



GROWTH WITH STARVATION: SOME ISSUES

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the paper is to apprise the issue that both growth and starvation are taking place in developing countries including India. The issues which are discussed in the paper are (i) Growth by itself does not bring poverty and hunger down. (ii) Growth is not sufficient to eliminate poverty and hunger. (iii) Agricultural growth affects rural poverty and hunger reduction not only by increasing farm incomes, but also by stimulating the non-farm economic sector in rural area and small towns.

Prologue

Poverty is omnipresent in the world with its varied genesis and dimensions. However, the third world countries including India are the main sufferers. Since Independence, the Government of India has taken several initiatives to tackle the scourge of poverty through area development approach and/or sectoral approach. But even, after more than 60 years of planning and employing various poverty alleviation programmes, official estimates show that 37.2 per cent of total households as per the computation based on calorie norms of the Tendulkar Committee was living below poverty line in India in 2004-05 and 41.8 per cent rural household were below poverty line during the same period.

It is the shame that a country that prides itself on becoming a future economic power in the world also has the appellation of being a “republic of hunger.” The pervasive dimension of the problem has been known for long and was even detailed in official Economic Surveys! The prevalence of hunger, as measured in months in which any member of a household had inadequate food, was as high as 9 in West Bengal, 5.3 in Orissa, 5 in Assam and 2.7 in Bihar, when compared to the national average of 1.9 months in 2004-05. Despite recording robust economic growth over the last couple of decades and spending thousands of crores of rupees on subsidizing foodgrains and other programmes aimed at improving the nation’s social indicators, India ranks a low 67 among 84 countries on the Global Hunger Index, 2010. The country has actually dropped two level since last year on the index published jointly by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide.

Our neighbours Sri Lanka and Pakistan rank much higher in the indexed based on three indicators: proportion of undernourished as a percentage of population, prevalence of underweight in children under five and under-five mortality rate. India’s record on these parameters is rather dismal. The country has over 230 million undernourished people, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization’s The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2008. They constitute about 27 per cent of world’s undernourished population. Worse, 43 per cent of its children under the age of five are underweight. To put that in global perspective, they constitute 42 per cent of the world’s underweight children, according to a 2009 UNICEF report. This present a scary situation for a country that hopes to be an

economic superpower, reaping demographic dividend.

In India the NSS data suggest that the rate of decline in poverty has not improved significantly in 1993-05, the period of intensive opening of the economy, compared to the 1970s and 1980s. This is partly because; inequality has gone up in the recent period. Also, agricultural output grew at a slower rate in the last decade, compared to the earlier decades, largely on account of the decline in public investment in rural infrastructure (like irrigation, roads or prevention of soil erosion). These are primarily domestic factors. The NSS data also suggest that there has been a decline in the rate of growth of real wages in the period 1993-05 compared to the previous decade, 1983-93.

There is a bewildering maze of debates about defining and measuring poverty and hunger that are complicating the issue of poverty problem. The lesson for India's policymakers is hard to overlook in the context of poverty reduction, regardless of how it is measured. If our analysis has any validity, some of the priorities are greater attention to 'triggers' for institutional reforms (e.g. speedier implementation of the right to information to restrict corruption) and a more inclusive growth through easier access to both human and physical capital.

There is a broad consensus in the development economics literature that growth is a necessary condition for poverty reduction (Ravallion and Chen 1997, Dollar and Kraay 2002, Kraay 2004). However, the extent to which growth translates into reductions in poverty largely depends on the structure of growth and the characteristics of the poor (Ravallion and Chen 1997, Deininger and Squire 1998, Bourguignon 2002).

Economic performance and hunger levels are inversely correlated. Countries with high levels of gross national income (GNI) per capita – an important measure of economic performance- tend to have low GHI scores in 2010, and countries with low levels of GNI per capita tend to have high GHI scores.

