

# **Annual Report 2004 - 2005**

## **Preface**

Last year was an eventful year for the **Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS)** for many reasons. Though CEFS was founded in 2001, initial two years were really the period of its infancy and it was only during third year that CEFS reached adolescence. But CEFS acquired full adulthood during fourth year of its life, i.e. 2004 - 2005. After initial period of slow progress, it was the time for CEFS to take off and now this organization has not only acquired full “enfranchisement”, but made its presence felt in the Parliament of India, various ministries of the Central Government and State Governments, as well as on the intellectual horizon of the Capital and among the NGOs and CBOs of India and abroad. The overwhelming response to all our research and advocacy programmes initiated and carried out during 2004-2005 has exceeded all our expectations.

First and foremost, CEFS completed and released its first research report titled “**Political Economy of Hunger & Poverty in Adivasi (tribal) Areas of India**”. The report has been very well received by media, ministries, departments and agencies of the Union Government and State Governments as well as by Academia, NGOs, CBOs and public at large.

Second, CEFS has launched a **Freedom from Hunger Campaign** to make India a 'Hunger-Free country'. This Campaign was launched on 10th February 2005 at India International Centre, New Delhi in the presence of over 200 activists, scientists, intellectuals, government officials, policy makers, farmers' leaders, members of diplomatic missions and various international and UN agencies. The Campaign was jointly launched by Magsaysay Awardee Social activist **Aruna Roy** and **Susan George** (author of landmark book on hunger "**How the Other Half Dies**").

In a very short period with tiny budget and small infrastructure, the Freedom from Hunger Campaign has been able to draw the attention of Indian Parliament and various ministries and agencies of the Government. In May 2005, some members of Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) asked questions about CEFS and its Freedom from Hunger Campaign. On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2005, Mr. Sharad Pawar, Union Minister for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution gave written answers to all these questions on the floor of Rajya Sabha. (Please see these questions and answers in annexure I of the Annual report.)

The Freedom from Hunger Campaign is a humble initiative to create awareness and understanding, and to kickoff a national debate on the political economy of hunger. Debate not for the sake of debate but to facilitate enabling legislation and public action to banish the scourge of hunger from our motherland. This Campaign is a tiny effort to bring back the issue of hunger and poverty in mainstream intellectual discourse, at the centre of public policy and on the conscience radar of the nation. Since hunger is essentially a political condition, the key to banish hunger is to change the politics of hunger. And to change the politics of hunger, we need to bring the issue of hunger in mainstream electoral politics. Freedom from Hunger Campaign is a very modest attempt to politicize hunger in India.

As part of this campaign, CEFS will hold lectures, workshops, seminars, conferences and public hearings all over India. Apart from doing research and advocacy for a hunger-free India, we also plan to bring out a series of "Citizens' Reports" especially from the "hunger hot-spots" of the country. The Freedom from Hunger Campaign will continue till 2015 and it has been divided into three phases. The First Phase of Campaign will conclude on 15th August 2007 to coincide with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Indian Independence. The Second Phase of Campaign will continue till 2010 and Third Phase will conclude in 2015, the target year of UN Millennium Development Goals.

Since February 2005, CEFS in collaboration with India International Centre (New Delhi) is hosting a bimonthly **Freedom from Hunger Lecture Series** and this lecture series will continue till 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2007. We plan to publish all the lectures delivered in this series in two volumes. This lecture series has become a popular intellectual event of the Capital and is attended by a large number of activists, scientists, intellectuals, government officials, policy makers, farmers' leaders and members of diplomatic missions and various international agencies.

There are a number of programmes and activities to be carried out during the first phase of Campaign. But we have decided to focus mainly on two issues during the first phase. The first issue we are going to focus on is - Livelihood crises and hunger in Adivasi areas of India. The second issue we would focus on is - Agrarian distress and farmers' suicides: Its implications for India's sustainable food security.

More than 65 per cent of India's population still depends on natural resources for their livelihood. Any economic process that undermines the health and sustainability of natural resources is bound to undermine the livelihoods of over 65 per cent of our population. Unlike Western societies where "Environment" is limited to trees and tigers, wildlife sanctuaries and eco-tourism, environment for a developing country like India is a by-name for lives and livelihoods. Environment is lifeline and, therefore, economic growth at the cost of destruction of ecological wealth would be only suicidal. No wonder that large number of farmers in India are committing suicide. For a healthy and sustainable economic growth, the protection of natural resources must be in-built. Unfortunately, the prevalent economic growth models are skewed and often ecologically disruptive.

Realizing the importance of discourse on interface between economic growth and ecological security, CEFS in collaboration with India Habitat Centre (New Delhi) initiated a public debate on -"Can Economic growth and Ecological Security go together?" As part of this debate series, the first public debate on the topic was held at India Habitat Centre on 10th January 2005. The panel of lead debators included distinguished

environmentalist Dr Vandana Shiva and noted economists Dr Ashok Desai, Dr Prem Shankar Jha and Prof Shubhashis Gangopadhyay. This inaugural debate was moderated by eminent social scientist Prof. Ashis Nandy. The second debate in this series was held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2005. Eminent environmentalist Dr. Ashok Khosla (President, Development Alternatives) and distinguished economists Dr. Surjit S. Bhalla (President, Oxus Investments) and Prof. Amitabh Kundu (JNU) participated in this debate as lead debators. Prof. N S Ramaswamy, founder director, IIM-Bangalore chaired and moderated this debate.

On July 20<sup>th</sup> 2004, CEFS hosted a “**Panel Discussion on Farming Crisis and Union Budget 2004-2005**” at India International Centre, New Delhi. Mr. B P Singh (Former Union Home Secretary, Executive Director and Ambassador at the World Bank) chaired and moderated this discussion. The lead panelists included Dr. Vandana Shiva (Eminent environmentalist), Prof. B B Bhattacharya (Vice-Chancellor, JNU), Mr. Paranjay Guhathakurta (Senior Economic Journalist) and Dr. Devinder Sharma (Food and Trade Policy Analyst).

In February 2005, CEFS launched its website ([www.cefsindia.org](http://www.cefsindia.org)) and it has proved very useful for our advocacy programmes because it has given tremendous boost to our outreach efforts. And last but not the least, in January 2005, CEFS was granted permanent FCRA registration.

In the years ahead, we would strive to redefine activism and transform the contours of development discourse and ecological politics in India. We firmly believe that poverty is the worst form of violence and food is god to the hungry.

Parshuram Rai  
New Delhi

## **Introduction of Centre for Environment and Food Security**

The Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) was founded in April, 2001 by some eminent scholars, writers, environmentalists, scientists and activists like Prof. Ashis Nandy, Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Dr. Pradipto Roy, Mr. Anupam Mishra, Prof. P. S. Ramakrishnan, Dr. T.N. Khoshoo, Mr. P.N. Singh and Mr. Parshuram Ray. CEFS was founded with the broad objective of knowledge-based activism on the issues of poverty, hunger, food security, sustainable livelihoods, sustainable development and ecological security. Research, Advocacy and Campaign on these issues is the core mandate of this NGO based in New Delhi. Parshuram Ray is the Founder Director of CEFS.

The main aims and objectives of the Centre for Environment and Food Security include:

- To promote study and research on environment and food security to create awareness and knowledge among the people.
- To disseminate environment and food security knowledge among the people by conducting training programs and holding lectures, workshops and seminars.
- To implement and encourage all kinds of projects, plans and programs for promoting ecological balance and food security.
- To build a resource centre on environment, food security and sustainable livelihoods.
- To mobilize people and build a network of grassroot organizations, civil society groups, NGOs, activists and experts for promoting sustainable development and food security.
- To publish books, research papers, monographs and occasional papers on environment and food security related issues.
- To carry out intensive campaign with media for covering and highlighting the issues of environment and food security.
- To promote strategies for conservation of natural and human-managed biodiversity, which have implications for food and human security for all sections of the society, especially societies living close to nature and natural resources.

## Introduction of CEFS Founders and Board Members

1. **Prof. Ashis Nandy** is presently Senior Fellow of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and Chairperson of the Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures, both in Delhi. He has been Director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (1992-1997); Woodrow Wilson Fellow, Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington (1988); Charles Wallace Fellow, Department of Politics, University of Hull (Summer, 1990); Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities, University of Edinburgh (Summer, 1991); UNESCO Professor, Centre for European Studies, University of Trier, Germany (Summer, 1994); and Regent's Fellow, University of California, Los Angeles. Trained as a sociologist and clinical psychologist, Nandy's research interests are political psychology, cultures of knowledge, utopias and visions, popular culture, and futures. Among Nandy's books are *Alternative Sciences* (1980,1995); *At the Edge of Psychology* (1980); *The Intimate Enemy* (1983); *Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias* (1987); *The Tao of Cricket* (1989); *The Illegitimacy of Nationalism* (1994); and *The Savage Freud and Other Essays in Possible and Retrievable Selves* (1995). He is also co-author of *The Blinded Eye* (1993) also published as *Barbaric Others*, and *Creating a Nationality* (1995). Nandy has edited two books, (ed), *Science, Hegemony and Violence* (1988); and *The Secret Politics of our Desires*; and co-edited *The Multiverse of Democracy* (1996). Oxford University Press is now bringing out an omnibus edition of all his works. Nandy's works have been translated into a number of languages, among them Bengali, Chinese, Finnish, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Malayalam, Marathi, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Tamil. He has also contributed to major human rights reports on ethnic and communal violence and democratic elections.

2. **Dr. Prodipto Roy** has an M.Sc and Ph.D. in Rural Sociology with a minor in Agricultural Economics from the Pennsylvania State University, USA and a B.Sc. in Agriculture from the Agricultural Institute of Allahabad University. He started his professional career as an Assistant Professor of sociology, Washington State University, (1957-61); Director (Sociology) National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad

(1961-68); Director and Executive Chairperson, Council for Social Development, New Delhi(1968-1979); Visiting Professor, Tribhuvan University(1979-81) and then Sociologist, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Kathmandu (1984-89). Important Assignments: UN Centre for Regional Development, Nagoya, Japan 1974; ILO Bangladesh 1975; UN Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia(1981); IBRD Consultant (1982-83); Australian AID project on R & R of project affected people due to Coal-mining, Jharkhand, 1994-98; appraisal of a Tree-growing programme, Palamu, Jharkhand (1998-2000). Publications: *Manual for Block Level Planning* NIRD, Hyderabad, Macmillan, Delhi, 1977 with BR Patil; *Planning with People: Decentralization in Nepal*, with Sant B Gurung, Orient Longmans, New Delhi 1987; *Third World Surveys: Survey Research Methods in Developing Nations*, New Delhi, Macmillan 1976; *Ecological Responsibility* in Social Change, Vol 31 Nos 1 & 2, 2001.

3. **Prof. P.S. Ramakrishnan**, Professor Emeritus of Ecology at Jawaharlal Nehru University, is an internationally recognized ecologist working in the interphase areas of linking ecological processes with social processes, directed towards sustainable livelihood/development of traditional societies. For his work, involving over 350 research publications and 8 books in this area of study, he has received a variety of national and international recognitions. He is currently involved in networking with a large number of scientists through many national and international programmes.

4. **Dr. T.N. Khoshoo**, was (expired in July 2002) one of the foremost environmental scientists of the country. His environmental canvas widened considerably when he was secretary to the govt. of India in the dept. of Environment. He was fellow of all the major science academies in country, and had to his credit a number of prestigious medals, prizes and awards including the Padma Bhushan, Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar, Government of India (1993) and Sasakawa Award of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-2002).

5. **Dr. Kamla Chowdhary**, currently heading the Vikram Sarabhai Foundation, is former Chairperson of the National Wasteland Development Board, Govt. of India, former Director of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad, former Chairperson of the Centre for Science and Environment. She was at the faculty of Harvard University and has worked with the World Bank and Ford Foundation too.

6. **Shri Anupam Mishra**, currently General Secretary of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, is a distinguished social and environmental activist of India. Mishra's contribution in popularizing and reinventing the role of traditional Water Harvesting Practices of India has earned him a special name in the country. He is author of the celebrated book on traditional tanks of India titled *Aaj Bhi Khare Hai Talab (Tanks are still alive)* which has been translated in many languages and the print - run of the original Hindi version is a record 75,000 copies till now.

7. **Shri B. P. Singh** is a distinguished scholar and civil servant. Over the past 40 years he has held a variety of important positions within Assam as well as in the Government of India including Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests (1993-95), Culture Secretary (1995-97) and Home Secretary (1997-99). He was Executive Director and Ambassador at the World Bank (1999-2002) representing India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. B.P. Singh has authored four books including the two widely acclaimed ones: "The Problem of Change: A Study of North-East India" and "India's Culture – the State, the Arts and Beyond" both published by Oxford University Press, New Delhi. He is also Chief Editor of the "Millennium Book on New Delhi" published by Oxford University Press, New Delhi in 2001. Currently, B.P. Singh is Chancellor of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath (a Deemed University). He is also Chief Editor of the South Asia Series on "Perspectives on Economics, Technology and Governance" of Oxford University Press, New York.

## **Programmes and Projects Implemented during 2004-2005**

### Research and Advocacy Project on the Political Economy of Hunger in Adivasi Areas of Rajasthan and Jharkhand

Since November 2003, CEFS has been doing survey research on the issue of hunger in tribal areas of Rajasthan and Jharkhand. This project was an effort to bring the issue of hunger & food insecurity in Adivasi areas in the forefront of intellectual discourse and policy planning. This research study has been now completed and the full copy of this report has been posted on CEFS website ([www.cefsindia.org](http://www.cefsindia.org)). This research report has been widely circulated and it has attracted extensive media coverage. Besides the state governments of Rajasthan and Jharkhand, many Union ministries and government agencies too have taken note of this survey report.

### ***Executive summary of survey research on hunger & poverty in Adivasi areas of Rajasthan and Jharkhand***

The findings of the survey research on hunger in Adivasi areas of Rajasthan and Jharkhand carried out by **Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS)** are revealing but shocking. It is distressful to note that out of total 1000 Adivasi households from 40 sample villages in Rajasthan and Jharkhand surveyed for this study, a staggering 99 per cent were facing chronic hunger. The data gathered during this survey suggests that 25.2 percent of surveyed Adivasi households had faced semi-starvation during the previous week of the survey. The survey data also suggests that 24.1 percent of the sample Adivasi households had lived in semi-starvation condition throughout the previous month of the survey. Over 99 per cent of the Adivasi households had lived with one or another level of endemic hunger and food insecurity during the whole previous year. Moreover, out of 500 sample Adivasi households surveyed in Rajasthan, not a single had secured two square meals throughout the previous year.

### **Sample Size and Methodology**

The Field survey for this research was carried out during March-June 2004 in forty Adivasi villages of four Adivasi-dominated districts, two each from Rajasthan and Jharkhand. Udaipur & Dungarpur districts of Rajasthan, and West Singhbhum & Gumla districts from Jharkhand were purposively selected for a household survey among 1000 Adivasi households. From every sample district 10 sample Adivasi villages and from every sample village 25 Adivasi households were purposively selected for the household survey. The total sample size of Adivasi households was 1000, 500 samples each from Rajasthan and Jharkhand. Only villages with over 75 per cent of Adivasi population were selected for sample survey. In the selection of household samples, only one category of households were excluded, i.e.- those with regular salaried income.

