

c. LAND USE (in hectares):

Cultivated Land		Land not available for cultivation (Area covering dwellings, roads, ponds, grazing ground)
Irrigated	Unirrigated	
-	-	26 hectares

d. FACILITIES:

Educational	-
Medical	-
Market	-
Electricity Supply	-
Communication	-
Nearest Town	-

Answer :

NCERT Solutions for Class 9 Social Science Economics Unit 1

The Story of Village Palampur Class 9

Unit 1 The Story of Village Palampur Exercise Solutions

Exercise : Solutions of Questions on Page Number : 14

Q1 :

Every village in India is surveyed once in ten years during the Census and some of the details are presented in the following format. Fill up the following based on information on Palampur. a. LOCATION:

b. TOTAL AREA OF THE VILLAGE:

a. LOCATION: Bulandshahar district, Western Uttar Pradesh

b. TOTAL AREA OF THE VILLAGE: 226 hectares

c. LAND USE (in hectares):

Cultivated Land		Land not available for cultivation (Area covering dwellings, roads, ponds, grazing ground)
Irrigated	Unirrigated	
200 hectares	-	26 hectares

d. FACILITIES:

Educational	2 primary schools and 1 high school
Medical	1 primary health centre and 1 private dispensary
Market	Raiganj and Shahpur
Electricity Supply	Most of the houses have electric connections. Electricity powers all the tube wells in the fields and is used in various types of small businesses.
Communication	Well-connected with neighbouring villages and towns. 3 kms from Raiganj. All-weather road connects it to Raiganj and further on to Shahpur. Many kinds of transport like bullock carts, <i>tongas</i> , bogeys, motorcycles, jeeps, tractors and trucks are present.
Nearest Town	Shahpur

Q2 :

Modern farming methods require more inputs which are manufactured in industry. Do you agree?

Answer :

Traditional farming methods involve the use of relatively low-yielding seeds, which require less water for irrigation. Farmers following the traditional methods use cow dung and other natural manure as fertilisers. All these elements are readily available with the farmers. This makes them less dependent on industrial output.

Modern farming methods, on the other hand, involve the use of high-yielding variety seeds. These seeds require a combination of chemical fertilisers and pesticides,

agricultural implements like tractors, and proper irrigation facilities like electric tube wells to produce the best results. All these elements are manufactured in industries. Hence, it would be right to say that modern farming methods make use of a greater number of industrial outputs as compared to traditional farming methods.

Q3 :

How did the spread of electricity help farmers in Palampur?

Answer :

The spread of electricity in Palampur transformed the system of irrigation in the village. Persian wheels gave way to electric-run tube wells, which reduced the dependence of the farmers upon rainfall, and enabled larger areas of land to be irrigated. By mid 1970s, the entire cultivated area of 200 hectares was irrigated. This improvement in irrigation allowed farmers to grow three different crops in a year, thereby ensuring that the cultivable land was being used for producing the maximum possible output.

Q4 :

Is it important to increase the area under irrigation? Why?

Answer :

Monsoons are by their very nature erratic and variable. So, farming cannot entirely depend upon rains. A large portion of the cultivable land in India is not well irrigated and is dependent entirely upon rains. As a result, when rains are late or are inadequate, farmers incur much loss. The loss is more acutely experienced by the small farmers. Failure of rain means failure of crops and a total waste of efforts and resources, both for the individual farmers and for the economy. To avoid such situations, it is important for the entire cultivable area of the country to be brought under the protective shield of proper irrigation facilities. A well-irrigated land produces greater output. The constant availability of water for irrigation provides a sense of stability to the farmer, and also encourages him to practise newer farming methods and patterns to maximise the productivity from his land.

Q5 :

Construct a table on the distribution of land among the 450 families of Palampur.

Answer :

Total area of land under cultivation in Palampur = 200 hectares

Q6 :

Average area of land cultivated	Number of families	Per cent of families	Per cent of land cultivated (approximate values)
Nil	150	33	0
Less than 2 hectares per family	240	54	32
More than 2 hectares per family	60	13	68

Why are the wages for farm labourers in Palampur less than minimum wages?

Answer :

Though the minimum wage fixed by the government for a farm labourer is Rs 60 per day, farm labourers in Palampur get paid much less, about 35 to 40 rupees a day. The reason for this is the competition for work among the agricultural labourers in the village. Knowing that supply is much more than the demand, they themselves agree to work for wages that are lower than minimum wages. The large farmers too exploit this condition of excess supply, and force labourers to work for low wages. The use of modern agricultural implements like tractors, threshers and harvesters also reduces the amount of agricultural labour required. This further intensifies the competition among the labourers looking for jobs.