Although many millions of people have exited poverty in recent decades, much of the reduction in poverty has benefited people living close to the poverty line rather than those at the very bottom of the income distribution (Braun: 2009). No doubt, progress in reducing poverty has been significant, even though the population of developing countries is trapped in poverty. As a share of population, the for those living on less than US\$1.25 a day fell from 52.2 per cent in 1981 to 22.4 per cent in 2008. By 2015, according to an estimates, more than 1 billion people will still live on less that US\$1.25 a day. Even factoring in the prospects for more rapid growth in some developing countries, there will still be more than 900 million people living on less than US\$1.25 a day in 2015 (Chen and Ravallion: 2009).

The most important finding is that the proportion of people in less-developed countries living on less than US\$1.25 a day (in 2005 prices) more than halved between 1981 and 2005, falling from 52 percent to 25 percent. The absolute number of poor people also fell during this time, from 1.9 billion in 1981 to 1.4 billion by 2005, with three-fifths of this reduction occurring since 1999. Of those, half a billion live on less than 75 cents a day, and 162 million live in less than 50 cents a day (Ahmed et.al: 2009).

Table 1: Share of Population below Poverty line (below \$1.25 per day)

	1981	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2010
East Asia & Pacific	77.7	65.5	54.2	54.7	50.8	36.0	35.5	27.6	16.8	14.3	12.5
China	84.0	69.4	54.0	60.2	53.7	36.4	35.6	28.4	15.9	n.a.	n.a.
Europe & Central Asia	1.7	1.3	1.1	2.0	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.6	3.7	0.5	0.7
Latin America & the Caribbean	11.5	13.4	12.6	9.8	9.1	10.8	10.8	11.0	8.4	6.5	5.5
Middle East & North Africa	7.9	6.1	5.7	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2	3.6	3.6	2.7	2.4
South Asia	59.4	55.6	54.2	51.7	46.9	47.1	44.1	43.8	40.3	36.0	31.0
India	59.8	55.5	53.6	51.3	49.4	46.6	44.8	43.9	41.6	n.a.	n.a.
Sub-Saharan Africa	53.7	56.2	54.8	57.9	57.1	58.7	58.2	55.1	51.2	47.5	48.5
World	52.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	22.4	n.a.
LDC poverty rate at \$1.00 a day	41.4	34.4	29.8	29.5	27.0	23.1	22.8	20.3	16.1	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Chen and Ravallion 2008, table 7. Also available on the World Bank's PovcalNet.

The world GHI declined most rapidly—by 2.6 points—between 1990 and 1996, and progress slowed thereafter. Undernourishment and underweight in children improved most between 1990 and 1996, whereas progress in reducing child mortality has accelerated since 2001. The proportion of undernourished people has remained almost constant at the global level since 1995–97, falling by just 1 percentage point. The index for hunger in the world, however, remains “serious.”

The 2010 world GHI shows some improvement over the 1990 world GHI, falling from 19.8 to 15.1 or by almost one quarter. The index for hunger in the world, however, remains serious. In fact, the overall number of hungry people, as measured by the FAO, surpassed 1 billion people in 2009, though new estimates suggest that number will have dropped to 925 million in 2010. (2009; FAO 2010a). The picture varies greatly by region and country. These global averages mask dramatic differences among regions and countries. Compared with the 1990 score, the 2012 GHI score was 16 percent lower in Sub-Saharan Africa, 26 percent lower in South Asia, and 35 percent lower in the Near East and North

Africa (Figure 2.1). Progress in Southeast Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean was particularly remarkable, with the GHI scores decreasing by 46 percent and 44 percent respectively (although the score was already low in the latter region). In Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the 2012 GHI score was 46 percent lower than the 1996 score.⁶ Southeast Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced a fairly consistent reduction in GHI scores since 1990. In the Near East and North Africa, the decrease of GHI scores has accelerated after a period of virtual stagnation between 1990 and 1996. In South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa—the two regions with the highest GHI scores, at 22.5 and 20.7 respectively—the rates of progress have also been uneven.