### **Socio-economic profile of sample Adivasi households**

Out of the total sample size of 1000 Adivasi households, 60.1 per cent of respondents were male and 39.9 per cent female, 68.75 percent of respondents were illiterate, 95.1 per cent lived in thatched and mud houses, 96.4 per cent were without electricity, 84.7 per cent without water availability within 1000 meters of their house, 99.7 per cent were without toilet and a horrifying 99 per cent of Adivasis were facing chronic hunger. **On the basis of these socio-economic indicators, it would be only logical to conclude that these Adivasis are living in appalling conditions, grinding poverty and their depth of deprivation defies all imaginations of a deprived human life.**

### **Household Assets**

To get an elementary assessment of the level of poverty and deprivation among sample Adivasi households in Rajasthan and Jharkhand, they were asked as to how many of ten listed household assets (1.Blanket, 2.Pair of shoes, 3.Bicycle, 4.cooker, 5.Kerosene stove, 6.Radio, 7. T.V, 8. Torch, 9. Clock/Watch, 10.Others) were available in their homes. We were shocked to find that 10.4 per cent of Adivasi households did not have any of these listed items in their homes. Moreover, there was not even a single Adivasi household from the 1000 samples which possessed more than 4 household assets from this list. 32.2 per cent of samples possessed blanket and pair of shoes. While 44 per

cent of households from Rajasthan possessed blanket and a pair of shoes, only 20.4 per cent of Jharkhand samples possessed these two items. Only 8.8 per cent of the samples were in possession of 4 items from the given list. Proportion of samples possessing any 4 listed household assets was only 4 per cent in Rajasthan and 13.6 per cent in Jharkhand.

### **Daily hunger Profile**

Among the total 1000 households asked as to whether they had eaten two square meals on the previous day of the survey, only four respondents (0.4 per cent), two each from Rajasthan & Jharkhand said that they had eaten two square meals on the previous day. When they were asked whether they could get one square meal plus one poor/partial meal on the previous day, only five households (0.5 per cent) replied yes. Out of the remaining households, 47.9 per cent had eaten two poor/partial meals, 34.7 per cent got one poor/partial meal plus one distress meal, 11.3 per cent could get just one poor/partial meal, 0.2 per cent had eaten only one distress meal and 5 per cent of the surveyed Adivasis could eat only jungle food on the previous day of the survey.

This data suggests that at least 16.5 percent of the surveyed Adivasi households had eaten either just one poor/partial meal or one distress meal or only jungle food on the previous day of the survey. In other words, at least 16.5 per cent of sample Adivasi households were facing either starvation or semi-starvation on the previous day of the survey. While only nine families (1.8 per cent) in Rajasthan had survived on Jungle food, 41 Adivasi households (8.2 per cent) in Jharkhand had to make do with only jungle food on the previous day of the survey.

### **Proportion of Jungle food in total food intake on previous day**

62.4 per cent of sample Adivasi households said that the proportion of jungle food in their previous day's diet was zero, 16.9 per cent samples said that one-fourth of their diet on the previous day consisted of jungle food, 9.9 per cent families said that half of their diet on the previous day consisted of jungle food, 5.8 per cent said that it was three-fourth and 5 per cent Adivasi households said that their full diet on the previous

day consisted of only Jungle food. This data again reinforces the previous finding that 5 per cent of Adivasis had eaten nothing but jungle food on the previous day of survey. The use, access and availability of jungle food and Minor Forest Produce (MFP) in Jharkhand (especially in West Singhbhum district) is very high in comparison to that in Rajasthan. In the West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand, MFP is still a major source of livelihood for many Adivasi households.

### **Protein (Pulses & animal products) eaten on previous day**

An alarming proportion of 76.6 per cent Adivasi households said that they could not afford any pulse or animal product on the previous day of the survey. Only 23.4 per cent of the samples had eaten some pulses or animal products on the previous day. While 112 (22.4 per cent) samples from Rajasthan had eaten some pulses or animal products, 122 (24.4 per cent) samples from Jharkhand were able to secure some pulses or animal products on the previous day. While 388 (77.6 per cent) samples from Rajasthan could not afford any pulse or animal product on the previous day of survey, the corresponding figure for Jharkhand was 378 (75.6 per cent).

### **Weekly Hunger Profile**

To assess and ascertain the weekly state of hunger and food insecurity among Adivasi households, they were asked as to what category of food was secured by them for how many days of the previous week. When they were asked as to whether they had eaten two square meals on all 7 days of the previous week, only one respondent (0.01 per cent) replied yes. The remaining 999 (99.9 per cent) households said that they could not get two square meals even on a single day of the previous week. When asked as to how many of them for how many days of the previous week could secure one square meal plus one poor/partial meal, 98.9 percent said that they could not afford this kind of food even for a single day of the previous week. This weekly data on hunger again confirms that about 99 per cent of Adivasi households in Rajasthan and Jharkhand were facing chronic hunger.

Only 216 (21.6 percent) out of 1000 surveyed households were able to secure even two poor/partial meals on all seven days of the previous week. 57 sample families (5.7 per cent) had secured two poor/partial meals for 6 days of the previous week, 103 families (10.3 per cent) for 5 days of the week, 70 families (7 per cent) for 4 days, 59 families (5.9 per cent) for 3 days, 62 families (6.2 per cent) for only 2 days of the week and 18 sample families (1.8 per cent) for just 1 day of the previous week.

Another 214 (21.4 percent) of the households had survived throughout the week on just one poor/partial meal plus one distress meal per day. 99 sample Adivasi households (9.9 per cent) had eaten one poor/partial meal plus one distress meal for 5 days of the previous week, 66 families (6.6 per cent) for four days of the week, 76 households (7.6 per cent) for 3 days of the week, 112 families (11.2 per cent) for 2 days and 71 families (7.1 per cent) for only one day of the previous week.

2.8 percent of the households had survived by eating just one poor/partial meal- a -day throughout the previous week. 30 sample families (3 per cent) had eaten just one poor/partial meal for 5 days of the previous week, 40 samples (4 per cent) for four days, 58 families (5.8 per cent) for 3 days and 96 families (9.6 per cent) for 2 days of the week. This data suggests that 25.2 percent of surveyed Adivasi households in Rajasthan and Jharkhand had eaten only one poor/partial meal for 2-7 days of the previous week.

Ten Adivasi households (1 percent) could barely secure one distress meal- a-day throughout the previous week. Another three families had eaten only distress food for 6 days of the week, 7 families for 3 days and 11 families for 2 days of the previous week. This data suggests that 31 (3.1 per cent) Adivasi families had eaten either for the whole previous week or for a significant part of it only one distress meal-a-day.

The survey data on weekly hunger clearly suggests that 28.3 per cent of sample Adivasi households had survived for the whole or significant part of the previous week by eating just one distress meal-a-day or one poor/ partial meal- a- day. In other words, 28.3 per

cent of sample households had lived in semi-starvation condition during the previous week of survey.

### **Jungle food consumption during previous week**

Among the total sample Adivasi households, 62 per cent said that they did not eat any jungle food during the previous week of survey, 15.2 per cent said that approximately one-fourth of their diet consisted of jungle food during previous one week, 8.2 per cent samples said that half of their diet during the week consisted of jungle food, 6.7 per cent said that it was up to three-fourth and 7.9 per cent samples said that 75-100 per cent of their previous week's diet consisted of jungle food only.

### **Protein (pulses & animal products) consumption during previous week**

40.2 per cent of sample Adivasi households could not afford any pulse or animal product even for a single day of the previous week. 20.8 per cent samples could afford these items for just one day of the week, 22 per cent for 2 days in the week, 8.3 per cent for 3 days, 4.6 per cent for 4 days, 2.1 per cent for 5 days, 0.4 per cent for 6 days and only 1.6 per cent of samples had eaten some source of protein on all 7 days of the previous week.

### **Monthly Hunger Profile**

998 households (99.8 per cent) said that they could not secure two square meals even for a single day of the previous month. Out of the remaining two households, one had got two square meals on just one day of the previous month and only one household (0.01 per cent) had taken two square meals-a-day throughout the month. Not a single of the 500 households surveyed in Rajasthan had eaten two square meals even on a single day of the previous month. When asked as to how many of them for how many days of the previous month could afford one square meal plus one poor/partial meal-a-day, the answer was no less shocking. A staggering 98.4 per cent of the households said that they could not secure for a single day of the previous month even this kind of food. The data on monthly hunger profile suggests that since only one family had secured two square meals and another two families had secured one square meal plus

one poor/partial meal for the full month, the remaining 997 Adivasi households (99.7 percent) were facing chronic hunger during the previous month of the survey.

When asked as for how many days of the previous month they had secured two poor/partial meals- a- day, 36 per cent said that they could not get this kind of food even for a single day of the previous month and only 15.2 per cent said that they had eaten this kind of food for the whole month. 13.7 per cent of the sample households had eaten this category of food for 25-30 days, 11.3 per cent for 20-25 days, 7.4 per cent for 15-20 days, 11.4 per cent for 10-15 days and 3 per cent of households had eaten this kind of food for 5 days of the previous month.

When asked as for how many days of the previous month they had eaten one poor/partial meal plus one distress meal- a- day, 14.5 per cent of total samples said that for the whole month they had eaten only this kind of food, 11.8 per cent for 10-15 days of the month, 10.9 per cent for 15-20 days, 14 per cent had eaten for 20-25 days and 3.6 per cent for 25-30 days of the previous month. While 12.4 per cent Adivasi households from Rajasthan had eaten only this category of food on all days of the previous month, 16.6 per cent samples from Jharkhand had eaten this kind of food on all days of the previous month. 5 per cent of samples from Rajasthan had eaten this kind of food for 25-30 days, 11.2 per cent for 20-25 days, 10.6 per cent for 15-20 days and 11.2 per cent for 10-15 days. The respective figures for Jharkhand are 2.2 per cent, 16.8 per cent, 11.2 per cent and 12.4 per cent

When asked as for how many days of the previous month they had survived only on one poor/partial meal, 1.9 per cent among total samples said that for the whole previous month they could secure only this kind of food, 1.1 per cent for 25-30 days of the month, 3.2 per cent for 20-25 days of the month, 3.9 per cent for 15-20 days of the month and 14 per cent of the Adivasi households had survived on this kind of food for 10-15 days of the previous month. This data suggests that 24.1 percent of the surveyed Adivasi households had eaten only one poor/ partial meal-a-day for 10-30 days of the previous month.

Two Adivasi households among total samples had survived the full previous month by eating only one distress meal-a-day, one sample for 25-30 days, two samples for 20-25 days, 5 samples for 15-20 days, 20 samples for 10-15 days, 3 samples for 8 days and another 20 samples for 5 days of the previous month. The data on this count suggests that 5.4 per cent of Adivasi households had survived for more than 5 days of the previous month eating only this category of food. The proportion of samples surviving only on this category of food for more than 10 days of the month is 3.4 per cent.

Three families from the total samples had no food at all for 10 days of the previous month, 1 sample for 8 days of the month, 5 samples for 5 days, 7 samples for 4 days, another 5 samples for 3 days, another 7 samples for 2 days and 3 samples for one day had no food at all. It is interesting to note that all except one of these samples are from Rajasthan. While only one family from Jharkhand could not secure any food for 5 days of the previous month, there were 30 families from Rajasthan who could not eat any food for 1-10 days of the previous month. This variation is most probably because of higher availability of jungle food and minor forest produce in Jharkhand in comparison to Rajasthan. Rajasthan sample villages had very scarce jungle food.

The monthly hunger profile of the sample Adivasi households clearly shows that 24.1 percent of the households had eaten only one poor/ partial meal-a-day for 10-30 days of the previous month, 3.4 per cent of the households had survived by eating only one distress meal-a-day for more than 10 days and 2.8 per cent samples had not eaten any food for 2-10 days of the previous month. This data suggests that 30.3 per cent of Adivasi households were facing semi-starvation during the previous month of survey.

### **Jungle food consumption during previous month**

59.9 per cent of sample households said that they did not eat any jungle food during the previous one month of survey. 18.3 per cent said that approximately one-fourth of their diet consisted of jungle food during previous one month, 7 per cent samples said that half of their diet during the month consisted of jungle food, 7.9 per cent said that it was

up to three-fourth and 6.9 per cent samples said that about 75-100 per cent of their previous month's diet consisted of jungle food only.

### **Protein (pulses& animal products) consumption during previous month**

33.3 per cent of samples could not get any pulse or animal product even on a single day of the previous month. 3.7 per cent could get it on just one day, 10.7 per cent for two days of the month, 6.5 per cent for three days, 8 per cent for four days, 10.4 per cent for five days, 2.8 per cent for six days, 2.5 per cent for seven days, 5.7 per cent for eight days, 0.2 per cent for nine days, another 5.7 per cent for ten days, 6 per cent for 12-15 days, and remaining 4.5 per cent samples for 16-30 days of the month. These figures suggest that only 10.5 per cent of Adivasi households could eat some pulses or animal products for 12-30 days of the previous month. The remaining 89.5 per cent of samples either did not get these items at all or did not get for more than ten days of the month.

### **Annual Hunger Profile**

A staggering 99.8 per cent of Adivasi households said that they could not get two square meals even for a single month of the previous year. Of the remaining two samples, one had secured two square meals only for one month and just one (0.1 per cent) had eaten two square meals for the whole previous year. Therefore, it is clear that 99.9 per cent of surveyed households were facing one or another level of hunger and food insecurity during the previous year. Moreover, out of 500 sample Adivasi households surveyed in Rajasthan, not a single had secured two square meals for the whole previous year. Therefore, it is extremely distressing to note that 100 per cent of sample Adivasi households in Rajasthan were facing chronic hunger throughout the previous year. When asked as for how many months of the previous year they could secure one square meal plus one poor/partial meal a day, 99 per cent of the samples said that they did not get this kind of food even for a single month of the previous year. Two samples had secured this category of food for 11-12 months, one for 10 months, one for 8 months, one for 6 months, one for 5 months, one for 4 months and three samples had secured this kind of food for just 1 month of the previous year.

When asked as for how many months of the previous year they did manage to get two poor/partial meals-a-day, only 8.1 per cent of total samples said that they could afford this kind of food for all months of the previous year. 27 per cent of the respondents said that they did not get this kind of food even for a single month of the previous year. 2.2 per cent of the respondents had secured this kind of food just for 1 month of the year, 8.7 per cent for 2 months, 4.2 per cent for 3 months, 19.2 per cent for 4 months, 7.7 per cent for 6 months, 7.4 per cent for 8 months, 6.1 per cent for 10 months and just 8.1 per cent of the Adivasi households had secured this kind of food for 12 months of the previous year.

When asked as for how many months of the previous year they did get one poor/ partial meal plus one distress meal-a-day, only 2.7 per cent said that they had secured this kind of food throughout the year, 21.7 per cent of the samples could not get this kind of food even for a single month of the year. 7.7 per cent of the households had eaten this kind of food for 2 months of the previous year, 15.7 per cent for 4 months, 17.9 per cent for 6 months, 14.1 per cent for 8 months and 3.1 per cent had eaten this kind of food for 10 months of the previous year.

When asked as for how many months of the previous year they had to survive on just one poor/partial meal-a-day, 1.3 per cent said that they could get only this kind of food for the whole year, 3 per cent had to survive on this kind of food for 8 months of the previous year, 2.7 per cent for 6 months of the year, 15.6 per cent for 4 months, 23.8 per cent for 2 months and 10.8 per cent of Adivasis had to make do only with this kind of food for 1 month of the previous year. This data implies that 22.6 per cent of Adivasi households in these sample states had to survive only on this kind of food for 4-12 months of the previous year.