Q7 :

In your region, talk to two labourers. Choose either farm labourers or labourers working at construction sites. What wages do they get? Are they paid in cash or kind? Do they get work regularly? Are they in debt?

Answer :

Attempt this question on your own.

Q8 :

Describe the work of a farmer with 1 hectare of land.

Answer :

The situation of a farmer with 1 hectare of land is truly problematic. Since the land area cultivated by him is small, the output is generally low. The produce is barely enough for the survival of his family. To begin work on his farm, he needs to buy seeds and fertilisers. For these, he needs sufficient capital, which is provided to him by the large farmers, traders and moneylenders as loan. The loan comes with a high rate of interest and often requires him to work in the lender's fields. He works on his field along with his family members. Even after all their efforts of ploughing and sowing seeds, the output depends upon the availability or non-availability of water for irrigation. If irrigation facilities are not available, then the output is more or less dependent upon rainfall, which is uncertain and erratic. Thus, even the low output is not something he can be certain about. Hence, in order to make ends meet, and to repay his loans, he and his family members have to work as farm labourers.

After harvest, there is little or no surplus left as almost all the produce is either used for his needs or for repaying his lenders. The lack of savings prevents him from adopting better farming practises and improving the conditions on his farm and in his house. As he is left with almost no working capital, his situation at the end of the day is still the same. He is still in need of money to start working on his farm, and for this, he takes more loans. Thus, he remains in the vicious circle of loans.

Q9 :

How do the medium and large farmers obtain capital for farming? How is it different from the small farmers?

Answer :

Medium and large farmers retain a part of their produce and sell the surplus in the market. This provides them with the required capital for farming. Most of them even use these earnings to provide loans to small farmers. By charging high rates of interest on these loans, they succeed in furthering their earnings. Thus, medium and large farmers have ready capital with them from one agricultural season to the next.

The situation of small farmers is in stark contrast. They begin an agricultural season with no working capital and end the season on more or less the same note. To begin working on their farms, they take loans at high rates of interest. Due to the small sizes of their farms, their total production is small. Their produce is kept for their needs or for repaying their lenders. As a result, they have no surplus to sell in the market, and thus, have no savings.

Q10 :

On what terms did Savita get a loan from Tejpal Singh? Would Savita's condition be different if she could get a loan from the bank at a low rate of interest?

Answer :

Savita required money for buying seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, and water for irrigation. She also needed money for repairing her farm instruments. So, she decided to borrow money from Tejpal Singh, a large farmer in her village. Tejpal Singh agreed to give the loan of Rs. 3000 at an interest rate of 24 per cent for four months. He also got her to agree to work on his field during the harvest season for Rs. 35 a day. Knowing that it was difficult for a small farmer like herself to get a loan, she agreed to these tough conditions.

If she could get a loan from a bank, then her situation would definitely have been different. First of all, she would have got the loan at a reasonable rate of interest. Secondly, she would have been able to focus her entire attention on her farm. She would also have been able to devote more time to the needs of her family members, especially those of her three children.

Q11 :

Talk to some old residents in your region and write a short report on the changes in irrigation and changes in production methods during the last 30 years. (Optional)

Answer :

Attempt this question on your own.

Q12 :

What are the non-farm production activities taking place in your region? Make a short list.

Answer :

Attempt this question on your own.

Q13 :

What can be done so that more non-farm production activities can be started in villages?

Answer :

Three things that need to be done to encourage non-farm production activities in villages:

- (i) The government should set up schemes whereby landless labourers and small farmers are able to get cheap loans to start small individual/community businesses.
- (ii) In addition to financial assistance, the government should set up rural workshops to enable the villagers to build on their skill levels.
- (iii) The government should also work towards improving the infrastructure of villages so that the rural parts of the country are well connected to the urban areas.



NCERT Solutions for Class 9 Social Science

Economics Unit 2

People as Resource Class 9

Unit 2 People as Resource Exercise Solutions

Exercise : Solutions of Questions on Page Number : 27

Q1 :

What do you understand by 'people as a resource'?

Answer :

People can make the best use of nature to create more resources when they have the knowledge, skill and technology to do so. This is why human beings are considered a resource. It is the abilities of human beings which help in transferring a physical material into a valuable resource.