The 2010 GHI score fell by 14 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa compared with the 1990 score, by about 25 per cent in South Asia, and by 33 per cent in the Near East and North Africa. Progress in Southeast Asia and Latin America and Caribbean was especially great, with the GHI scores decreasing by 40 per cent and more. (Table -2).

Table 2: Global Hunger Index Scores by Region

	World	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Asia	Southeast Asia	Near East & North Africa	Latin America & Caribbean
1990	19.8	25.3	30.7	14.4	7.5	8.7
1996	17.2	24.8	24.0	12.0	7.9	7.4
2001	16.3	23.7	24.3	9.6	6.8	6.1
2010	15.1	21.7	22.9	8.6	5.1	4.9
2012	14.7	20.7	22.5	7.9	5.3	4.9

Source: 2010 Global Hunger Index, page 11

According to a new UN hunger report, nearly 870 million people, or one in eight, were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2010-12. The vast majority of these, 852 million live in developing countries where the prevalence of undernourishment is now estimated at 14.9 per cent of the population. Over the periods, despite launching many welfare programmes for addressing malnutrition, the reduction of undernourishment is very slow (Table-3).

In the past 30 years Asia has experienced dynamic growth and structural transformation and achieved substantial poverty reduction. The extension of current trends will create a dramatically transformed Asia by 2015. The incidence of people living in poverty in the region has fallen from more than 50 per cent in the mid-1970s to 18 per cent in 2004, and the incidence of hunger from more than 30 per cent to 16 per cent. Currently the region is home to 520 million hungry people as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and 600 million poor people as defined by the World Bank.

By 2015 Asia's share of global gross domestic product (GDP) will approach 42 per cent, but Asia will still be home to half of the world's poor, and projections show that three-

quarters of these poor will live in rural areas. Currently 85 per cent of those who live on less than a dollar a day live in rural areas.

Table 3: Global Number (in million) and Percentage of Undernourished People

	1990-92	1999-2001	2004-06	2007-09	2010-12*
World	1000 (19%)	919 (15%)	898 (14%)	867 (13%)	868 (12%)
Developed Countries	20 (1.9%)	18 (1.6%)	13 (1.2%)	15 (1.3%)	16 (1.4%)
Developing Countries	980 (23.2)	901 (18.3%)	885 (16.8%)	852 (15.5%)	852 (14.9%)

Source: FAO

Table 4: Dollar-a-Day Poverty in Asia, 1990 and 2004 (million)

	1990	2004
South Asia	479.2 (51.2%)	446.2 (73%)
East Asia	374.9 (40%)	128.621%
Central Asia	1.9	3.5 (1.0%)
Middle East Asia	1.3	1.5
Southeast Asia	81.9 (9%)	33.7 (5.0%)

Poverty In India

Two decades after the country ushered in economic liberalization, the promise of high growth to reduce poverty and hunger has not worked. In fact it has worked the other way round: the more the economic growth, higher is the resulting poverty. India's economic boom is on, social sector spending is on, relentless battle against poverty and hunger is on but hunger afflicting millions is also going on. For millions of Indians hunger is routine, malnutrition rife, employment insecure, social security non-existent, health care expensive, and livelihood under threats despite India's robust economic performance and its growth despite the recent global recession. It is the shame that a country that prides itself on becoming a future economic power in the world also has the appellation of being a "republic of hunger" (Mohan: 2010). One in four persons in India was hungry. This situation shows a shameful paradox of poverty amid plenty. India has more persons suffering endemic or chronic hunger as well as 'hidden hunger, whether measured by calorie intake or anthropometric indicators of malnutrition, than any other country. One-third of the world's malnourished children are in India (Swaminathan: 2006). Ironically farmers are amongst the millions who go hungry.

Accordingly, the Tendulkar Committee has worked out that 41.8 per cent of the population or approximately 450 million people survive on a monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure of `447.