There were 11 (1.1 per cent) Adivasi households who had survived by eating only distress food for 5-11 months of the previous year. Another 39 (3.9 per cent) families could eat only this kind of food for 4 months, 50 (5 per cent) families for 3 months, 102 (10.2 per cent) families for 2 months and 77 (7.7 per cent) families for 1 month of the

previous year. **This data implies that 10 per cent of sample Adivasi households had to survive only on distress food for 3-11 months of the previous year. If this figure is combined with 22.6 per cent of samples who had survived for 4-12 months only on one poor/ partial meal, we get a very disturbing figure of 32.6 per cent of sample Adivasi households living in semi- starvation during the previous one year of survey.**

There were 3 (0.3 per cent) Adivasi households who had survived on only jungle food for 2 months and 26 (2.6 per cent) samples for 1 month of the previous year. All 3 samples who had survived on jungle food for 2 months were from Rajasthan. Out of the 26 samples who could get only jungle food for 1 month of the previous year, 9 (0.9 per cent) were from Rajasthan and 17 (1.7 per cent) were from Jharkhand.

There were 57(5.7 per cent) Adivasi households who had not eaten any food whatsoever for one month of the previous year. However, this state of hunger was not suffered in continuation but was spread over the whole year. Therefore, it does not necessarily cause “starvation death”. But this is definitely a firm indicator of the state of semi-starvation prevailing in this group of Adivasi households. Out of these 57 samples, 42 (4.2 per cent) were from Rajasthan and only 15 (1.5 per cent) from Jharkhand.

### **Jungle food consumption during previous one year**

51.4 per cent of households said that they did not eat any jungle food during the previous one year of survey. 23.2 per cent said that approximately one-fourth of their diet consisted of jungle food during previous one year, 7.9 per cent samples said that half of their diet during the year consisted of jungle food, 9.1 per cent said that it was up to three-fourth and 8.4 per cent samples said that 75-100 per cent of their previous year’s diet consisted of jungle food.

### **Protein (pulses & animal products) consumption during previous year**

30.8 per cent of sample households in Rajasthan and Jharkhand could not secure any pulse or animal product even for one month of the previous year. Less than 1 per cent

of sample households were able to eat some pulses or animal products during the whole previous year. 3.8 per cent could secure these items for 7-11 months, 8 per cent of samples had eaten these protein sources between 4-6 months, 7.3 per cent for three months, 19.4 per cent households had eaten these items for two months and 29.2 per cent households were able to eat these sources of protein hardly for one month in the previous year. To put these figures differently, 86.7 per cent of Adivasi households in Rajasthan and Jharkhand either could not eat any pulse & animal product or did eat for hardly three months during the year. Therefore, these figures clearly suggest that at least 86.7 per cent of Adivasi households were suffering from severe protein deficiency and were vulnerable to many opportunistic diseases. Severe protein deficiency among Adivasi children is responsible for very high infant mortality rate in these areas and this problem has now assumed alarming proportions in Adivasi areas of India.

### **Food Stocks at Home**

To assess and understand the immediate level of hunger and food security of the Adivasi households, they were asked as to how much of food stock they had at home. 4.7 per cent of the households had no food stock at all on the day of survey, 18.7 per cent had less than 10 kg of food grains at home, 45.9 per cent of them had less than 50 kg, 15.9 per cent had less than 100 kg, 13 per cent had between 100-150kg, 3.4 per cent 150-200 kg, 6.5 per cent had 200-250 kg, 1.3 per cent between 250-300 kg, 4 per cent between 300-350 kg, 0.4 per cent had between 350-400 kg and there were only 9.7 per cent of households who had more than 400 kg of food grains at their home on the day of survey.

### **Adivasis' own perception about their state of food security**

To get Adivasis' own perception about their current state of food security in comparison to that 2-3 decades ago, they were asked as to whether their household food security had improved or weakened in last 25 years. A staggering 90.6 percent of total samples said that their food security had weakened.

### **Reasons for decline in food security**

To know Adivasis' views about the processes and main reasons behind the decline in their household food security in recent past, they were asked to identify three main reasons for the same out of a list of 9 probable reasons given to them (1. Land alienation; 2. Decline in MFP/deforestation/degradation; 3. Decline in livestock; 4. Decline in actual wages; 5. Decline in work availability; 6. Growth in family size; 7. Development projects; 8. Conservation of forests/wildlife; 9. Others). 54.9 per cent of the respondents identified decline in availability of minor forest produce (MFP) due to deforestation and degradation of forests as the most important reason for weakening of their food security.

### **Access & availability of PDS**

While Rajasthan and Jharkhand had a combined proportion of 74 per cent of sample households possessing ration cards and only 26 per cent without ration cards, the segregated data of both these sample states gives a strikingly different picture. While only 6.2 per cent of Rajasthan households were without ration cards, a staggering 45.8 per cent of Jharkhand Adivasi households did not possess any ration card.

Out of the combined proportion of 74 per cent of households in possession of ration cards in two sample States, 40.5 per cent of households possessed APL (above poverty line) cards, 50.1 per cent had got BPL (below poverty line) cards, 9.2 per cent had Antyodaya cards and only 0.1 per cent possessed Annapoorna cards. Out of 50.1 per cent card holding samples who had BPL cards, only a tiny 9.2 per cent households said that they were getting their regular quota of ration. Remaining 90.8 per cent samples were taking either partial or no ration at all. While 13.1 per cent of BPL samples from Rajasthan said that they were availing their regular quota of ration, only 3.8 per cent of Jharkhand samples could say so.

PDS supplier's refusal to give full quota was identified as the biggest reason for Adivasis' inability to avail their full ration entitlement; because the highest proportion of samples (28.2 per cent) identified this as reason for the same. An overwhelming 80.9 per cent of Adivasi households were not satisfied with the functioning of PDS shops and

behaviour of PDS dealers. Our survey data has revealed slightly better functioning of PDS shops in Rajasthan in comparison to Jharkhand. While the proportion of dissatisfied households was 75.7 per cent in Rajasthan, that proportion in Jharkhand was as high as 87.9 percent.

## **Panel Discussion on Farming Crisis and Union Budget 2004-2005**

**Venue : India International Centre, New Delhi**

**Date : July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

### **Chair**

**Mr. B P Singh (Former Union Home Secretary, Executive Director and Ambassador at the World Bank)**

### **Panelists**

**Dr. Vandana Shiva (Eminent environmentalist)**

**Prof. B B Bhattacharya (Former Director, Institute of Economic Growth and currently Vice-Chancellor, JNU)**

**Mr. Paranjoy Guhathakurta (Senior Economic Journalist)**

**Dr. Devinder Sharma (Food and Trade Policy Analyst)**

### **Welcome & Theme introduction by Parshuram Rai**

On the day Union Budget 2004-2005 was presented, it was interpreted by the media and economists as if this budget would really herald a “golden era” for rural India. For non- economists, lay persons and activists like me, it took 3-4 days to understand the fine print, the real direction and substantive dimensions of this budget. In the history of India, if you really understand the Indian spirit, culture and civilization, we are currently facing a civilisational crisis manifesting as agrarian distress and farmers’ suicide. Every day at least **dozens of farmers are committing suicide in one or other part of the country**. During last 2-3 years I have visited more than one hundred villages in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan and Jharkhand ; and I had long and systematic interviews with farmers not in hundreds but in thousands. Even though you read a number of news stories these days about farmers’ suicides, it is very difficult to

understand the true dimensions of farming crisis and depth of distress level among the farming community unless you personally go and see for yourself at least some of these villages. It is against this background that we thought that let us organize this panel discussion so that we could have some grasp over the intents and contents of this “dream budget”. Every Minister of the UPA government is talking about the seriousness of the farming crisis and promising that agriculture would be the top item on the agenda of the new govt.

I remember Mr. P. Chidambaram, the Finance Minister, just after 3-4 days of assuming new office, he was on “Walk the Talk” programme of NDTV. In his talk with the programme anchor Mr. Shekhar Gupta, very first sentence the suave and articulate Finance Minister uttered was that “agriculture is our first priority.” That is what generated some sense of euphoria and expectation in us. But when the Budget came, we found that the basic ideology and political economy that is guiding and governing the economic policy making of this country remains the same. There is no denying the fact that in this budget we see particular focus on agriculture, food security and on rural India, but the elemental values that are going to guide and govern the government policy making remain the same. The first elemental value of this ideology is that farmers and rural India have failed. So, now let the Agribusiness, Corporates and Multinationals step in. That is the first postulate somehow they are trying to suggest. The second thing they are trying to say is that unless there is “Private- Public Partnership”, there is no way the Indian farmer is going to survive. So, using this cynical strategy, somehow I see a hidden hand trying to push this agenda of corporatization of agriculture. And corporatization of agriculture is not limited to just that the corporates and business houses would have complete control over agriculture of this country; it has very serious implications for the culture and civilization of this country too. Still we are unable to understand the true dimensions of the policy regime that we are ushering in.

Only the other day farmers’ organisations met the Prime Minister and many of the farmers’ leaders were narrating as to how compassionately Dr. Manmohan Singh listened to them and assured them that farmers’ interests would be the first priority of

the UPA government. But many of these farmers' leaders didn't know that on the same day or next day the agriculture secretary of India had invited all the corporates and multinationals dealing with agriculture and food security and was just begging and beseeching before them that " please, do come, invest, rescue the farmers, otherwise they are doomed. You have to come, you have a responsibility to save farmers and farming of this country... Please do make investments in contract farming". Now these kinds of trends one sees everywhere these days.

There are any number of people in this country who still say there is no farming crisis. In the last eight months I have travelled and interviewed over a thousand farmers in 80 odd villages, 30 villages in Karnataka and Kerala, 40-50 villages in Rajasthan and Jharkand; and you have to go there, you have to live with them, you have to talk with them to really understand the true dimensions of the crisis. Out of the 1000 Adivasi families we interviewed from Rajasthan and Jharkhand, spread over 40 villages, not a single family is getting two square meals throughout the year. What to talk about two square meals, they are not getting even one square meal regularly, and all of them, more than 95 per cent were farmers. Now large number of farmers are being pushed off the farms. We are well aware and have been talking about displacement from various development projects for quite long time. But very few among us are aware about a much more serious kind of displacement - **displacement of the farming communities from agriculture. A large number of farming families who have been depending on farming for their livelihood are being displaced and pushed off the farms and they are joining the swelling ranks of the wage laborers and slum dwellers.**

And finally I will give another example. Amartya Sen has been very passionately talking about how in India you can find both the best and the worst. By best he means Kerala and by the worst he means Bihar. I'll tell you one personal experience I had in that so-called "developed state of Kerala". Last year, during my field research on farming crisis in Karnataka and Kerala, I visited many villages of Kasargode district of Kerala. In the last two years almost 55 arecnut farmers have committed suicide in Kasargode district and I went to meet many of the victim families. Can you believe it, not a single *Patwari*,

not a single official, not a single bureaucrat, what to talk about minister, has bothered to visit any of these victim families in these villages of this “most developed state of India”. Moreover, the people are afraid of reporting these suicide cases, because the police officers would falsely implicate the victim families and try to extort money from them. And since these poor farmers are already in soup, they are generally afraid of police, so they don't report these suicide cases to police. So much of good governance and welfare state I came across.

The current chief minister of Punjab has been saying that 10 lakh hectares of land is going to be put under contract farming. I do have the interview clipping of the chief minister. He has been asking Punjab farmers not to grow the “old fashioned” crops like wheat and paddy, “it is rubbish, you are not going to survive in the competitive world by growing wheat and paddy, you are not going to prosper, grow gherkin, grow capricana, grow export crops for five star consumers in the developed countries.. You can sell gherkin at the rate of Rs 300-400 per kg. Why do you want to grow wheat and paddy which do not bring you even Rs 10 per kg”? What a fatal bait ! Only a few months after reading this interview of Capt. Amarinder Singh, I was in Karnataka for my field research on farming crisis. I was travelling in Davangiri district of Karnataka and I was shocked to learn that in front of the District Collector's office in Davangiri district, hundreds of cartloads of gherkins were being dumped by local gherkin growers, because the price of gherkin had crashed to 50 paise-a-kg and many farmers were committing suicide due to heavy losses and indebtedness. I wonder whether Punjab farmers still hope to get Rs 300-400-a-kg for their gherkins as promised by their chief minister.

The kind of volatility we see in the international market, growing crops for the same uncertain market is nothing but a recipe for suicide. Nobody goes and suggests to American and European farmers that they should go for diversification and grow vegetables and fruit. Why Indian farmers only are being suggested to grow cash crops? So, it is against this background that the Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) decided to host this Panel discussion.

**Mr. B P Singh (Chairperson)**

When I came here to moderate this panel discussion, my old friend Devinderji asked me to read the last paragraph of his paper which is before you and it says, “the greatest irony is that those who created the problem at the first instance are the ones being asked to provide the solutions”. And it hit me very hard. Because, I have belonged for the last 40 years to the establishment. But the next paragraph has given some redeeming feature, where he talks about how those who till the land should be involved. I was looking back at my own family background, we have lived on the same plot of land in the village for over 500 years. And it was only my great grandfather who having not moved on a full time basis to education insisted that my grandfather must move on to education. And he became later founder Principal of one of the national schools in 1920. So it is only for the last say 70 years or 75 years or 80 years that no body has tilled in my family. Otherwise we had all that knowledge and wisdom that Dr. Sharma talks about. I don't know how much I have inherited that, but I have worked with the boys, commissioners, with the agricultural production commissioners and all that. And I have also seen the other side of the coin; that is the World Bank and all that.

I was wondering that are we putting in our dialogue too much of value on the Union budget. Are we really thinking that the Budget is that important an instrument of change to affect the lives of the farmers as we would like it to be. Or do we really believe that although the CMP (common minimum programme) and the electoral mandate talks about the poor, the framers of the budget in the North Block (Finance Ministry) were really guided by the fragrance of the village and not by the fragrance of the stock exchange or industrial hubs or the policy making bodies spread over academia or in the multilateral bodies. But this is the issue that we will deal with. What I am just trying to state before all of you as a supplement to what Parshuramji has said, that we are dealing with complex and deep-rooted problems in the rural economy.

A few things have completely transformed the rural economy. And again it varies from one part of the country to the other part; in fact it varies from one village to the other village. And that is, that **there is a silent but very powerful process of**

**commercialization of every sphere of the rural economy.** And the second point which is very important, is that **there is a gradual decline in the entitlement of the poor in common natural resources of the rural economy,** there is a gradual decline due to the rise in population, may be due to awareness, may be due to politics. And then in this backdrop, we see the rising aspirations of a consumer society, making influence on the youth in the village along with if you are in a flood prone area, if you are in a drought prone area, the way it affects you, if you belong to a caste which believes in dowry in marriages, or if you belong to an area where there is no health care facility and if you belong to a village where money lenders have been very powerful, the plight of farming as well as non farming communities in villages could be imagined. And I have lived with several such situations.

There has been much hope in the state governments allowing the panchayats to take hold of the affairs of the rural economy in allowing the farmers themselves to decide about their future; but this again varies from place to place. And these are the issues which are not addressed by a budget. The budget this time, in view of its mandate, in view of the common minimum program that the government had accepted, wanted to transfer resources and it has succeeded at some places, and it has not done it in some other places, and it has kept about 2 billion or more dollars with the Planning Commission to support the plans. But what it has done and what I must commend the budget authors for is that the focus will be on the rural economy. And this is one of the reasons that this panel discussion is taking place. That they must not run away from that focus. We must put pressure, we must give clarity, we must give strength so that the focus remains on the rural areas.