'People as a resource' is a way of referring to a country's working people in terms of their existing productive skills and abilities. The idea of people as a resource is linked to the concept of human capital - i.e., the stock of skill and productive knowledge embodied in a population. Any production of goods and services requires the presence of the four factors of production, namely land, labour, physical capital and human capital. The knowledge and enterprise provided by the human capital puts together the other three factors to produce an output. Population becomes an asset instead of a liability when investments are made in the form of education, training and medical care.

Q2 :

How is human resource different from other resources like land and physical capital?

Answer :

Human resource makes use of other resources like land and physical capital to produce an output. The other resources cannot become useful on their own. This is the reason why human resource is considered to be superior to the other resources.

Q3 :

What is the role of education in human capital formation?

Answer :

Human capital refers to the stock of skill and productive knowledge embodied in a population. Proper education and training enable the formation of this human capital. An educated population is an asset, a resource. In contrast to the uneducated and untrained, educated individuals make efficient use of the available resources and opportunities. Education and skill are the major determinants of the earning of any individual in the market. Education enhances the quantity and quality of individual productivity, which in turn adds to the growth of the economy. Aware of the benefits of education, educated persons help in its perpetuation. The advantages of an educated population spread to even those who themselves are not educated. Hence, educated people benefit the society as a whole. Thus, education plays the role of a catalyst in transforming a human being into a positive asset and a precious national resource.

Q4 :

What is the role of health in human capital formation?

Answer :

Human capital refers to the stock of skill and productive knowledge embodied in a population. This skill and productive knowledge is provided with the help of proper education and training. However, the benefits of education alone do not lead to the creation of human capital. A human population which is educated but unhealthy cannot realise its potential. An unhealthy population is a liability, and not an asset. Hence, health is an indispensable basis for realising one's well being.

Q5 :

What part does health play in the individual's working life?

Answer :

The health of an individual helps him to realise his potential and also gives him the ability to fight illness. An unhealthy individual is a liability to his place of work. The health of a person is directly related to his efficiency. As compared to an unhealthy individual, a healthy person can work more efficiently and with greater productivity.

Q6 :

What are the various activities undertaken in the primary sector, secondary sector and tertiary sector?

Answer :

Primary sector comprises activities related to the extraction and production of natural resources. Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, fishing, poultry farming, mining and quarrying are the activities undertaken in this sector.

Secondary sector comprises activities related to the processing of natural resources. Manufacturing is included in this sector.

Tertiary sector comprises activities that provide support to the primary and secondary sectors through various services. Trade, transport, communication, banking, education, health, tourism, insurance, etc., are examples of tertiary activities.

Q7 :

What is the difference between economic activities and non-economic activities?

Answer :

Activities that add value to the national income are called economic activities. These have two parts - market activities (production for pay or profit) and non-market activities (production for self consumption).

Non-economic activities are the ones that do not add to the national income; for example, an individual performing domestic chores.

Q8 :

Why are women employed in low paid work?

Answer :

Education and skill are the major determinants of the earning of any individual in the market. Due to gender discrimination, women are generally denied the education and the necessary skills to become worthy contributors to the national income. As a result, a majority of women have meagre education and low skill formation. This is one of the reasons why they get paid less than men. Also, the perpetuation of gender prejudices such as “a woman cannot do as much physical work as a man” put women at a disadvantage.

Q9 :

How will you explain the term unemployment?

Answer :

Unemployment is a situation in which people who are able and willing to work at the going wages cannot find jobs.

An individual is termed as unemployed if he or she is part of the workforce of a country, and is capable and willing to work for payment, but is unable to do so.

Q10 :

What is the difference between disguised unemployment and seasonal unemployment?

Answer :

Disguised Unemployment	Seasonal Unemployment
It is the situation in which an individual appears to be employed, but he does not add to the productivity. That is, the productivity is the same even in his absence.	It is the situation in which an individual is not working during certain months of the year. The productivity would remain the same.
Example: When a work that requires only three individuals for its completion is being done by five persons, the two additional persons are disguised unemployed.	Example: Agricultural labourers find work only during certain months of the year, i.e., sowing, harvesting, weeding and threshing.

Q11 :

Why are educated unemployed a peculiar problem of India?

Answer :

If disguised unemployment characterises rural India, educated unemployment is a peculiar problem of urban India. This is the situation wherein a number of youth with matriculation, graduation and post graduation degrees are not able to find suitable jobs. The education system is such that even after about 18 years of education, a person can still be termed as unskilled. What this does is that a large number of unskilled educated youth get churned out of educational institutions year after year, but only a fraction of them are able to find suitable jobs. Among the remaining, some remain unemployed while others get employed in activities that seem inadequate as per their potential. This in turn leads to the wastage of the huge amounts of resources that had been spent on educating them.

