



## NATURE OF FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA

**Dr. Ratnadip L. Gaikwad**

Head Dept. Of Commerce, Shankarrao Mohite Mahavidyalaya, Akuj. Tal- Malshiras, Dist- Solapur. (M.S.)

### ABSTRACT

**F**ood security means availability of sufficient food grain to meet the domestic demand as well as access at the individual level to adequate quantities of food at affordable prices. The Indian National Food Security Act was passed in September 2013. The act gives right to subsidies food grain near about 70 percent of India's 1.2 billion people and provides for penalty for non-compliance by public servant.

**KEYWORDS:** domestic demand , food grain , food security.

### INTRODUCTION

The act has also focus on nutritional support to women and children. Food problem has been one of major problems of India both before and after independence. In the early 19th century India was self-sufficient in foodgrains production. In 1880 Famine

Commission remarked that British India including Burma had an annual surplus of 5.16 million tons which, taken as a whole, was sufficient for meeting the demands of any part of the country likely to suffer from famine at any one time. But, considering the growth of population, the commission opined that excessive pressure of population on land was resulting in inefficient cultivation of land and lower per capita availability of food. Normally, a country exporting this much of quantity would be deemed as surplus in foodgrains. However, in the colonial economy of India, these exports formed a part of annual tribute extorted from the country.

### OBJECTIVES

Following are the objectives of research paper

- 1) To study the concept of food security
- 2) To know the problems of food security
- 3) To study the strategies for food security

### METHODOLOGY

In this research paper an attempt has been made to analyse the food problem and food security in India. For study an analytical method is used for achieving objectives. The present study is based on secondary data. The secondary data have been collected by going through various books, publication and websites.

### FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA

The green revolution initiated in the late 1960s was a historic watershed that transformed the food security situation in India. It tripled food grain production over the next three or four decades and consequently reduced by over 50 percent both the levels of food insecurity and poverty in the country, this was achieved in spite of the increase in population during the period, which almost doubled. The country succeeded in the laudable task of becoming a food self-sufficient nation, at least at the macro level. The per capita dietary energy supply increased significantly from 2370 kcal/day in the



early 1990s to about 2440 kcal/day in 2001-03 and to 2550 kcal/day in 2006-08. The prevalence of undernourishment in the total population also decreased from 25 to 20 per cent during the period of 1990 to 2000, and as many as 58 million individuals were estimated to have come out of the poverty trap. The absolute number of poor persons came down from 317 million to 259 million with other livelihood indicators such as the literacy rate and longevity increasing substantially. The life expectancy at birth for males and females respectively, in 2005-06 was 63 and 66 years respectively as compared to that in 1986-91, which was as low as 58 and 59 years for males and females respectively.

Several important issues have emerged in the context of food security in India. These have been the liberalization of the economy and its impact on agriculture and food security, the establishment of the WTO and the agreement on Agriculture, climate change and its impact on food production and prices, the prevalence of hunger and poverty coexisting with high levels of food stocks, the National Food Security Bill etc. These important issues have posed severe challenges for food security in the country.

### FOOD PROBLEM IN INDIA

The partition of the country aggravated the food problem. India got 82 per cent of the total population with 75 per cent of the cereals production area. This disadvantage was greater in rice and wheat where India got 68 per cent and 65 per cent respectively of the total output. By the time of first five year plan, the deficit measured in imports was around 3 million tons against the target of 61.5 million tons of food grains production. But actually, the production was recorded to be 65.8 million tons. Thus, it was realized that such an increase in food grains production is enough to provide food to all mouths. From this point of view, the period of first plan turned out to be the best in the post-independence period. The second five year plan began with more serious phase of food problem in the country. The main emphasis of the plan was to develop the basic and key industries in availability was thought to be very small. Thus, there were scarcity conditions in certain parts of the country. The states of Punjab, Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, etc. suffered by floods, supplies of food grains fell short of market demand. Therefore, in 1956 about 1.40 million tons of food grains were imported which further increased to 3.60 million tons in 1957. It was in 1958-59 and 82.3 million tons in 1960-61. This unexpected increase in production led the planners to revise the target of Second Plan to 80 million tons but in actual it was 79.7 million tonnes. Therefore, 5.1 million tons of food grains were imported from abroad in 1960. The domestic output of food grains in 1961-62 was 82.7 million tons. It fell to 78.5 million tons in 1962-63 and 80.2 million tons in 1963-64, in 1970-71, it again jumped to 108.4 million tons and to a record level of 150.4 million tons in 1985-86. Further, it was 179.5 million tons in 1992-93.

Thus, taking the overall view it is noted that the difficulty in matter of food grains on demand side had arisen primarily due to rapid increase in population and rise in income.

### STRATEGIES FOR FOOD SECURITY

During the planning period, the Government of India adopted various measures to tackle the food situation of the country at different times. The strategies adopted by the Government are as follows.

1. The Government adopted technological measures to boost the agricultural production of the country. Since 1966, the Government adopted new agricultural strategy through the application of HYV seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. And adopted farm mechanization technique through the use of tractors, oil engines; pump sets, tube wells, threshers, harvester combines etc.
2. In order to increase agricultural productivity through the removal of intermediary tenure, the Government introduced various land reform measures and also adopted legislation to bring ceiling on land holding, regulation of rent, conferment of ownership to tenants etc. But the land reforms in India could not yield much result in raising the agricultural production and productivity in the country.
3. In order to stabilize the prices of food grains and to rationalize its distribution, the government adopted zoning system where the country was divided into food deficit zones and food surplus zones.
4. The Food Corporation of India (FCI), was set up to purchase, handling transport, storage and distribution of food grains on behalf of the government.

5.The government resorted to continuous import of food grains for meeting the deficiency in the food supply as the country failed to maintain a buffer stock of food grains.

6.Price incentives are very much significant to induce the farmer for the farmers for further agricultural development. Accordingly, the Government set up an Agricultural Prices Commission later on renamed as Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, which is making crucial decisions in connection with determining and announcing minimum support prices of agricultural produce regularly.

7. In order to protect the growers of these horticultural and agricultural commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop during the peak arrival period when prices fall to a very low level, Government implements the Market Intervention Scheme for a particular commodity on the request of a State Government concerned. Losses so suffered, are shared on 50:50 basis between Central Government and the State itself. The market intervention scheme has already been implemented in various states our country.

### CONCLUSION

Food security is the backbone of national prosperity. The health of any nation is directly linked to food security. Food problem is one of the major problems of India. The food problem has been rising at rapid rate. The main reason of it is increasing in population rapidly. There are some other reasons of food problem such as low productivity of land, high prices of food grains, poverty and unemployment, uncertainty in production, wastage of food grains etc. There is strong need to regulate the policies for food security in India. It is recognized that better governance is very important for affecting functioning of food based programme.The Government of India adopted various measures and policies during the planning period to solve the food problem such as technological measures, food zones, and import of food grains etc.

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