This tragic thing which is happening, the farmers committing suicide, it is a complex phenomenon. We have no option. **Mahatma Gandhi used to say that for anything the biggest sacrifice that a human person can make is to give his life. If someone has to make that biggest sacrifice to release himself from the suffering of living, we can not visualize a more dehumanized society than that.** And it is in this large background that this panel discussion is taking place. And I have great pleasure in

having such eminent people to talk to us. There will be a small code that is that each panelist will speak for 10-12 minutes and then the whole thing will be put forward for dialogue and discussion amongst all of us. May I request Dr. Vandana Shiva to take the floor.

### **Dr. Vandana Shiva**

Thank you very much Mr. Singh. About five years ago, six years now, in the IIC, after the first set of farmer suicides in Andhra Pradesh, we had organized a meeting and it was basically focusing on the suicides, and calling attention for an emergency. That we were starting to get into a national emergency. And I remember everyone who came from a background that either was farming or interacted with farmers, recognized that there was starting to emerge an emergency, whereas everyone who was based in the worldview and paradigm of trade liberalization, was basically denying it totally. The suicide issue in a way, if we see the farm suicides as an indicator of the farming crisis, it's gone through 4 stages in the last few years. The first was absolute denial that it was happening. You would go to villages, you would know farmers' suicides in Punjab. I came back and people said, but Punjab is the land of the green revolution, there can't be farm suicides.

The second stage was, I remember Chandrababu Naidu actually saying the reason they were committing suicide was to collect compensation. This was driven by greed. More recently after the Karnataka suicides started to pick up and compete with Andhra suicides, the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister set up a committee and the committee basically wrote that this is totally a psychological phenomenon; everyone of these people was either an alcoholic, or an adulterer. And the recipe was to appoint more psychiatrists in rural areas. And it was literally only the shock of the election outcome that made the establishment notice the fact that the suicides were happening. The point now is the analysis as to why they are happening is correct or not? And I believe the budget is in part an analysis and a response. And I think what is happening is attention to a sector. Attention to a new market is being equated with attention to that sector and attention to the people who make their living in that sector.

I remember a few years ago the World Bank and the Tropical Action Plan; and so many environmentalist friends of mine worldwide would say, "Oh, but you should be happy the World Bank is paying more attention to the forestry sector." But I said, look at where that 8 billion dollars is going, it's going to log the tropical forests. So, attention to the farming sector is not equal to attention to the livelihood security of the farmer. And I think we need to start separating these two issues. Yes, the budget does pay more attention to the agrarian sector, but in what form. I believe we need exactly the same form that the GATT agreement in the Uruguay round started to pay new attention to agriculture. It did not pay attention to agriculture earlier because agriculture was not part of the free trade regime globally governed. WTO started to pay attention, but the attention was to open up the rural areas of the southern countries as a market place for imports and a supply source for cheap commodities needed for the global market.

And very quickly, the three indicators in the budget which show that this is precisely the direction in which things are going, is first of all, if debt is the reason for farmer suicide, then relief from debt should be solution to farmer suicides. Instead, giving quicker larger loans without any safety net that debt will be repayed shows that the issue really is get more money into the rural areas, to continue to buy more tractors, more pesticides, more seeds, etc. And yes, if in the process the farmers disappear, that is exactly the idea for the strategy. Because the entire global strategy for agriculture is farming without farmers. So it is not a surprise what we see happening in India in a very very crude way. What has happened in every other part of the world where this strategy has been applied? In every part of the world farm suicides are three times more than the average suicide rates in every country. You could go to Netherlands, you could go to Canada, you could go to United States, you could go to Mexico, and farmers are the ones who are the most highly pressured in terms of very rapid economic insecurity.

I remember reading a US senator's quote once about how farmers had to be squeezed off the land just like the last remaining bit of toothpaste has to be squeezed out of your toothpaste tube. And in a way what we are seeing is that process at work. What is a tragedy for the farmer is in fact a successful design of a strategy of a farming system

that is totally capital intensive and corporate controlled. I see the current crisis of agriculture as a three level crisis. First, we are carrying the non sustainability of the green revolution period of agriculture which was equitable in terms of food security, but highly inequitable in terms of resource use and resource entitlements. Built into that production model of the green revolution was the fact that water would be contaminated, was the fact that intensive water use would create more water conflicts. It was built into that model that Punjab would write the law it has just written which says that no water of Punjab for Haryana or Delhi.

When I wrote my book on *The Violence of the Green Revolution* 20 years ago, 30 people had died to stop water around the Sutlej-Yamuna canal. The Bhakhra Byas management board chairman had been killed as part of that period and I can just see that if we do not shift to an agriculture that manages to grow food with less water, we are really going to have bloodshed around every river diversion. And that is why the river linking needs to take lessons from the Sutlej-Yamuna canal that a model of intensive water use in agriculture is a crisis that is making agriculture more and more unviable on the one hand, and on the other hand creating such deep conflicts. The chairman talked about how the people live in stress, they live in floods, they live in droughts. The interesting thing is that you do not see a single suicide in flood-prone areas where people pack their bags, move their kitchens, sit on whatever little ground is beyond water. They go right there. I have done *Lakshmi Puja* in Orissa flood after flood. But they don't give up hope. Because dealing with the flood or dealing with the drought is a different affair than dealing with your local moneylender, who is also your landlord, who is also the agent of the new seeds and pesticides, who is the one who is holding you to ransom in every direction in a new kind of way which neither your culture nor your society programs you to deal with.

**If you look at where are the farm suicides most intense, they are most intense in areas of sudden introduction of commercial farming and commercial seed supply.** Those two are the places. You don't see farm suicides in the poorer areas. You see farm suicides in the richer areas, or when new commodities have been introduced.

And the second place you are seeing farm suicides is the kind of area Parshuram has written about in his article ; areas where the arec nut gardens with the cardamom and the pepper, the most wealthy societies we have had worked in those gardens. The wealth in those societies could not be competed with, compared with anywhere. That is what led to colonialism. That's what led to Columbus and Vasco de Gama. If people are committing suicide there, it's not because these were low value crops, it's because the value of these crops has been robbed by a mutually competing system where lower priced pepper is being dumped, lower priced arec nut is being dumped, and lower priced commodities are being dumped mutually under the trade system. **So the two aspects of the crisis are the sustainability issue in production and the distribution crisis.**

The distribution crisis on the one hand is linked to higher costs of production and on the other hand it's linked to lower prices farmers are getting. How is the issue being addressed? Well, first of all this is a result of the trade liberalization package. If you notice the World Bank, even before it put the overall structural adjustment in place in 1991, it had put in place an agricultural adjustment program and everything we see as results today are part of the World Bank and WTO rules combining together. 1997 was five-six years after the build up of the liberalized policy. What have the liberalized policies done? First of all, why was liberalization initiated? We were told that two thousand crore rupees food subsidy is too much, too high a bill, too big a deficit, change the system. Stop the procurement, remove the universal food subsidy, and bring targeted food subsidies. So what are we spending today on food subsidies? Rs. 25000 crores. **From 2000 we have gone up to Rs. 25000 crores to starve our people.** Something must be extremely inefficient in this adjustment and in this reform.

I think the second thing that has been deliberately done is, the green revolution started it and the World Bank model of the green revolution did it. In every society production and distribution go together to ensure food entitlement. **If you don't have a production harmonized with distribution, you can't make sure the growers have enough food and you can't make sure the society is able to afford the food.** The green revolution separated it by creating a subsidy system for chemical inputs and a food subsidy

system for a centralized procurement system. That is what leads to the crisis. Which is why reforms came. The reforms then accelerated those directions of more costly production and more food going beyond the entitlement of people. The budget, I believe is most dangerous in two things. It continues to diverge these two aspects of food, the production justice and the consumption justice.

If you notice what is being said, we will have more and more food for work, we will have more and more midday meals, Rs. 4000 crores of cess revenue at 2per cent is to be raised, a large part of it will go to the midday meal. And then they add, we shouldn't be growing grain anymore. We should be growing gherkins and tomatoes and beans for export. Well, **if we are going to have most of our poor people on starvation levels, they are going to survive with food for work and midday meal programs.** If we are not growing the grain, where is that grain going to be coming from? I can predict. There are already packages in place to import more and more genetically engineered soya and corn and I wouldn't be surprised if US aid packages are not already in place to move more supply for running these programs conditional on imports of these crops.

And I believe that one of the really big things that has to be done is that every element of food for work, and every element of a midday meal scheme has to turn into a market security for farmers in local areas. **Food security and livelihood security must combine once again.** These huge budgetary allocations being put aside for food for the poor and hungry should not end up being yet another subsidy for global agribusiness. Which brings me to the issue of the distortion in the tax part of the budget. Agribusiness makes 800 – 1000per cent more than farmers do. We've done analysis. Farmers get 10 per cent of your rupee that you spend on grain. Given the entry of agribusiness like Kargil, agribusiness like Konagra, domestic agribusinesses that were old time multinationals like ITC, like Levers. Given the fact that they have integrated seed to commodity, they sell the inputs and buy the commodity and it works for them to sell costly inputs and buy cheap commodities. These are also the companies taking the patents. Konagra has a patent on wheat and *atta*(flour). Monsanto has a patent on wheat and *atta*. A zero tax for five years, a tax holiday and then a tax on 25per cent of

this agribusiness basically means all agro processing in this country will shut down, what hasn't yet shut down. All small *chakkis*(flour mills) will shut down, all *dal*(pulses) mills will shut down. All *atta* mills will shut down. And in any case, which is the direction that model will push us through?

The agricultural research direction of the budget ignores the fact that today research needs to be done to reverse the water crisis in agriculture. That we need to be working on lowering water use in crops. That we need to work on agro-ecology to make sure chemical free farming, that doesn't get farmers into debt is promoted. Now there is only one identification of priority for research budget, it's biotechnology. I work in this field. I can give you the results of 20 years of biotech development in the world. One company, Monsanto, two traits and three crops related to food- corn, soya, canola, 4 countries account for more than 95 per cent of the planting. Now everything in this budget is basically saying that you become part of those two traits, and three crops production systems or the low cost contract farming where the Sainsburys and the Wal-Marts pick up cheap products but eventually it will lead to a system where there will not be farmers. Chandrababu Naidu's design was that 2per cent farmers will survive in the 20-20 vision he put out, which is why he was voted out with such vigor by the rural communities of Andhra Pradesh.

I would basically say that **agrarian crisis has been caused by the very same processes that have been offered as a solution. The disease is being offered as a cure. Indebtedness is the disease, more indebtedness is being offered as a cure. Concessions to giant agribusiness which do not allow small producers and small processors a level playing field, that is being offered as a cure. But I believe the biggest crisis we are facing is the callousness of our urban elite. The callousness of our urban elite that does not even sense what is going on in our country. That imagines that just because you can walk into a supermarket here and buy those horrible bringle chips with reconstituted rotten potatoes, that somehow we as a country are doing better. And so I would say that this huge issue of the first generation of the green revolution crisis, the second generation of trade**

**liberalization crisis and the third generation of a dehumanization crisis, that triple crisis needs to be addressed and it needs a very very broad based response.**

**Prof. B B Bhattacharya**

First of all I thank this organization for drawing our attention to the farming crisis and the response of the budget. I will begin with the frank confession that I am one of those who didn't have an opportunity to live in the rural areas. All my knowledge about the agriculture is based on the research, my colleagues, some of them have spent quite a lot of time in the rural areas. I shall confine therefore more specifically to the budget. What it can do and what it probably cannot do with respect to the present crisis. Actually the problem of the agriculture has been known to us for the last several years. Previous government itself appointed a committee which I was chairing to look into why there has been a decline in agricultural investment. We submitted the report about 2.5 years ago, drawing attention that there has been a sharp fall in agricultural investment both in the public and the private sector. Not only the direct investment but the indirect investment to agriculture in a variety of forms. Somehow the report didn't see the light until the new government took over. And now some of the numbers have been talked about that **public investment in agriculture is now 0.3per cent of GDP. Total investment in agriculture is now 1. 2per cent of GDP, public plus private In the early 90s there was about ten times more as a ratio to GDP, I repeat ten times more. Sorry, not ten times, 7-8 times more.**

But what has actually happened is that it's not that the government's budgetary allocations have actually dried off. During the same period the budgetary subsidies for different type of cultivation has increased. It's questionable though whether all of them went to agriculture or not such as food subsidy, or fertilizer subsidy. There is a debate whether fertilizer subsidy protects poor fertilizer industry or it actually benefits the farming in terms of the lower fertilizer cost. So, there has been some kind of switching over of government policy. Instead of increasing the overall infrastructure, water, irrigation, rural roads networking, it went to subsidize selectively certain crops and backed up by the minimum support price. Actually as you all know the government

announces minimum support price for a large number of crops. But except the rice and wheat the government does not buy the rest. It expects the market to pay those prices but the market refuses to pay those prices. In effect farmers are better off producing only rice and wheat because that is the only thing the government will buy. In the case of Punjab and Haryana, they went for the cultivation of paddy, not necessarily because they had a comparative advantage of this by the market criteria. Simply because it was one way of assuring critical minimum income.

My environmentalist friends have been telling that the basmati rice export includes not only the rice but also the precious water that has been also exported. Some kind of crisis was, therefore, expected also because the longer run trend that has been witnessed in India. While the share of agriculture in the GDP has declined over the years, from over 50per cent in the early 1950s, to now less than one fourth. But agriculture continues to bear the burden of providing livelihood to 65-70per cent of the population even now. That in essence is the crux of problem of the Indian agriculture. Large number of population's livelihood depends on agriculture, but agriculture generates income that is now proportionately minor component. As a result therefore, the average standard of living in the rural areas remains stagnant. Certainly in the last few years for which I have done the study, disparity between the urban and rural areas increased and policy making attention gradually shifted from agriculture except occasionally when for the sake of the vote bank. I mean the attention shifted to the other segments of economy. Common minimum program of the United Progressive Alliance government recognized this and stressed for a diversion of the government policy.

The Union budget makes many bold announcements. Unfortunately, however, very little would be done in terms of actual allocation. First of all, Centre does not spend much on agriculture. The bulk of the agriculture investment, rural development has to be from the state budget. State governments are mostly bankrupt. There are many states that after paying the salaries, they have less than 5-10per cent of the resources left for everything including agriculture. I know of agriculture universities where after paying the salary, they do not have even one paise to buy the materials required to do research in

agriculture. Now this has been the result of distorted budget report and the fiscal and other policies for some time. So we have virtually become dependent on the mid 60s-green revolution technology in certain parts and in the rest of the country we remain sensitive to the monsoon. In the last ten to twelve years, there has been hardly any major irrigation project to expand the area from the dry land farming to the controlled water farming. Meanwhile globalization came.

Now globalization brought along with it international uncertainty. Commodity prices all over the world moves in a big sweep. The problem arises in this respect. If there is less production in one year and if international prices rise, farmers start producing that crop in the next year more, switching over from other crops. And the next year there is a bumper crop, wheat, sugarcane, beet, cotton, and prices crash. Meanwhile farmers have borrowed the money in anticipation of higher market price and then prices crash.