Q12 :

Can you suggest some measures in the education system to mitigate the problem of the educated unemployed?

Answer :

Measures in the education system to mitigate the problem of the educated unemployed:

- (a) Make education at the secondary level more career-oriented, which would endow individuals with not only education but also the requisite skills for gaining successful employment.
- (b) Create a sort of screening process whereby each individual chooses subjects that suit his or her abilities.
- (c) The introduction of newer subjects and fields of study at the school level should be accompanied by a growth of job opportunities in the sectors that would employ the students electing to study such subjects.

Q13 :

Which capital would you consider the best - land, labour, physical capital and human capital? Why?

Answer :

Human capital makes use of the other resources like land, labour and physical capital to produce an output. The other resources cannot become useful on their own. Hence, human capital may well be considered the best among all the resources.

Unit-3

Poverty as a Challenge

Question 1:

Describe how the poverty line is estimated in India.

Answer:

A person is considered poor if his or her income or consumption level falls below a given minimum level necessary to fulfil basic needs. Each country uses an imaginary line that is considered appropriate for its existing level of development and its accepted minimum social norms. This is called the poverty line.

While determining the poverty line in India, a minimum level of food requirement, clothing, footwear, fuel and light, educational and medical requirements, etc., are determined for subsistence. These physical quantities are multiplied by their prices in rupees, and thereby the poverty line is arrived at. The numbers involved in the calculation of the poverty line vary. Since the economics of living in the rural parts of the country is different from that of living in the urban parts, the poverty line deducted for individuals living in the rural areas is different from that deducted for individuals living in the urban areas.

Question 2:

Do you think that present methodology of poverty estimation is appropriate?

Answer:

The present methodology of poverty estimation takes into account a minimum subsistence level of living rather than a reasonable level of living. A person is considered poor if his or her income or consumption level falls below a given minimum level necessary to fulfil basic needs. While ensuring the minimum necessary in terms of income is indeed essential for India to bring a large section of its population out of the clutches of poverty, the government must also focus its attention upon the broader element of human poverty. A future state may be achieved wherein everybody is able to feed himself or herself. However, in the continuing presence of factors like illiteracy, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to proper healthcare and sanitation, caste and gender discrimination, etc., such a state cannot be called a poverty-free state.

Question 3:

Describe poverty trends in India since 1973.

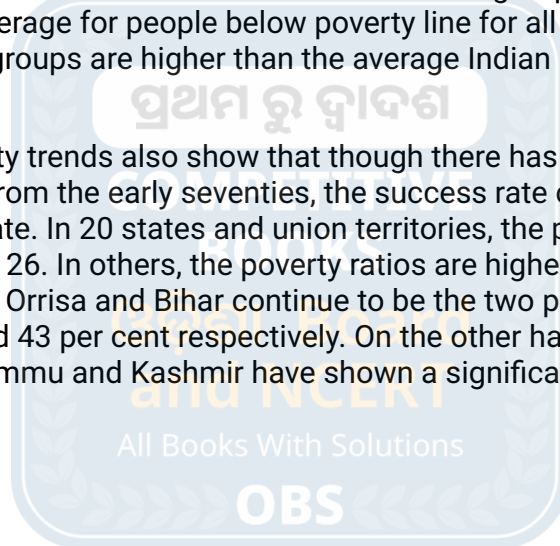
Answer:

A decline: There has been a substantial decline in the poverty ratios in India from about 55 per cent in 1973 to 36 per cent in 1993. The proportion of people below poverty line further came down to about 26 percent in 2000. Although the percentage of people living in poverty declined from 1973 to 1993, the number of poor remained stable around 320 million for a fairly long period. However, as per the latest estimates, the number of poor has shown a significant decline to about 260 million.

Rural and urban poor: The poverty trends also indicate that the problem of poverty is a much bigger menace in the rural areas than it is in the urban areas. As the greater part of the Indian population resides in the villages, the greater number of the poor also resides in the villages.

Vulnerable groups: Looked at from the point of view of the various social and economic groups in the country, the scheduled tribes, the scheduled castes, the rural agricultural labourers and the urban casual labourers turn out to be the groups most vulnerable to poverty. Though the average for people below poverty line for all groups in India is 26, the averages of these groups are higher than the average Indian poverty ratio.