While the incidence of poverty has declined, the rate of decline is very slow, 0.74 percentage

points during 1993-99 to 2004-05, at 7.9 percentage points during 1999-2005 and at 1.48 percentage points during 2005- 10 the percentage of people living below the poverty line in the country has declined from 37.2 per cent in 2004-5 to 29.8 per cent in 2009-10. Even in absolute terms, the number of poor people has fallen by 52.4 million during this period. Of this, 48.1 million are rural poor and 4.3 million are urban poor. Thus poverty has declined on an average by 1.5 percentage points per year between 2004-5 and 2009-10. The annual average rate of decline during the period 2004-05 to 2009-10 is twice the rate of decline during the period 1993-94.

Table 5: Poverty Ratio (in %)

Year	Rural	Urban
Pre-Tendulkar		
1973-74	56.40	49.00
1977-78	53.10	45.20
1981-82	40.80	40.80
1987-88	39.10	38.20
1993-94	37.30	32.40
Tendulkar		
1993-94*	50.10	31.80
1999-2000	27.10	23.60
2004-05*	42.00	25.50
2009-10	33.80	20.90

**Following the Tendulkar methodology, which includes non-food expenses.*

Source: Planning Commission

The sharp drop in poverty estimates in the latest count has been attributed largely to the high growth over 2004-10, but disaggregated state level data does not seem to provide conclusive evidence. The national poverty count dropped to 29.8% in 2009-10 from 37.2% in 2004-05, but in states such as Bihar, Chattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and even Punjab the decline was much less even though they reported a visible improvement in economic growth over this period. Though poverty ratio in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh has declined by about 10 percentage points more, in Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, poverty ratio in 2009-10 has increased.

Maharashtra occupied first position in per capita income in 2010-11. During the decade of 2001-10; its overall growth was 8.9 per annum (p.a), and agri-growth was 5 per cent p.a., both being well above all India average for the decade. It registered steep fall in rural and urban poverty, by 18.4 percentage points (ppt) and 7.3 ppt respectively, between 2004 and 2009, though levels of poverty still remain high. Gujarat has notched second highest overall rate of growth in GSDP growth (9.6 per cent p.a.) during the decade of 2001-11.

Its poverty reduction been significant: 12.4 ppt rural and only 2.2 ppt urban. Punjab with GSDP growth rate (6 per cent p.a.) as well as agri-GSDP (2 per cent p.a.) has modest poverty reduction (7.5 ppt in rural areas). Bihar has witnessed almost no reduction in rural poverty during 2004 to 2009, though Bihar had highest growth rate (12 per cent) during the 11th Five Year Plan but clocked below average rates for the decade as a whole: 6.9 per cent overall and 2.5 per cent agri-GSDP. So, a general trend is that in states with higher growth rates in overall GSDP and agri-GSDP have also experienced greater fall in poverty.

Table 6: When Growth Didn't Reduce Poverty Fast Enough

State	Average Growth Rate* 2000-2005	Poverty Ratio** 2004-05	Average Growth Rate* 2005-10	Poverty Ratio** 2009-10
Bihar	6.03	54.4	10.01	53.5
Uttar Pradesh	3.75	40.9	7.12	37.7
Chattisgarh	6.00	49.4	9.80	48.7
Punjab	3.94	20.9	8.72	15.9
Andhra Pradesh	6.50	29.6	8.72	21.1
West Bengal	5.60	34.2	7.04	26.7
Rajasthan	5.15	34.4	6.98	24.8

*Average growth in state gross domestic product **As % of the population (in %)

India has lagged behind in improving its GHI score despite strong economic growth. After a small increase between 1996 and 2001, India's GHI score fell only slightly, and the latest GHI returned to about the 1996 level, as the above graph shows. This stagnation in GHI scores occurred during a period when India's gross national income (GNI) per capita almost doubled, rising from about 1,460 to 2,850 constant 2005 international dollars between 1995–97 and 2008–10 (World Bank, 2012).