In terms of actual allocation, the budget has only announced number of schemes for actualization, for looking at it, nothing much actually has been done. What can you do under the circumstances for the long run solution? I think we must accept one thing in the long run. It would be difficult to increase agricultural production beyond 2.5-3per cent for the simple reason that two basic commodities required for agricultural production, land and the water, are constrained by the nature. We cannot create them. We can produce fertilizer, seeds, pesticides, and what not. But those will then endanger the ecology and the environment. If we over-exploit the water to increase the agricultural output, we will also land in ecological problem. Already, reports have suggested that in many parts of the country farmers have overexploited the groundwater. According to the national water commission report, the previous one that I have seen, 75per cent of the water in India is used for farming. Unfortunately, however, most of it is wasted because we still continue to use what you call the flood technology, flooding the land, and a small proportion of that water actually goes to the root of the plant, instead of adopting the modern water- saving efficient technology like drip technology and so on. So, the result is that we have become totally dependent on the

water availability to accelerate agricultural production. And water has become number one issue, numero uno.

In terms of now the critical issues. For last ten years economists and environmentalists have been raising this point again and again. Somehow policy makers didn't pay enough attention that you have to do something about the water. And now what is coming as you know there could be inter-state wars based on the water. It began with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, now it is between Punjab and Haryana, it may soon extend to the rest of the country in terms of the scarce water. So the only solution is therefore, in the intermediate period, as I have proposed, we have to diversify cultivation to the less water intensive crops. Paddy is a highly water intensive crop. We have to move away gradually from paddy.

Now looking at the international market as well as domestic market, we find that in the urban areas also the younger people do not consume as much raw rice and wheat. The consumption of the rice and wheat has declined among the middle and upper income category. We consume more of the fruits, vegetables, dairy products. India is capable of growing many of them. We have comparative advantage in the fruits, vegetables, but there is no marketing and cold storage facilities. I know that in certain parts of the country, in Bengal for instance, after a bumper crop of potatoes, a lot of potatoes will be left to be rotten in the field ; because the cost of storing and bringing them to the market in a bumper crop year is more than the price they can yield in the market. Similarly in certain years in Bengal mangoes are just thrown, because the cost of the basket is more than the price of mango you can obtain from the primary market. Please remember, the price that we finally pay in the urban grocery store, is many many times more than the price that farmers obtain while selling it. So what we urgently require, therefore, is a massive cold storage and networking program so that in a cluster of villages at least there should be one cold storage. So, all these vegetables and fruits can be used round the year, and the next round they have to be processed. For processing you need a cold storage facility together with agribusiness. Now, here I have my proposition.

There are three sources of financing for such agribusiness. Either let's have the government make all those agribusiness investments, but most state governments are bankrupt, nor do we find that they might be the best producing that. Farmers accept money in Punjab and Haryana only if they could form a cooperative, they can mobilize such funds. In rest of the states, even if they form the cooperatives they won't be happy. Certain parts of the country, let's say Bengal's Bardawan district. There are rich farmers who can mop out 1 crore after the harvesting. But there is no tradition of that in India except probably in Gujarat, where farmers have put their capital into entrepreneurship. Then the only option is to allow the corporate sector to invest. But then that leads us into a lot of political questions. Should we allow the corporate sector to go to the farming. And the choice restrictions, certain things like that. But the issue needs to be addressed directly.

Now my last comment; is globalization the villain? Partially, yes. It is a partial globalization and that is why you have the problem. Had there been a real globalization, Indian fruits and vegetables could have found their way into Europe and America. But that is not allowed. There come environmental green boxes and restrictions, and non-tariff barriers on exports of farming products from India. They (developed countries) protect their farming. We do not. I mean we protect but not to that extent. But then there comes a basic budgetary constraint. Please remember one fact. **In the United States 97per cent of the non-farmers subsidize less than 3per cent of farmers. So, their budget can sustain it. In Europe 90per cent of the non-farmers protect through subsidy 10per cent of their farmers. Still it is sustainable. In India, we have 1-2 per cent income tax payers, and that too has come down drastically after this budget. Half of them will go out of tax network. We have to protect with this resource 70 or 60per cent of farming population. So, there is a financial problem. We have to therefore look at self sustaining, self financing agriculture rather than subsidized agriculture in the Indian context.** I, therefore, go back to the original model.

The government must cut down the subsidies and bring back the money for improving rural infrastructure. Networking, cold storage and then leave the farmers to have fair

play into the market. Probably slowly and slowly we may have a better farming. Pending that we'll continue to have the swings and oscillations because there is no way you can protect the farm output. You have storage for industrial products, if more cars are produced, company will halt the next year car production and let the few cars remain, and till they sell them nothing will happen to the car, next year they can sell. But if more rice, wheat, potatoes and onions are produced, there is no way to keep them for next year, except rice and wheat partially. Nothing to keep your potatoes, and onions and fruits. They will get rotten and prices will crash. Somebody has to look into this whole mechanism of the market.

**Mr. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta.**

Actually I am the oddball in this panel, because I have no expertise in agriculture, I confess. Whatever I understand, whatever little I understand of the subject is based on my reading of newspapers, magazines, official documents, and whatever I'm going to tell you is from the perspective of the lay person, unlike my esteemed panelists here. I've been city- born, city- bred, spend much of my time in cities. At the same time I agree with what Dr. Vandana Shiva has said, that the callousness of India's urban elite is really shocking. It is indeed shocking, as a media person I feel very strongly about it, because never before in the history of India has the hiatus, the gap between the media and the ordinary people of this country been as wide as it is at present. And this also gets reflected in the fact that you know, outside Andhra Pradesh, everybody thought Chandrababu Naidu was a progressive chief minister. Well, it's as if the people of India gave this, sprung this tremendous surprise on the media of India. Because everybody thought that Mr. Vajpayee and his government would come back.

INTERJECTION (Bhattacharya): Only the media thought that Mr. Chandrababu Naidu was doing well. I presented my seminar more than a year ago in Hyderabad which showed Mr. Chandrababu Naidu had done extremely poor in economic management. Only in English media do we find that he was considered a hero.

**Paranjoy Guhathakurtha** : That's right Professor Bhattacharya. When a few of us wrote that there is a possibility that this government, the NDA government will not come back to power we were literally booed out, we were told that what has gone wrong with you. I and my friend, we have written a book in which we have actually said this, and our publisher also wondered whether he would be saddled with unsold stocks. Anyway, I think that's beside the point. I am, I too share a fair amount of the pessimism that Dr. Vandana Shiva has expressed in saying that there is very little in this budget which indicates that there's been a significant shift, or a paradigm shift in the way the government is looking at the problems of the farm sector. At the same time I am not entirely despondent and not entirely pessimistic that nothing will happen, nothing can happen. Okay, I just wanted to make 1 or 2 points based on my readings of newspapers. Even what is contained in official documents? A lot of us, you know, if you look at what is contained in successive government documents, in the economic survey which you and I know, which doesn't give you the whole truth. Its evident that if you look at the last seven years, **the average income of each and every farmer has actually come down. So where was India shining, where was *Bharat Uday*?**

The second point that is worthy of note is that even the earlier government, whose policies were distinctly right of centre, pro business, perhaps more than any other government in the past, even they realized that they had to do something for the farmer. But they realized a little too late perhaps. You know, the former deputy PM, Mr. Advani, when a group of farmers had gone to his home, he also acknowledged that not all of India was shining. Even Mr. Jaswant Singh in his interim budget in February talked about growth with equity, talked about how there was need to have a huge program to increase public investment in agriculture. Okay, now as you know, the common minimum program has said that the UPA government will ensure that public investment in agriculture is accelerated, rural infrastructure and irrigation is stepped up in a significant manner at the very earliest. This is what the common minimum program said, which was released on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2004. Mr. Chidambaram presented his budget recently. As of now we don't see any action on this front. All of you know that it's about roughly 10000 crore rupees extra has been allotted to the Planning Commission. What

Dr. Vandana Shiva said and what Dr. Bhattacharya has said, at the end of the day we shall have to see how state governments spend this money.

One point that has come through very loud and clear, even to the callous urban elite, even to the establishment of our country, is that as long as you have this situation where 22per cent of your GDP comes from agriculture, but agriculture provides livelihood for 60per cent, close to 58-60per cent of your population, you are going to have tremendous volatility. And that has become very evident. It was in 1914, the Royal Commission on Indian currency and finance, of which the famous economist John Maynard Keynes was a member, first described the Indian budget as a gamble on the monsoon. Till today the budget remains a gamble on the monsoon. And it's very simple. Only around 40per cent of the total cropped area of the country is irrigated. We may have more irrigated area than even the US, but only 40per cent of the total cropped area of this country is irrigated and I think Dr. Shiva has already pointed out the problems of growing too much of wheat and rice, and sugarcane that is water intensive, rather than other kinds of farm crops. So you had one drought here, that is in 2002-2003, and your index of agricultural production came down by more than 12per cent, your production of food grain came down by 14per cent, and total agricultural production came down by 5.2 per cent. And next year you have a good monsoon, and once again, your agricultural production that came down by 5per cent went up by 9per cent. I mean, no sector of the economy is as volatile as agriculture. At the end of the day, so, you go back to the whims of *Bhagwan Indra(rains)*.

Now the other point that has also come through very clearly, and I think Dr. Shiva has already talked about is that we have this peculiar situation in the country where we have huge stocks of rice and wheat, but widespread malnutrition. Now, there are all kinds of reasons why this has happened. But I believe that by and large the points are very very well known, there is no point in elaborating. You see, right through the 1980s, the rate of growth and production of wheat and rice had far outstripped that of growth of population. But then that situation changed in the 1990s. Secondly, you know the inclusion of pulses in the overall rate of growth and production distorts the picture

completely, because the production of pulses has actually been stagnant for 30 years as a result of which per capita availability has actually come down. And then second reason why we have this contradiction of such high food stocks is because coarse grains are being increasingly used to feed cattle, that is the other aspect which has also not been mentioned. And, Dr. Bhattacharya has already talked about how the per capita consumption of cereals has actually come down from roughly 15.3 kg per person to 13.7 kg per person.

This trend towards a diversified diet is actually cutting across the Indian population. But the problems really are known. The question is, do we see any political will to change the situation. I think we all know that as a member of the World Trade Organization, the agreement on agriculture is binding on India and that agreement provides for specific commitments by countries on steps to improve market access, Dr. Shiva knows more about this than most others. So what we are actually seeing is that till 1991 the bulk of agricultural imports by India comprised two items that were oil seeds and coffee. But because of the change in the world trade rules we are seeing a very wide range of fruits, besides of course rubber, cotton and a whole range of products are currently being imported and you just have to go less than half a kilometer away to Khan Market (in New Delhi) and you will see all the goodies from all over the world available for you. Now, this has resulted in a very very precarious situation for the farmer. I don't need to elaborate about it.

The point that needs to be mentioned is that if you look, even in the government data, there has been a lot of jugglery. You know because there are two major components that are not in the index of agricultural production. That is livestock and certain fruits and vegetables. And data on livestock is obtained from a census that is carried out once every five years, while data on fruits and vegetables comes from the National Horticultural Program. And these statistics, as you know, are not often very reliable but even if one looks at the index of agriculture production from 1996, there has been hardly any increase in this index. The point is now, what can be done actually to increase public investments. I think the only way is there has to be pressure from below.

Mr. Chidambaram can say what he likes. Dr. Manmohan Singh can go to Andhra Pradesh and announce a lot of money, or a fair amount of money to the families of those, families of the farmers who have committed suicide, but what is really lacking is that the pressure from the farm sector actually comes in very very distorted forms. Therefore, fertilizer subsidy is not rationalized. Why? Because businessmen are involved. Food subsidies are not rationalized. Because the Food Corporation of India benefits and no one else. So I think there has to be a complete change in the whole system in which the whole subsidy regime has formed. I mean, we talk about targeting of subsidies, but actually targeting of subsidies has not happened. And it is true not just for food and fertilizer, it is true for power subsidy, it is true for petroleum product subsidies. Power subsidy is a classic case. Okay, who gains from free power?

The rich farmer who draws more water that increases salinity in the soil and distorts the cropping pattern. This city of Delhi, 40 per cent of the power that is supplied here is not billed for. Who gains? The people with air conditioners in their homes. Not the *jhuggi-jhopriwallah* (slum-dweller) who throws a hook to get it. This is the reality of the country. Kerosene, three fourths, certainly more than half of the kerosene, does not go to poor households, does not go to the people in remote areas for their cooking and lighting purposes. It goes to adulterate diesel, the transporters and truckers benefit. So, it's all very fine to talk about targeting of subsidies, but we are not seeing any of that happening. So how can that happen?

The only way it can happen is when civil society exerts pressure and that only can happen when non government organizations and other bodies, farmers' organizations start exerting pressure right through from the local bodies, the Panchayat bodies, to the state government level and eventually the central government level. The rich farmer of Punjab who grows strawberries and gherkins and who earns lakhs of rupees each month, he doesn't pay income tax. You know it and I know it. It is not today, from the 1950s every economist has been saying tax the rich farmer, why isn't the rich farmer being taxed? Why is the rich farmer in our country such a strong lobby? I ask you, why is the voice of the poor farmer, we all pay lip service, we all say our heart bleeds for the

poor farmer, but when it actually comes to actual policies we don't see any of that happening. Now the common minimum program has lot of very very nice statements. Very very fine statements of intent, laudable goals, improve the rural cooperative credit system, implement minimum wage laws for agriculture labor, modernize the revenue administration, establish clear land titles, improve the functioning of cooperatives, democratic, autonomous, professional, systematic removal of controls that depress the incomes of farmers, adequate protection provided to farmers from imports particularly when international prices fall sharply. All these are very very fine statements of intent. Will it happen?

Well, it can happen only when civil society organizes our farmers, when some effort is made to do what Dr. Shiva, and others like her have been arguing, where food for work programs and midday meal schemes are dovetailed, **where food security is dovetailed with livelihood security**. I think that thing is crucial. It's very easily said, but very difficult to achieve. I am not entirely pessimistic. And before I end, I have a small ray of hope somewhere maybe. And that ray of hope is called anti-incumbency. You know it may not exist in certain parts of the country, notably Bihar, Bengal and in certain other parts of the county, but the fact is that in last four general elections, 40per cent of the MPs are not elected. And you look at the local level, if you look at members of the legislative assemblies, close to half of MLAs are not reelected. Only a few of them are denied tickets by their parties.

I am optimistic that our political leadership will no longer look on people, especially those who live in the rural areas as illiterate, herds of cattle who will be "vote banks", who will all vote in one way, who are easily aroused by emotional issues like Ram Mandir, etc, they will vote along caste lines, along community lines, this is a popular impression. I think slowly but surely, the Indian electorate, the unwashed, illiterate electorate, is proving to be much wiser than all our pundits, all our media pundits, including my fellow journalists and all those who attend seminars at IIC and other places. And they are throwing out politicians who do not perform, and I think that is a very positive sign. Because it is no longer "unprofitable" to use a perhaps politically

incorrect word, to build a health care centre in your constituency. It is perhaps going to be profitable for the politician to build a proper cold storage, it will become profitable to build an elementary school in such a way, and ensure that the teacher remains in school. It will be profitable to build a health care centre all over again, and that is because slowly but surely, those who live in the world's largest democracy can no longer be treated as unintelligent fools. I think that slowly but surely this change is happening. I would like this change to come faster, I'm sure all of us would like this change to come faster. But the change is happening. I believe, therefore, I am not entirely pessimistic. I think there is some ray of hope, some reason for optimism.

