphorous is well above the requisite percentage because of the secured provisions of vegetables during the times of research period, which was October-November 2002. Further, the findings are graphically represented as below.



ANALYSIS: Household Food and Nutrition Security Provisions

With the tools of trend forecasting and extrapolation of the research findings as above the analysis projected for the Santhal Pargana Region is as under.

Household

- ☞ Basic education is alarmingly low at 30% or less and for female it is even below 7% .
- ☞ Earning opportunities in the region is not only limited but also varies on season-to-season basis promoting large-scale migration as wage laborers.
- ☞ Livelihood security provisions should be given utmost priority in the region.
- ☞ Given the earning population figure of less than 25%, emphasis should be on capacity building in non-farm sectors as most of the resource-poor population happen to be 'arable land' landless.
- ☞ The under 15 years population shall be around 35-40% in the region and that of the under 5 children shall be around 12-15%. This population in particular has to be brought under the safety net of Food and Nutrition security considering the long-term perspective for building a healthy and strong nation is concerned.
- ☞ The old and the infirm should be around 6-8% of the total resource-poor population in the region. Given the least or nil old-age income security it becomes imperative to attach the same importance as should be meted out to U5 children. The old age benefits like pension reaches to less than 7% of the total old age population in the region.
- ☞ The household gender ratio is in favor of the males. Against every 100 males the number of females shall be around 80-85.
- ☞ Less than 25% of the resource-poor households in the region do get to avail loans from Banks. This makes them largely vulnerable to moneylender's atrocities.
- ☞ SHG and Microcredit promotion should be carried out with added vigor and with enhanced seed capital/ revolving funds in the region. At present the credit lending appears to be around 24-25% only.
- ☞ Conscious and calculated shift should be made from the prevalent poverty-lending approaches towards a more secure micro-enterprise based approaches.

PDS

- ☞ A PDS shop in the region on an average has an enlistment of 300-400 beneficiaries.
- ☞ Government strategy to enlist beneficiaries under BPL scheme, it seems has considerably failed. The BPL/ Red Card to BPL population ratio is less than 40% in the region. Whereas, as per the enlistment records of PDS the ratio is close to 65% which points to a serious discrepancy by way of siphoning the excess food stocks to the markets.

- ☞ 85-90% of the so-called enlisted beneficiaries seems to be deprived of total due entitlements from PDS in the last 6 months.
- ☞ PDS shops in the region are in a dilapidated state, remaining closed for a prolonged duration (6-8 months on average). Because they have their own share of problems which has remained unattended by the government for long.
- ☞ Barring Kerosene, the qualities of other items are abysmally low. And their prices though subsidized are not quite differentiable from the nearby markets (wherever they are present), thereby making the entity called PDS highly redundant in the locality.
- ☞ PDS is far from being capable to contribute to the food security and farthest from being to contribute to the nutrition security of its beneficiaries in the region.

Food and Nutrition

- ☞ ***“Whatever was the father of a disease, an ill diet was the mother”.***
- ☞ The general trend of the household “food flow” points to an acute problem of food and nutrition security in the resource poor households of the region.
- ☞ Conformance to the minimum requisite nutrients is well below the health-threatening limits at 60-65% in the region, that too during the productive seasons.
- ☞ The region suffers the most during prolonged summer and during incessant rains.
- ☞ The region suffers the most due to its non-access to safe-drinking water, health and hygiene.

THE VERDICT

Food and Nutrition security provisions have to be effectively sustained in the Santhal Pargana region. This simple statement is just like telling, “*Kashmiris should henceforth be let to live in peace in Kashmir*”. Both these statements are highly welcome to every human soul, here, there and anywhere. At times these humans are made to wonder that why after so much of planning, hype and hooplas, investments and all visibly possible efforts under the sky... still they have to make a fresh start to combat the same problems. Fresh starts are welcome if it purports to effectively address the deep-rooted causes behind such malignant problems.

The issues under the banner of “Food Security” or “Food Insecurity” deserve special attention and focus. Short-term food security has one set of issues like – Emergency Food Aid, Water and Medical Assistance, etc. Medium-term food security has other set of issues like – Enhanced Food & Cash crop Production, Livestock, Market, Income Generation, Savings, Food assisted

Health Restoration of children and women, etc. Finally, the Long-term food-security has another set of multidimensional issues concerning – NRM and Equity, Land Access, Irrigation Access, Education, Skill Trainings and above all the Empowerment for realizing the entitlements rightfully and justifiably.

The verdict here is to get set for the **long-term food and nutrition security** *in the region of Santhal Pargana* with adequate preparedness for the short-term and medium-term security of the region. Again, this verdict will just be an act of the “*freedom of speech*” if that is not backed by committed and competent needful actions on the ground. And the onus of such needful actions should not just rest on one individual (*read: prime minister*) or one institution – government or non-government. Instead, the onus should be judiciously shared by a like-minded participative set of individuals and institutions.

It is in this context that WE THE PEOPLE-- NGOs, Trade Unions, Peasants Organizations, Progressive and Pro-People Fronts, Media, Activists, etc. ought now to deliver responsibly and with a greater unity of purpose and readdress the whole issue of Poverty in the ‘Rights’ mode where the said marginalized majority of the region is empowered to realize their legitimate entitlements as a responsive citizen of India, with dignity and without fear.