India's latest score on the global hunger index has returned to the 1996 level, after showing a minor deterioration between 1996 and 2001. Between 1996 and 2012, India's proportion of undernourished people, underweight children and child mortality has remained the same, despite the country's healthy economic growth and social sector spending, according to the findings of the Global Hunger Index 2012. India's latest score in Global Hunger Index (GHI), as reported by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), has once again returned to the 1996 levels, after showing a minor deterioration between 1996 and 2001. According to IFPRI, India's GHI score was 30.3 in 1990, which fell to 22.6 in 1996. It began rose to 24.2 in 2001 and stood at 22.9 in 2012, almost touching the 1996 levels.

India has lagged behind in improving its GHI score, despite strong economic growth. After a small increase between 1998 and 2001, India's GHI score fell only slightly, and the latest GHI returned to about the 1996 level.

Table 7: Ranking of Major States in terms of Per Capita Income & Economic Freedom Index

FY11 (FY05 prices)		2001-02 to 2010-11			Population below Poverty Line (%) - 2009-10	
State	Rank	AAGR of GSDP	AAGR of agriculture	Share of GSDP agri in overall GSDP, FY11	Rural (decline from FY05 in ppt)	Urban (decline from FY05 in ppt)
Maharashtra	1	8.9	5.0	8.5	29.5 (18.4)	18.3 (7.3)
Haryana	2	9.1	3.4	16.7	18.6 (6.2)	23.0 (15.8)
Gujarat	3	10.2	9.6	12.7	26.7 (12.4)	17.9 (2.2)
Tamil Nadu	4	7.8	2.3	8.3	21.2 (16.3)	12.8 (6.9)
Kerala	5	7.9	0.6	10.6	12.0 (8.2)	12.1 (6.3)
Uttarakhand	6	12.3	2.3	11.3	14.9 (20.2)	25.2 (1.0)
Himachal Pradesh	7	7.6	4.6	19.2	9.1 (15.9)	12.6 (-8.0)
Punjab	8	6.0	2.0	24.1	14.6 (7.5)	18.1 (0.6)
Andhra Pradesh	9	8.0	4.7	20.8	22.8 (9.5)	17.7 (5.7)
Karnataka	10	7.2	3.1	16.6	26.1 (11.4)	19.6 (6.3)
West Bengal	11	6.6	2.7	18.3	28.8 (9.4)	22.0 (2.4)
Jammu & Kashmir	12	5.3	2.6	21.4	8.1 (6.0)	12.8 (-2.4)
Chhattishgarh	13	8.8	9.0	19.2	56.1 (-1.0)	23.8 (4.6)
Rajasthan	14	7.7	9.9	22.7	26.4 (9.4)	19.9 (9.8)
Odisha	15	8.6	4.7	17.6	39.2 (21.6)	25.9 (11.7)
Jharkhand	16	6.9	6.9	15.1	41.6 (10.0)	31.1 (-7.3)
Madhya Pradesh	17	6.7	6.6	22.6	42.0 (11.6)	22.9 (12.2)
Assam	18	5.3	2.3	22.8	39.9 (-3.5)	26.1 (-4.3)
Uttar Pradesh	19	6.0	2.1	23.0	39.4 (3.3)	31.7 (2.4)
Bihar	20	6.9	2.5	22.6	55.3 (0.4)	39.4 (4.3)
All India		7.6	3.2	14.5	33.8 (8.2)	20.9 (4.6)

Source: Collated on the basis of data available from CSO. Planning Commission (for poverty using Tendulkar methodology) and the Economic Freedom of the States of India 2012 (Debroy, et.al, 2013). The Index of Economic Freedom is calculated for three categories viz., Size of Government Expenditures, taxes and enterprises, Legal Structure & Security of Property Rights & regulation of labour and business and then aggregated to form an index for economic freedom

Note: ppt signifies percentage points, AAGR: Average Annual Growth Rate.