### **Dr. Devinder Sharma**

I remember Paranjoy was comparing a program on the television and I along with an economist, were being interviewed. And I think Paranjoy will remember the question he asked was whether India's food security needs can be met by wheat imports and that was the time, India imported wheat, 1 million tons. I think that was the last time we imported wheat, 1996, during Gujral's time. And I answered, how dangerous it would be if India were to revert back to a system of relying on food imports for meeting its food security needs, and then the question was shifted to the enlightened economist and I'm sure Paranjoy would bear with me and remember that the economist had said, "I don't agree with my co-panelist, that is why we are both here. If India can import petrol, why can't India import wheat?" This was about eight years back. And I think the same philosophy continues today. We are beginning to believe that we don't need to produce wheat, produce rice, we can import and we have to get rid of this siege mentality of importing food grains.

Now that Mr. Manmohan Singh went on July 1(2004) to Andhra Pradesh, I was very happy, because as far as I know, he was the first Prime Minister in the last 15 years to have visited a village. That is very interesting, because every Prime Minister swears in the name of villages in rural India that he represents. But to the best of my understanding and I stand corrected if anybody knows, has any other Prime Minister gone to a village in his time when he was the Prime Minister, except at the time of

elections. That showed as if the village has suddenly disappeared from the policy planning or the economic radar of the country. Let us look at the developments in the last few years and last few days.

Reburi was a small farmer in Andhra Pradesh, was yes, he is dead now, and he had taken 90000 rupees on loan. He had ten acres of land, five acres belonged to him, 5 acres he had taken on lease. He grew the cash crops; you know all the cash crops that of course bring money to the farmer, as the economist would tell us. He had paid back his loan and only 25000 rupees was left. He was shuttling at every place and trying to raise that 25000 rupees, he could not. So he finally went to the Mandal office in Andhra Pradesh and requested that if he committed suicide, they should pay back that amount of 50000 rupees compensation to his daughter. So he went back home, consumed pesticide and then realized he was not going to die so soon. So he came back to the Mandal office and said, "look, I have taken pesticide and I am going to die, just ensure that my daughter is with me, that you will pay the 50000 rupees to her." This is the reality. I thought the PM would know all this that is happening and the budget would reflect on these kinds of tragedies that are happening in the country.

But unfortunately it is not absent from the consciousness of the civil society or all these people in the cities alone, the policy makers also need to have a human heart or compassion. And look at the budget, the Finance Minister did not even make a mention of the farmer suicide, what to talk of apologizing. This is a tragedy on one hand, on the other hand I look back 20 years back when I was a reporter like Paranjoy. I remember doing a story in the Indian Express that I was working with. Somebody, a poor chap, had gone to sector 17 in Chandigarh, picked up a bottle of milk and gulped it down. That bottle would not cost more than 10 rupees. He was thrashed by the shop keepers, handed over to the police, it was a crime, he was put in the jail. Ten days later he died in police custody for a crime that was just ten rupees. Today we have 1 lakh ten thousand crores lying as nonperforming assets in the banks. Nobody is talking about it. The rich people are not being at least questioned or put in jail. But that is the system that pervades in this country.

We talk of subsidies to the poor, but we don't talk of subsidies to us or to the rich. In Punjab, recently when I came back, three days back from Chandigarh, I read a report, an interesting report, that in Punjab the subsidy that goes to farmers is about 250 crores. The subsidy that goes to industry is about 650 crores. We always talk about big subsidy farmers should not be getting and so on and so forth. Nobody talks about subsidies that go to the industry. You know we call it ten by ten dream budget if the Finance Minister opens up the state sector for the industry. And the economists would lap it up, and the economists would say what a wonderful budget he has put up. GDP will go up and so on and so forth. But give a few hundred rupees to the farmers and they start saying everything, where will the money come from, that is the biggest question asked. Last year, or was it last to last year, when we came up with the Fifth, no that was several years back, the Fifth Pay Commission report, that the entire budgeted annual expenditure of the government was 80000 crore rupees. No one has ever asked whether the fiscal deficit goes up or down due to that.

Last year when there was a question of raising the procurement price of wheat by ten rupees, the Finance Ministry said, "please tell us how much it will cost." When they were told that it would cost the nation 100 crore rupees, then they said, "sorry, we cannot give you this because it will increase the fiscal deficit." But that is a reality. This year, the Government of India, in the budget if you look at it, they merged 50per cent of the DA of the government employees with the basic pay structure. It has cost the nation 12000 crores. Where is the fiscal deficit we talk about? And if you give 100 crore rupees to the farmers, the fiscal deficit will go up. Now that's the kind of mentality we all carry and I think we are all part of that crime. Let us not say that only the others are part of the crime, we are all part of the same crime. And then we come out with these wonderful proposals to, you know, take agriculture to the era of 21<sup>st</sup> century, or 22<sup>nd</sup> century, I don't know, this is a wonderful formula we are told, this will be the answer to your food security and so on and so forth. And you look at the parameters they draw, and they are exactly the parameters which the World Bank had drawn about fifteen or twenty years back. Or the IMF has been telling us and so on. The World Bank, the IMF of course part

of it, the WTO, and for that matter the GM industry and plus even our budget is part of the same package.

If you look at Manmohan Singh's first budget, for those of us who remember his first budget in 1991, he mentioned that agriculture is the mainstay of the country's economy and so it involves, as you rightly mentioned 60 per cent of our population is directly involved blah blah blah all of those things. But then he said, agriculture is a state subject, so I leave it to my colleagues in the states to look after agriculture. The next area of his speech was industry, and he went on talking about industry but he forgot to say that industry also is a state subject. And then our entire budget was on the industrial system. And the same model follows even now. I don't know, does he realize today that when he talks about reforms with a human face, were those reforms not with a human face? It is quite obvious if you look at, those reforms were not meant to be with a human face. Now we have these reforms with a human face, you must throw in these words, you must talk of agriculture, you must talk of food for work programs and all these kinds of things to give an impression like the shining India kind of impression that we built a few months back.

So, now we have been given to believe the mirage that agriculture is going to become good sector. So as Paranjoy said, he shares this optimism that things will improve. And a lot of people believe that things will improve and I am not a pessimist in that sense, but it is important to see realities. Today's realities are being dubbed as pessimism. If you talk about ground realities, you are a pessimist. If you talk about the illusions and notional figures of shares going up in the stock markets, then you are an optimist. So you have to talk about those wonderful figures which you keep on throwing at all like your hat and that is what is happening today.

The model that we talk about, I think it is very important to see where are we heading towards. We brought in the green revolution; the green revolution was meant to address the problem of hunger, food insecurity at that time. It did a job, and then in the process, we forgot to go in for what is called, mid term correction. The Finance Minister always

goes in a year for midterm corrections. But the agriculture scientists forgot to do the midterm correction. And so we have these huge problems, huge environmental problems, second generation environmental impacts. Now, of course, with visible farmer suicides, as we all rightly mentioned earlier. Now we come into this model, the wonderful model being thrown around by agricultural scientists and economists of agribusiness. Now let us look at the agribusiness, what it means.

You know we are being told that the biggest crisis today the world faces is going to be land and water, all of us know that. So we must have agribusiness. What does agribusiness do? Does it not operate on land and water? And let us see how agribusiness will further exacerbate the crisis of land and water. What has been done by the farmers all these years. Diversification is the new mantra, we'll come to that, but first let us look at this agribusiness, and agribusiness is what exactly is under the diversification. You go in for cut flower cultivation. Lets take cut flower cultivation as one example. What does cut flower do? It brings in dollars, of course all of us are told, but cut flower cultivation is one of the most dirtiest of cultivation practices.

What it does is, you take a piece of land, and in that piece of land you have to grow, you have to be really efficient or competitive farmer, 60000 plants in one acre. That is a huge and very dense kind of population. Then you have to provide every plant some space. You have to provide 58 kg of manure, and 120 kg of chemical fertilizer. And on top of it, it takes 212 acre inches of water. In four or five years it makes that land barren and then the company gives the land back to the farmer and moves onto a new piece of land. That's a new *Jhum* cultivation. You know the *Jhum* cultivation, and I'm sure Mr. B.P. Singh will agree to that, was considered to be a very substandard or backward form of cultivation. Today the corporates are doing *Jhum* cultivation and nobody thinks that is backward. They are exactly doing the same. You know they move on from one piece of land to another.

What does intensive agribusiness do? Nobody is going to grow pulse as part of your contract farming. They are coming for crops that can be more intensively grown. That

means this is going to be more environmentally damaging to the same piece of land which as we all know are already affected with second generation environmental impacts in Punjab and Haryana. You are bringing it, intensive farming, agribusiness, agribusiness will exploit that land, they will destroy that land in four or five years and move on to a new piece of land. This is a process which has been going on, whether it is Philippines, whether it is Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mexico, Argentina or wherever in the world that you know of. Why is that we are always told that we need to diversify as Parshuramji rightly mentioned in the very beginning?

You know there was a time when Ronald Reagan, he was still alive, I still remember his quote in Newsweek, where he said when he was the President, **“if we don’t find a market for American produce, then the economy would collapse under its own artificial weight of subsidies.”** That was Ronald Reagan. **Therefore, you brought in agriculture under WTO** and so on. So where could you export that food, of course, to developing countries. So we were made to sign on those laws, and of course now you are under obligation. You have to respect those things and so on. So they have solved their problem. What is happening today is that those countries which are producing a surplus year after year and of course they need markets, are the countries which are telling us, backed by the financial institutions, that for developing country farmers, the best way to make income or economics work is shift from crops like staple foods, like wheat and rice, get into more cash crops. Tomatoes, strawberries, melons, cut flowers and so on, which will bring you more income. I am sure you will agree that one part of the world that needs to bring in this kind of system is that part of the world, where you provide phenomenal subsidies.

You know both North America and the European Union are the two places that we all know provide huge subsidies on agriculture, now these are the places where the equation has gone wrong. These are the places where farmers need to be economical. Therefore, they should be diversifying from growing corn year after year, or soybean year after year, and wheat year after year, to cash crops. But, no, they should not diversify, only developing countries should diversify. So the focus is very clear. You

don't produce staple foods, you don't know how to produce staple foods, you are inefficient and so on and so forth, your cost of production is very high. So you don't do that, you produce cash crops which meet the luxury requirement of people in the western countries and you can import cheaper foods from those countries. What a wonderful formula for development ! And our economists are supporting that, not knowing the realities of diversification, what exactly it means, the politics of diversification. And they are in a way, as I said, part of the entire process.

We are told, "you don't have cold storages in this country." I remember when I was a reporter, Punjab had a problem. They produced so much of potato, they didn't know what to do with that. And people didn't even take out potato, they didn't even harvest potato at that time. So there was this government, I still remember, it was Darbara Singh's government and he sanctioned 5 crore rupees at that time to set up cold storages. So cold storage chains were set up in Punjab. Two years later no potato came, so eventually 80per cent of the cold storages were turned into cinema halls. And then came Mr. Som Pal's tenure. When he was the agriculture minister, he went on saying that cold storage is the answer for UP, and for the country. So we had 1500 crores in the budget being allocated for cold storages. I did tell him, please don't do this mistake, but he said, no this is the answer for the country. So, there is already 1500 crores laid out for those who get this benefit. Do you know who are they?

As Vandana Shiva mentioned, it is agribusiness, the benefit goes to agribusiness; its very obvious who gets the benefit. What has happened? A farmer in Hapur grows potatoes and keeps it in the cold storage and he does not go back to pick it up, because he knows that there is no money if he takes it out and sells. Because he is not going to get a price, so the cold storages are giving legal notices to the farmers, that if you do not pick up your potatoes we will throw it out. And if you look at anywhere, whether it is Andhra or Karnataka, people are throwing tomatoes or potatoes or onions, whatever it is, you find everywhere it is happening. We still are made to believe that the answer would perhaps be addressed by diversification.

One of the reports I must bring to your notice, the report prepared by Dr. S.S. Jauhal, and he had talked of diversification in the early 80s. He had said that Punjab must diversify and I'm so glad that Punjab farmers were wise enough not to diversify all these years. In that same report it was mentioned that if Punjab increases the production of fruits and vegetables by just 1 percent, and I repeat by just 1 per cent, it would cause an unmanageable glut in Punjab. Now where do you expect the farmers to diversify? What do you expect them to grow if they are not growing fruits and vegetables and if the production had gone up by just 1per cent they would have committed suicide? They did not diversify all these years. They were wise enough, they knew it.

We have been told that farmer's economy has gone wrong, and as was mentioned earlier, the problem is he needs to get more loan, more credit, and that can pick him up or sustain him. You know Reburi who died, as I mentioned earlier, he died because he could not repay the 25000 rupees to the bank, and now we are saying we need to provide more credit to the farmers. I think farmers also need income. If all of us in the city need income, farmers also need income. We have to find a mechanism where we can provide the income and to that extent the direct subsidies that was provided in Europe and America are justified. Because in today's world when we provide so much of subsidy to the industry, I think it is not wrong to provide an equal kind of subsidy to the farmers also. Time has come. Why should they be deprived, after all, they also add to the GDP? They add enough, in fact more, than what we are all talking about today.

On the issue of land, water, public investment, we have gone on and on for the last 30-40 years talking about it. But now we are being told that we need to move on from the green revolution Phase I to the green revolution, Phase II or as some people call it, the gene revolution, and so on and so forth. And this is perhaps what will be addressing the real problem. As I mentioned earlier, this is exactly what is meant by corporate control, this is the agenda that the world wants to promote, and this is the agenda that we as a nation, are very proudly accepting and welcoming it, not realising that we have millions of people who are involved in agriculture. What do we do with them? It is true that if we were to move these people out of agriculture it would do remarkable things for the

economy, but the fact is where do we remove those people? Where do we take out all those people that we talk about, after all 600 million farmers is not a small number? So what do we do?

We have an interesting phrase about that, some people suggest that we should move them to service industry. I don't know how you can justify all these kinds of logics that are being promoted. But they are being promoted. If you look at the reality, the global paradigm is built on this thing as was said earlier, that the world today finds farmers a burden on the society. It has happened in America. America today has only 9 lakh farmers left and in fact there are more people in American jails than on American farms. 2.1 million in American jails, and 900000 people left on the farms. If you come to Europe, we have only about 9 million people left on the farms in the erstwhile 15 European Union countries. Everyday three farmers disappear now in Europe. Disappear means, they leave agriculture and move out. And now the same process is being carried out in all countries. Because that would mean the corporates can move ahead.

So what is being done is that we are being told that our farmers are inefficient, they should be taken out of agriculture, to go where, you all know. And what has happened in the last few years. In last few years a new phenomenon has begun, some call it the feminization of agriculture. The people are abandoning agriculture and moving on to the cities. 30per cent of the Indian farms have already gone into the hands of women. Now this is not a result of gender equality. It is because the people, the men have moved onto the urban centers and the women have been left to perform these jobs. This is a process that is going on in this country; we don't want to talk about it. What does it mean? New Delhi today is 40 or 45per cent slums, it is expected by the date two zero one zero (2010), New Delhi will be 80per cent slums. When I came to Delhi about 15 years back, the railing outside the home was about 4 feet, today it goes up to about 12 feet. There is a guard in almost every other house I see, and I'm sure in about ten years we'll have a gun man, or maybe two gun men sitting outside every house. This is the kind of development that is taking place. Bombay, Shanghai. They are all part of the same process.