On the other hand, India's nearest economic rival China has managed to consistently lower its hunger index scores. China's GHI score of 11.8 in 1990 fell to 8.9 in 1996 and then further to 6.7 in 2001. In 2012, China's index stood at 5.1, among the lowest in the world. South Asia reduced its GHI score significantly between 1990 and 1996- mainly reducing the share of underweight children- but could not maintain the rapid progress. The report

added that although sub-Saharan Africa made less progress in reducing hunger since 1990s, it caught up with South Asia since the turn of the millennium when its 2012 GHI score fell below South Asia. According to the index, much smaller nations such as Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan and Nepal have performance better than India in reducing hunger (Table-8).

Table 8: Global Hunger Index

Country	Rank			Global Hunger Score
	2010	2011	2012	2012*
China	9	4	2	5.1
South Africa	n.a.	n.a.	9	5.8
Thailand	n.a.	n.a.	18	8.1
Indonesia	n.a.	n.a.	30	12.0
Sri Lanka	39	36	37	14.4
North Korea	n.a.	n.a.	52	19.0
Pakistan	52	59	57	19.7
Nepal	56	n.a.	60	20.3
India	67	67	65	22.9
Bangladesh	68	n.a.	68	24.0

**The lower the score, the lesser is the incidence of hunger as estimated by the International Food Policy Research Institute. Note: Not all countries included.*

Source: IFPRI

Hidden Hunger

The lack of essential vitamins and minerals such as iodine, vitamin A, iron, folic acid and zinc is affecting more than a third of India's people. It means that millions of people in India suffer from a subtle and insidious 'hidden hunger'. It is not the kind of hunger that one feels in the belly but the kind that strikes at the core of one's health and vitality. It can cause blindness and brain damage. It can induce stillbirths and abortions. It makes people fatigue and lethargic. It can make killers of ordinary childhood diseases such as diarrhea, malaria and measles. It contributes to high rates of maternal and child deaths. It can render investment in education less effective as children are unable to concentrate on their studies. Hidden hunger silently, invisibly traps people of entire countries in a cycle of poor health, poor educability, poor productivity and consequent poverty, often without the victims ever knowing the cause.

In India, percentage of prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia in children under 5 years is 75 and the same in women age 15-49 is 51. From severe anaemia maternal deaths occur annually 22,000. Iodine deficiency and vitamin deficiency are also very high in children (Table 9).

Table 9: Vitamin and Mineral Deficiency in India

Iron Deficiency	
Prevalence of Iron Deficiency Anaemia in Children under 5 Years (%)	75
Prevalence of Iron Deficiency Anaemia in Women Age 15-49 (%)	51
Annual Number of Maternal Deaths from Severe Anaemia	22,000
Iodine Deficiency	
Annual Number of Children Born Mentally Impaired	6,6000,000
Total Goitre Rate (%)	26
Vitamin Deficiency	
Annual Number of Child deaths precipitated	330,000
% of Children under 6 with Sub-Clinical Vitamin A Deficiency	57
Polate Deficiency	
Annual Number of Neural Tube Birth Defects	50,000
Economic Impact	
% of GDP Lost to all Forms of VM Deficiency	1.0

Source: *Damage Assessment Reports Issued by UNICEF*

Poverty ratio has been declining over periods but still poverty ratio is above 30 per cent in rural areas and more than 20 per cent in urban areas (Table 3).

It is a shame that the country that prides itself on becoming a future economic power in the world also has the appellation of being “republic of hunger”. The percentage of Subjacent hungry, , acquiring 1,800-2,200 kilocalories per person a day, is high in (i.e. 28%) in India, that of Medial hungry, acquiring 1,600-1,800 kcals per person per day, is 12 and that of Ultra hungry is 17. In India, overall prevalence of food energy deficiency is 56 per cent. This high incidence is mainly due to the households’ inability to access available food.

Grain stocks are enough in India but hunger is persistent. It shows a paradoxical situation of poverty and hunger amidst potential plenty. The current stocks of rice and wheat are around 70 million tones that are enough for feeding anyone who goes hungry.