We all talk about moving farmers out of agriculture but where do you move them. It is something that we need to answer. We need to provide an alternative. I would be very happy if we could move these farmers to America, because America doesn't have farmers. Or we could move these farmers to Canada, and ask the WTO to open up for the movement of farmers so that our farmers can also go and farm in America. I will end on an optimistic note Paranjyot, and that is what Harold Wilson said. Harold Wilson was the Prime Minister of UK. And you know UK has a very peculiar problem with rains. It can rain any time. In spite of the weather department saying it's not going to rain, it can rain any time, or despite the weather department saying it's going to be sunny, it can still rain. Now, that's what he said once. He said "I too am an optimist, but I always like to carry my umbrella with me."

There were over -a-dozen comments made and questions asked from the floor and the Chairperson requested Dr. Vandana Shiva to answer all those questions on behalf of the Panelists. The Panel discussion came to an end with concluding remarks by the Chairperson Mr. B P Singh. Over 80 activists, academics, farm experts, farmers' leaders, scientists, researchers and policy planners participated in/ attended this panel discussion.

## **FREEDOM FROM HUNGER CAMPAIGN LAUNCH & INAUGURAL FREEDOM FROM HUNGER LECTURE**

The Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) has launched a Freedom from Hunger Campaign to make India a 'Hunger-Free Country'. This Campaign was launched on 10th February 2005 at India International Centre, New Delhi in the presence of over 200 activists, scientists, intellectuals, government officials, policy makers, farmers' leaders, members of diplomatic missions and various international and UN agencies. The Campaign was jointly launched by Magsaysay Awardee Social activist **Aruna Roy** and **Susan George** (author of landmark book on hunger "**How the Other Half Dies**").

Parshuram Rai, director of CEFS said in his introductory speech, "more than 24,000 people die of hunger every day, nearly 78 per cent of them women and children. More than 1.4 billion people in the world face chronic hunger and over 13 million die of hunger every year. They die of hunger not because world does not have enough food for the entire population of the world, but because of an insensitive and callous world where profit of market seems to be the final arbiter of human destiny. The number of people who fell prey to Hitler's insanity was 6 million and the "silent holocaust of hunger" is killing over 13 million people every year. Every year more than two genocides of Nazi proportions. But unlike the victims of Nazi gas chambers, the victims of hunger die unnoticed, unmourned and in the backyards of vibrant democracies. If we believe in Gandhian dictum that poverty is the worst form of violence, then we are still inflicting this crime on over 1.4 billion poorest people of the world. While the U S can spend over \$ 80 billion per year in Iraq alone, the entire wealth and generosity of the world can not generate just 13 billion dollars which is the only amount required to prevent the "hidden genocide by hunger".

Speaking about the level of hunger in India, Rai further said, "more than 340 million of Indians still go to bed without food every night and over 10,000 die of hunger every day.

Every third hungry person in the world is an Indian and every third Indian goes to bed without food. The number of hungry people in India is always more than the number of people below official poverty line. While around 37 per cent of rural households were below the poverty line in 1993-94, 80 per cent of households suffered undernutrition. Evidence on the consumption of food, on calorie-intake and on nutritional outcomes clearly prove that chronic hunger persists on a mass scale in India."

Explaining the main aims and objectives of Freedom from Hunger Campaign, Parshuram Rai said that "The Freedom from Hunger Campaign is a humble initiative to create awareness and understanding, and to kickoff a national debate on the political economy of hunger. Debate not for the sake of debate but to facilitate enabling legislation and public action to banish the scourge of hunger from our mother land. This Campaign is a tiny effort to bring back the issue of hunger and poverty in mainstream intellectual discourse, at the centre of public policy and on the conscience radar of the nation. Since hunger is essentially a political condition, the key to banish hunger is to change the politics of hunger. And to change the politics of hunger, we need to bring the issue of hunger in mainstream electoral politics. Freedom from Hunger Campaign is a very modest attempt to politicize hunger in India".

As part of this campaign, CEFS will hold lectures, workshops, seminars, conferences and public hearings all over India. Apart from doing research and advocacy for a hunger-free India, this NGO also plans to bring out a series of "Citizens' Reports" especially from the "hunger hot-spots" of the country. The First Phase of Campaign will conclude on 15th August 2007 to coincide with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of our Independence.

### **Comments by Susan George (Chairperson)**

It's a great honour for me to have been asked to chair this meeting. I said this is an extremely happy but in some way very sad occasion too. The happy part is of course that this campaign is being launched. That you are going to have a remarkable series of lectures. But of course, no one can rejoice the reason for this campaign being

necessary. And in French we have a saying “the more things change, the more they remain the same “. And indeed thirty years ago when I was working on my first book (**HOW THE OTHER HALF DIES**), it was even then the same question. And I had ended introduction much as Parshuram Rai has ended and said in his introductory address, “it will take you six hours to read this book (HOW THE OTHER HALF DIES).” Somewhere in the world, 2500 people would have died of hunger or hunger related illness by the time you finish this book. And now the figure is even greater per hour. That’s enough not to rejoice about. And then the more things change, more they remain the same. Thirty years ago, again it was a recommendation that hunger would be fixed by the technology. So, get the technological fix right and there will be no more hungry people.

Yesterday, the technological fix was green revolution that really improved the situation in quantitative terms. But now it is GMOs and once more no one is paying any attention to the environment. And no one has studied or noticed the social impact of GMO or its environmental impacts. They certainly haven’t in the US and I doubt they have noticed here that once you give your food supply over to the producers of GMO seeds, you are giving away your life to the transnational Corporations. Of 100 authorizations by the US department of agriculture for GMO seeds over the past decade, over 50 belong to Monsanto or to companies which have been purchased by Monsanto. And if you take the top three companies, they own over 80per cent of the patents and top-5 companies own over 90per cent of the patents.

So, I don’t think it’s very good idea to give over one’s food supply to Corporations which have no interest in anything without profit. They are totally uninterested in who eats and who doesn’t, so long as they can force farmers to continue to buy their seeds. And they can force because once you have accepted those seeds, the problems of contamination are such that you’ll always have traces in your fields. There is this famous legal case in Canada where Monsanto had forced a poor farmer to pay them about \$140,000 dollars. The farmer had never planted GMO seeds in his field, but his land had been contaminated by neighbours who had planted GMO seeds in their fields. And he has

been the victim of the Monsanto police who go out and make samplings in the fields. And then they use that as the basis for legally demanding the farmer to continue to pay.

And no one is examining the environmental impact of these seeds and science is extraordinarily crude. They only want two characteristics. Which are either herbicide resistance or that the plant release its own pesticide. But there is no examination whatsoever of the impact on the soil, on the earth worms, on the lands and on the animals. And there is no examination of the living systems that make up any farming systems. It is extremely crude science.

So, that is the technology which you are being asked to swallow in all senses. And so, more things change, more they stay the same. A remarkable British Botanist who was Imperial Botanist in this country in 1905 called Albert Howard. He wrote a remarkable book titled 'An Agricultural Testament' and showed how much yields could be improved and how much people's livelihoods could be improved through cost-free technology. He was an ecologist before the word had gained much currency.

And I think that really what we have to re-visit and technology is not going to do the trick for the hungry. The problem of the hungry is the one that always has been the same. Either not enough land to grow one's own food, or not enough money to purchase it. I hope at least that came through from my work and the work of other people.

I also want to point out that there have been several studies showing that the World Bank's statistics are not correct. That is on how many people are living on less than a dollar- a -day, or how many people are actually going hungry are probably wrong by a factor of anything up to 60per cent, unless that is on the lower side by a factor of up to 60per cent. This has been shown by various scholars including two of Colombia University who have torn World Bank's methodological statistical analysis to shreds.

And I think the problem is undoubtedly worse than the official 800 million people who are said to be hungry. And I see Parshuram Rai in his brief introduction put the figures

at 1.3 billion and it seems to me to be much more accurate. So, here we are still in the situation and the only answer to it as far as I can see is political. The only answer is organization, the only answer is concerned citizenry who mobilize against this inexcusable scourge which is hunger.

Your telecom billionaire Mr. Mittal was interviewed in The Financial Times last weekend. And he says, next thing he is going to invest in is agro-business in India. Because it could be source of tremendous profits, because you have got sun on your land round the year and you could grow three-four harvests a year. And he wants India to become not the 'bread basket' but the 'vegetable basket' of the world and export off-season vegetables to the western markets. But it is already having quite a lot of competition. I mean Mexico, Central America, Kenya and various other countries have already thought it that way. But that's where lot of your agricultural land is apparently going to be turned over to sow more and more export crops.

And all I can offer you as a part of remark before giving the floor to our distinguished speaker is that really if people do not consider themselves personally concerned, if in their organizations they do not decide, things would remain same. Now you must make coalitions around the subject of 'hunger', the people who perhaps never had either the opportunity or the idea of working together before must learn to work together now. And by that I mean farmers' organizations, but also organizations of people in the city, Environmentalists, Trade Unions and women's organizations. Because **women as usual are the first victims of hunger**. If these coalitions cannot be made, we will not be able to move our governments.

Our governments have very short memory and they have very short time span in front of them. One has to keep their attention drawn to these questions and the only thing that draws their attention is the large group of citizens representing many organizations. And also elected officials, the people who are into these coalitions. And so, I hope that the launch of this **Freedom from Hunger Campaign** this evening is going to be wonderful sign of things to come. And I particularly like the name of this organization

because it brings together the environment and food and security. It brings together human beings, society, the basis of life itself and our natural sphere. So, without any further remarks from me, I've the great honour to give the floor to Aruna Roy for delivering her **inaugural Freedom from Hunger Lecture**.

### **Summary of First Freedom from Hunger Lecture by Aruna Roy**

I want to begin by saying that I'm indeed glad to be here and feel really honoured not only to have a chairperson like Susan George, but also being invited to launch the series of lectures on a topic very close to my heart. I have a deep concern over the issue of hunger, poverty and deprivation of hundreds and thousands of people among whom I've lived for over 30 years.

I've titled this lecture as "**The Capital of Labour and the Cost of Deprivation**." I don't know if it sounds a bit vague to people today. But what I really wanted to say is that there is tremendous potential strength, energy and richness in the people whom we consider poor and deprived and on the margin. And the people whom we think are rich today are rich in what? Perhaps it's philosophical question. But it is something which we have to think of.

This lecture is response also to the economists who've arrogated to themselves burden of carrying the universe on their figures. Whenever you begin a debate, their figures decimate you. You might have logic on your side, you might have justice on your side but some figures are always brought in to kill us. And especially so with the poor.

If everything in a democracy is for people, then why are they still hungry? Then why are they still on the margins? And why today in the year 2005 are we still talking about freedom from hunger? Why in India we are exporting food grains? Why don't we have space to store the grains? Even today if you look at FCI godowns, most of the

foodgrains are lying outside. They're rotting and rats are eating them away. They are lying outside the railway stations and you see them covered by tarpaulins.

In the mid 70s I also read a book – I'm sorry that I am also going to mention the same book that people in India mention, Susan George over and over again. I read "**How the other half dies**". It deepened my understanding of international manipulations. And I'm really honoured that Susan George is here to chair this meeting today.

Two of the major legislations that have been borne out of this massive campaign that has been going on in Rajasthan and in other parts of India are Employment Guarantee Act and The Right to Information Act. They both have been tabled in the Parliament and in the course of today's talk we'll hear a little more about it.

So long as human beings are deprived of food, there will be storm on this Earth. We have said it over and over again that hunger, deprivation, poverty and unemployment are terrible things. And whenever I come to Delhi and talk to people, it is always the cost of Employment Program. "How can we give you 2per cent of the GDP and it is too much." Whenever we talk anything related to the poor, corruption becomes big issue. So let us talk about the corruption and let us find out why there is corruption. But let us not dismiss things because there might be corruption. The Employment Guarantee Bill is one of the most discussed bills in recent times. It was talked about in the newspapers, there were public discussions, and also talked outside the Parliament and inside the Parliament. And also inside councils and outside councils. In states, there have been signatures campaigns.

Some people asked me, "do you think the Finance Commission's recommendations will not be implemented for civil servants if there is Employment Guarantee Act." So whenever there is an issue of any amount of money, even small amount of money or 2per cent of GDP going to the poor people, we get into a state of great unrest. But do we realize that in a democracy 60-70per cent of people who elect the government to power in this country are not the middle class people, they are poor people. And when

there is commitment by politicians accidentally or otherwise intentionally, they will have to keep their commitment and there will have to be an Employment Guarantee Bill. No matter whether they like it or not, whether they have seconded it or not today, there will have to be Employment Guarantee Bill.

The other issue which we've been extremely agitated about is the fact that there is so much foodgrains lying in our godowns and yet we don't get our belly -full food and nothing comes to us. So we have another slogan, "Deprived stomachs, godowns full of grains, it is unjust and offensive." It is actually a crime to have FCI godowns full of grains but people dying of hunger in Baran (Rajasthan) and Orissa. Grains not reaching the ration shops, grains not reaching people, and so what are we democratic for? What are we free country for? And why do we have national and state governments? If grains cannot be reached then what will be the status of the deprived people? No, you have to reformulate your policies and reformulate your channels of procuring grains.

What stops government from giving grain to people. Are we still slaves and is there any division or demarcation between citizens and subjects in India? Still two India as Prof. Upendra Baxi is fond of saying- there is one India which is full of citizens and one **Bharath which is full of slaves**. Are we those two countries and we still exist like that? So what are we as members of civil society doing? Because there are umpteen number of people and there is civil society in India and civil society is not one big map. If you want to enter a five star hotel or India International Centre and if you are not dressed well, you cannot enter.

"The empty (hungry) stomachs and stock-piled godowns" is a big rallying slogan for people all over the country. In Rajasthan it began with the five-year drought and we had no food. We had no employment and we had no water, and every time we approached the State government and asked for food and employment, they replied that they had no money. Then we told them to forget about money but demanded for releasing foodgrains. To which they said that they did not have grains in stock. But we counter-questioned as to how could they say openly like this. At that time there was 60 million

tons of foodgrains lying in FCI godowns. We questioned, “what about the FCI godowns which are full of grains and bursting with grains.” It was a long battle in which people understood that in a small village if you ask just for employment, you are not going to get it.

Because your Panchayat will say there is no employment. Your Panchayat Samiti will say there are no sanctions. And the District Collector or District Magistrate will say there is no money. You go to the State Capital and they will say, “we don’t have the money to buy the grain from New Delhi”, or they would say “we belong to two different political parties and so we are not getting the grain.” And so you’ve to reach New Delhi as well. And you have to lobby. But for the poor great democratic education is in understanding. And the micro and the macro are not divided. To get your micro benefits you have to be interested in macro issues.

And for purchasing these grains you need money and many times over. I remember, in the first severe drought that we had in 1987 before the birth of *Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan* (MKSS), Prof. Hanumantha Rao came out from the Planning Commission with a team of experts to visit Rajasthan. And 300-400 people got together to meet him on the highway. And when he asked them as to what did they want, the really half-starved people but with great dignity, in India may be a few beggars in the cities but people in our villages are dignified and I felt so proud when they all said that “we don’t want your doll but we want to work. We want work because we want to live with dignity. We want to earn money and buy our own food. “

So even today, even during severest drought in Rajasthan, people have not asked for a doll. They have asked for employment and they have asked for work. They have asked for food for work. Because women want food. Because money is used for buying liquor and spent on intoxication but grain comes home and used by the women to sustain the family. So this takes me to third slogan that we have coined, “we demand our birthright, not begging for alms. “

Finally, if we (poor people) introspect within ourselves as to what can we do to eke out our livelihood, because we know nothing, as we are illiterates. We are villagers and don't understand anything. But in Rajasthan the scene has now changed where the villagers say "we want our rights and we are not begging for anything. We want our rights and this is an independent country with secular fabric. And you cannot assure us of employment? You cannot assure us some amount of livelihood with dignity?" So the demand for collective action was one of the most amazing things in Rajasthan state over the last two-three years.

A number of people who have got around in Delhi can not explain as to why the Rural Employment Guarantee Act is so important. But any villager in Rajasthan and any villager now in any part of the country can understand the need for employment, because there is lack of jobs. People who had been in the organized sector have lost their jobs and people who had been working in mills and factories have come back home. There is rampant unemployment and with unemployment comes many diseases. It is disease of polity, disease of society, it's disease that leads to violence.

This is partly due to lack of employment, and lack of employment will lead our people to sell themselves anywhere. Because hunger is very strong motivational factor to make you to do such things. So those of us who are interested in peaceful India will also try and ensure that there is employment for our brethren even if we can't give them everything they need. They need to eat to survive and that can be assured only through a proper Employment Guarantee Act.

So people understood and the means of protest that was generated in Rajasthan through the *Akal Sangharsh Samithi* and many others established that we need to fight whether in Rajasthan or all over the country for our right to food. It is no longer a demand that you give me few kilos of more grains through Public Distribution System units. But, we have the right to food in this country and right to survive and right to live.

And if people want to stop hunger and we want not to die of guilt as most of the sensitive middle class does by eating extra *roti* or having extra sweet, we will have to ensure that people get food and people get employment. But today, we have wonderful opportunity. Two Bills are in Parliament- The Right to Information Bill and The Employment Guarantee Bill. Large numbers of people have written about it but much more public pressure can be put on this present government to honour its commitment made in the Common Minimum Program (CMP) to bring these two things to the people of this country. And I expect from most people in this audience to add on to this struggle and to push through this window of opportunity to see that people do not go hungry.

## **Public Debate on** **Economic Growth vs. Ecological Security**

### **Brief Summary of First Bimonthly Public Debate on Economic Growth vs. Ecological Security**

Realizing the importance of discourse on interface and inter-linkages between economic growth and ecological security, Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) in collaboration with India Habitat Centre, New Delhi has initiated a public debate on -"Can Economic growth and Ecological Security go together?" As part of this debate series, the first bimonthly public debate on the topic was held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 10th January 2005. The panel of lead debators included distinguished environmentalist Dr Vandana Shiva and noted economists Dr Ashok Desai, Dr Prem Shankar Jha and Prof Shubhashis Gangopadhyay. This inaugural debate was moderated by eminent social scientist Prof Ashis Nandy.

In his introduction to this debate series, CEFS director Parshuram Rai said, "more than 65 per cent of India's population still depends on natural resources for their livelihood. Any economic process that undermines the health of natural resources is bound to undermine the livelihoods of over 65 per cent of our population. Unlike western societies where "Environment" is limited to trees and tigers, wildlife sanctuaries and eco-tourism, environment for a developing country like India is a by-name for lives and livelihoods. Environment is lifeline and therefore economic growth at the cost of destruction of ecological wealth would be only suicidal. No wonder that large number of farmers in India are committing suicide. For a healthy and sustainable economic growth, the protection of natural resources must be in-built. Unfortunately, the prevalent economic growth models are skewed and often ecologically disruptive."

Elaborating on the limitations of present economic growth model, Parshuram Rai further said, "mainstream economics measures the wealth of a country by Gross National

Product (GNP). GNP is the total value of all goods and services produced by a country. However, the measurement system of GNP does not take into account unpaid work and 'natural capital'. For an example, forest is regarded as having no value until it is logged. The costs incurred on prisons and pollution mitigation also add on to GNP. The clean up costs of ecological disasters like an oil spill also add on to a country's GNP. However, self-sufficiency is seen as being uneconomical because it does not add to a country's value of goods and services. Unlike the economy, the planet does not grow, and neither do our limited supply of resources. There is therefore a limit to economic growth. Scientists believe we have reached this limit, and to continue exploiting natural resources could lead to a collapse of biological systems, leading to vast human misery and the irretrievable mutilation of our planet."

Initiating the debate Dr Vandana Shiva said Tsunami disaster is a wake-up call for policy makers and economic planners of India. "It is strange to hear from top policy planners of the country in the aftermath of Tsunami disaster that we should not have allowed human habitations in the vulnerable coastal zones. The same policy planners viewed Supreme Court's order prohibiting human settlements and dismantling aquafarms as anti- growth. But all of a sudden, seeing the cataclysmic proportions of destruction, they have become champions of environment." Dr Ashok Desai said that the issue of farmers' suicide is blown out of proportion by activists and media. "There is nothing unusual about farmers' suicides. If farmers have a propensity to kill themselves, it is a psychiatric problem and not caused by poverty, indebtedness or free market economic policies". Dr Ashis Nandy who is a trained clinical psychologist rebutted Dr Desai's argument and said that "farmers as an occupation all over the world are least prone to psychological stress and hence if they commit suicide, it indicates that something is deeply wrong with the socio-economic system."

Dr Prem Shankar Jha said that Dr Desai's analysis of farmers' suicides is factually incorrect and analytically wrong. Dr Jha asked "if the farmers' suicide is just an average of their population size, why is it that only a few states have recorded unusual numbers of farmers' suicides? Farmers are not committing suicide because of any psychological

stress but because of economic hardships caused by indebtedness, drought, crop failure and poverty." Prof Shubhashis Gangopadhyay said that as long as population keeps rising, we can not stop economic growth. "To meet the rising needs of an ever-growing population, economic growth is must. Many problems faced by farmers are caused by wrong policies of government and lack of marketing opportunities and shortage of storage and processing infrastructure in rural areas."

More than 125 academics, environmentalists, economists, scientists, social activists, journalists, experts, students, members of diplomatic missions and government departments participated in this bimonthly debate.

## **Brief Summary of Second Public debate on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security**

The Centre for Environment and Food Security (CEFS) in collaboration with India Habitat Centre (New Delhi) hosted second public debate on "Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security" on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2005. Eminent environmentalist Dr. Ashok Khosla (President, Development Alternatives) and distinguished economists Dr. Surjit S. Bhalla (President, Oxus Investments) and Prof. Amitabh Kundu(JNU) participated in this bimonthly debate as lead debators. Prof. N S Ramaswamy, founder director, IIM-Bangalore chaired and moderated this debate.

Initiating this debate, Parshuram Rai, director (CEFS) said, "it is nobody's case that there should not be any economic growth so that we can enjoy air and water of Himalayan standards. However, we must know as to how much of economic growth is too much for ecological security. We must draw a *Lakshman Rekha* (threshold line) for economic growth. We have to strike a balance between economic growth and ecological security. We must ask as to whether prevalent economic growth models are prepared and geared to factor-in environmental sustainability. The need and challenge

of the hour is to mainstream ecological security in economic growth. Our economic systems and pricing practices must learn to pay for the ecological services of the nature. So far ecological destruction has been calculated as economic growth in many cases. There are innumerable examples of this insanity globally and locally. We also need to ask as to whether economic growth and free markets by themselves are capable of ensuring planetary balance?"

Participating in this debate Prof. Amitabh Kundu (JNU) said, "Ground water has become a commodity over time. Now we know that we've serious problems of agrarian inequality. And that agrarian inequality is linked basically with the land distribution. Our land distribution was highly unequal and we tried in the 50s to bring down the inequality in the land distribution. We did not succeed. Now if we allow ground water to be also utilized as the commodity, we are multiplying the agrarian inequalities. Because the ground water then would be really dependent on affordability, a farmer or large farmer can pump out the water at the cost of the neighbouring small and marginal farmers. There is market for ground water. The urban users around Chennai are taking water from rural areas, and there is serious crisis. The urban water market is causing serious environmental problems in the surrounding areas. And basically water inequality is going to be much more serious in terms of ecological disorder. I'd like to therefore link the agrarian inequality with the ecological insecurity. They are very much inter-twined, because the capacity of people of different income levels to go down and tap the aqua for different levels are different. It is basically your affordability, which allows you to tap aqua for different levels. I'd therefore think there is strong need for ground water legislation."

Dr. Surjit S. Bhalla said, "the government is spending thousands of crores of rupees for alleviating poverty. Our country is spending about 15,000 crore as subsidies on fertilizers. Around 95 per cent of this fertilizer subsidy goes to the firms which produce the fertilizers but not to the farmers as is purported to be. So Rs. 15,000 crore is there and there is another Rs.11000 crore through budget allocation is now earmarked for 'Food for Work Program'. And then there is another Rs. 20,000 crore allocated to the

FCI's functions. And an additional of Rs.40-50, 000 crore we are spending today to alleviate poverty and to provide ecological security and to provide growth. Now deeply ponder over how much money will really be spent for Food for Work program and how much for poverty alleviation. Think about it? Whether poverty can be completely removed or not? This is million-dollar question."

Dr. Bhalla further argued, "we have institutionalized corrupt practices in the name of policies and in the name of pro-poor policies that we had for the last 40-50 years. It is very normal for everybody to feel morally righteous to be corrupt and why? The bureaucrats say why should we give our money because I know it is going to go down the drain. And that is the cost that we are paying heavily for our misguided policy we had. We are now less dependent on agriculture than before and the agricultural policies have led us down the path. And very bad respect for Ecology. It is precisely in the name of pro-poor policies which are not meant to benefit the poor have led us to the sad state of affair as far as the nature and environment is concerned. And thirdly our system has been such that it has allowed most if not all people to participate approximately or evenly in this process."

Dr. Ashok Khosla said, "My reasoning is that you cannot have development of the country without Ecological security. And it's causal relationship is in that direction. It's not that you get Ecological security by getting development and you cannot have the development without looking after your country's natural resources. And it's not 600 million people who depend upon Ecology. 1.1 billion people live in our country and every single one of them is dependent on nature either very directly in the case of farmers or of tribals or of variety of people in the countryside or indirectly like you and me. Eco Systems are key to the sustainable development. And they play key role is equity and efficiency. We have to make sure the benefits of nature that Nature provides reach everyone. And they are efficiently used so that we don't waste them. And that is where you get the empowerment. And the reward on the other side of the door through which you put this key in to the keyholes is sustainable livelihood jobs of various types. This is genuine source of empowerment. And Eco System services are Nature's

subsidies to society and to our economy. Caring for the environment does not attack on development. It is in fact source of it and it is probably the best investment you can have to accelerate it."

Dr. Khosla further said, "Ultimately we will need very deep changes and got to dematerialize past, we need to introduce full cost accounting. In other words we have to learn to value what we are rather than what we have. Actually the kind of material progress that we've borrowed from West is very destructive of Nature and of ourselves. And we have to find other ways in which to redesign what we can call real progress."

# **Proposed Programmes for 2005-2006**

## **Programmes on Hunger and Food Security**

### **Freedom from Hunger Campaign:-**

#### **1 - Freedom from Hunger Lecture Series in Collaboration with India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi.**

In continuation of the Freedom from Hunger Lecture Series, following lectures are scheduled during April-December 2005 :

#### **Second Freedom from Hunger Lecture**

Second Freedom from Hunger Lecture to be delivered by Prof. Utsa Patnaik (JNU) on April 12, 2005 at India International Centre. Prof. Patnaik will speak on "Theorizing Food Security and Poverty in the Era of Economic Reforms." Shri S. P. Shukla (former commerce secretary and India's ambassador to GATT) will chair the lecture.

#### **Third Freedom from Hunger Lecture**

Third Freedom from Hunger Lecture to be delivered by Dr. Kirit S. Parikh (Member, Planning Commission) on June 10, 2005 at India International Centre. Dr. Parikh will speak on "Abolishing Hunger: Not by Food Supply alone". Shri Surendra Mohan, veteran Gandhian and former chairperson of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will preside over this event.

#### **Fourth Freedom from Hunger Lecture**

Fourth Freedom from Hunger Lecture to be delivered by eminent environmentalist Dr. Vandana Shiva on 10th August 2005 at India International Centre. Dr. Shiva will speak on "The Real Green Revolution: Creating Peace & Removing Hunger and Poverty

through Organic Farming". Prof. Abhijit Sen (Member, Planning Commission) would chair the lecture.

### **Fifth Freedom from Hunger lecture**

Fifth Freedom from Hunger Lecture titled "Myths of Development" to be delivered by eminent Political Scientist and writer Prof. C. Douglas Lummis (Okinawa International University, Japan). Prof. Ashis Nandy will chair this lecture.

### **Sixth Freedom from Hunger Lecture**

Sixth Freedom from Hunger Lecture titled "Political Economy of Agrarian Distress and Farmers' Suicide" to be delivered by Prof. Jayati Ghosh (JNU) at India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi on 9th December 2005.

**2 - *Research Study on the Political Economy of Hunger in Adivasi Areas of Orissa, Chattisgarh and Maharashtra.***

**3 - Citizens' Report on Hunger in Adivasi Areas of India**

**4 - Survey Research on the state of hunger and food security among Dalits of Bihar**

**5 - Comparative Research Study on the livelihood crises and distress migration in Sitamarhi district of Bihar and Mahbubnagar district of Andhra Pradesh**

**6 - Citizens' Report on Agrarian distress& Farmers' suicides in India**

**7 - Research Study on the political economy of agrarian distress& farmers' suicides**

**8 - Seeds of Evergreen Revolution :**

A Research Study on the emerging organic farming movement in India

**9 - Lectures, workshops, seminars, conferences and public hearings on hunger, food insecurity and deprivation**

**Programmes on Environment and Ecological Security**

**1 - Bimonthly Public Debates on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security:**

In continuation of the bimonthly public debate series on economic Growth and ecological security, CEFS in collaboration with India Habitat Centre will host three more debates in this series.

**Third Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security:-**

Third Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs Ecological Security will be held on 20th May 2005 at India Habitat Centre. Prof. P. S. Ramakrishnan, Prof. Kanchan Chopra, Dr. Devinder Sharma and Prof. Suresh Sharma would speak as lead debators.

**Fourth Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security**

Fourth Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs Ecological Security will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2005 at India Habitat Centre. Prof. B. B. Bhattacharya (VC, JNU), Dr. R. K. Pachauri (DG-TERI and Chairperson-IPCC), Prof. C Douglas Lummis (distinguished Political Scientist & Writer) and Dr. Shekhar Singh (noted environmentalist) will participate as lead debators.

**Fifth Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security**

Fifth Public Debate on Economic Growth Vs. Ecological Security will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 at India Habitat Centre. Mr. Gurcharan Das, World-reknowned Management Guru, author and Columnist, Mr Ramaswamy R. Iyer, Honorary Research Professor, Centre for Policy Research and former Union Secretary, Water Resources, Dr. Suman Sahai, President, Gene Campaign and Prof. Smitu Kothari, noted environmental activist and Visiting Professor, Princeton University will participate as lead debators. Mr Parshuram Rai, Director(CEFS) will moderate and chair this debate.

**2 - International conference/seminar on the interface between economic growth and ecological security**

**3 - Socio-economic & ecological audit of mining in Jharkhand& Rajasthan: A Research and Advocacy Project**

**4 - Research Study on Development, Deforestation and livelihood crises in Adivasi areas of India**

**5 - Seeds of Sustainable Development :**

A Research Study on the initiatives, efforts, success stories, case studies and innovative experiments on sustainable development