With the latest population estimates, there are around 23.5 crore families in India, out of which the BPL component could be 8.74 crore families if one uses the Tendulkar Committee’s estimates of poverty or 11.75 crore families if one considers the N.C. Saxena Committee’s number. The required amount of food grain thus ranges between 37 million tones and 49 million tones if 35 kg of grain is given to these families every month a year. Clearly, the grain requirement is well within the likely buffer stocks with the government (Mohan: 2010). With such potential plenty, why then should there be a pervasive hunger? This is a great question as well as ironical.

Suggestions

The most unfortunate consequence of poverty is that more than 520 million people cannot afford an adequate diet. The G8 and indeed the U.N. should immediately evolve world

Network of Food Banks to tackle mass starvation, particularly in Africa and Asia. The affected areas should have soup of kitchens, food pantries, etc. The food aid to individuals should be in terms of kind and no cash should be distributed. This is the immediate need of the hour to prevent millions of deaths due to hunger and food insecurity. The measures for general poverty alleviation through multi-pronged development measures including better agriculture in the poor countries can follow in due course (Gopalakrishnan: 2005).

Growth by itself does not bring poverty down. Growth is not sufficient to eliminate poverty. Measures taken by Government for reducing poverty and hunger are not working. Careful assessment of our distribution system shows that just 10 per cent of the food subsidy actually reaches the poor. Assessments of MGNREGA do not look much better (Panagariya: 2011). If some glaring inadequacies in these schemes are rectified and they are properly implemented, the poor will get considerable relief.

In India, agriculture is crucial for income and employment generation. Numerous studies have shown that the impact of economic growth on reducing hunger and poverty depended as much on the nature of growth as on its scale and speed. The Table-7 establishes the proposition that those states of India where agricultural growth is high, GSDP works in reducing poverty and hunger. The strategies for reduction of hunger must have programmes and investments focused on hunger “hot spots.” The twin-track approach must include interventions to strengthen the productivity and incomes of the hungry and poor, while the other is to respond to immediate needs of the poor and the food-insecure. Investments in agriculture and rural development must be increased, while equal importance should be given to private sector investment including by small farmers themselves.

Since poverty is largely a rural phenomenon and many of the poor directly or indirectly depend on the farm sector for their incomes, growth that raises agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale farmers and landless labourers is particularly important in reducing poverty; growth alone is insufficient.

Policies must also reach out directly to the poor by supporting investments in human capital. Investment in health, nutrition and education address not only the worst consequences of poverty, but also some of its most important causes. Moreover, even with rapid economic growth, some of the poor will be reached slowly, if it all remain vulnerable to economic reversals.

Staple food crops will remain essential for poverty-reducing growth. Since value chains start at the farm level, achieving pro-poor growth will require that new production technology be embedded in improved managements systems, is likely to be central to the development of technology adapted to less-favoured areas.

Epilogue

Jeffrey Sachs has pointed out in his book “End of Poverty” that at present 8 million people die of extreme poverty every year. So, in 2015, we shall witness 4 million dying of extreme poverty. The serious question now is whether the world would ignore hunger or mass starvation and deaths due to it till the integrated development process, including better

agriculture, comes to fruition. The answer has got to be sure 'no'. In that case it is evident that the nations should tackle mass starvation in the world first, and this is precisely what is not happening. Millions of deaths due to mass starvation, particularly of children in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, North Korea, etc., have hit the conscience of the world.

India remains the home for the largest number of people suffering under the clutches of poverty in the world which can impose a volcanic impact of different nature which can erupt at any point of time unless timely corrective actions are taken.

According to a Harvard University study, India's impressive economic growth has not led to reduction in under nutrition among its children. Under nutrition was worst in poor and populous states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. It was less common in the northeastern states like Mizoram and Manipur.

The challenge is whether the euphoria over impressive growth recently will be matched by measures designed for better health and education among the deprived and institutions that will enable more equitable sharing of growth. The poverty leads the powerlessness, insecurity, frustrations, hostility and anger that will not result in peace in India. For building stable peace, ways need to be found to provide opportunities for poor people to live decent lives. "Put Poverty in the Museum by Creating a Poverty and hunger -free World."

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