Poor states: The poverty trends also show that though there has been a decline in poverty in every state from the early seventies, the success rate of reducing poverty has varied from state to state. In 20 states and union territories, the poverty ratio is less than the national average of 26. In others, the poverty ratios are higher than the national average. Among these, Orissa and Bihar continue to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 47 and 43 per cent respectively. On the other hand, states like Kerala, Gujarat, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir have shown a significant decline in poverty.

**Question 4:**

Discuss the major reasons for poverty in India.

Answer:

Major reasons for poverty in India

(i) Colonial rule: India went through a long phase of low economic development under the British colonial administration. The policies of the colonial government ruined traditional handicrafts and discouraged development of industries like textiles.

(ii) Low economic growth and high population growth: The Indian administration's failure on the two fronts – promotion of economic growth and population control perpetuated the cycle of poverty.

(iii) Rural poverty: The effects of agricultural and rural development were limited to only certain parts of the country. As a result, while some parts of the country showed great progress in the rural sector, others continued in the shadow of poverty.

The presence of huge income inequalities is a major reason for the high poverty rates in the rural areas.

The government's failure to properly implement major policy initiatives to tackle the issue of income inequalities has contributed to the continuance of poverty in villages.

(iv) Urban poverty: The jobs created by the industrial sector have not been enough to absorb all the job seekers. Unable to find proper jobs in cities, many people start working as rickshaw pullers, vendors, construction workers, domestic servants, etc. With irregular small incomes, these people cannot afford expensive housing. In consequence, they start living in slums. Thus, poverty (a largely rural phenomenon sometime back) has become a dominant feature of urban India as well.

(v) Socio-cultural factors: Various socio-cultural factors like caste and gender discrimination and social exclusion have contributed to the wider realm of human poverty.

Question 5:

Identify the social and economic groups which are most vulnerable to poverty in India.

Answer:

The proportion of people below poverty line is not the same for all social groups and economic categories in India. The social groups of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and the economic groups of rural agricultural labourers and urban casual labourers are the ones most vulnerable to poverty. The poverty ratios for each of these groups are higher than the average Indian poverty ratio. Apart from these groups, women, elderly people and female infants are considered to be the poorest of the poor.

Question 6:

Give an account of interstate disparities in poverty in India.

Answer:

The proportion of poor is not the same in every state. Though there has been a decline in poverty in every state from the early seventies, the success rate of reducing poverty has varied from state to state. In 20 states and union territories, the poverty ratio is less than the national average of 26. In others, the poverty ratios are higher than the national average. Among these, Orissa and Bihar continue to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 47 and 43 per cent respectively. Both rural and urban poverty are quite high in these states. On the other hand, states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir and West Bengal have shown a significant decline in poverty. Public distribution of food grains, focus on human resource development, high agricultural development and land reform measures are some of the factors responsible for the decline in poverty in these states.

Question 7:

Describe global poverty trends.

Answer:

The proportion of people in developing countries living on less than \$1 per day has fallen from 28 per cent in 1990 to 21 per cent in 2001. There has been a substantial reduction in global poverty since the nineteen eighties. However, the reduction in poverty is marked with great regional differences. Due to rapid economic growth and massive investment in human resource development, poverty declined substantially in China and Southeast Asian countries.

On the other hand, in South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan), the decline has not been as rapid. While the ratio of poverty in Latin America has remained the same, in sub-Saharan Africa, poverty has risen from 41 per cent in 1981 to 46 per cent in 2001. According to the world development report of 2001, countries like Nigeria, Bangladesh and India still have a large percentage of people living under poverty.

Poverty has also resurfaced in some of the former socialist countries like Russia, where officially it was non-existent earlier.

Question 8:

Describe current government strategy of poverty alleviation.

Answer:

The current anti-poverty strategy of the government has a two-lined approach – promotion of economic growth and targeted anti-poverty programmes.

Economic growth widens opportunities and provides resources needed to invest in human development. Also, so that the poor can take advantage of this economic growth, the government has formulated several anti-poverty schemes to affect poverty directly or indirectly. Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana, Rural Employment Generation Programme, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana, Antyodaya Anna Yojana, National Food for Work Programme, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, and proposals for establishing National and State Employment Guarantee Funds are some of the anti-poverty schemes of the government.

However, despite the good intentions of these schemes, the benefits have not fully reached the deserving poor. Hence, the major emphasis in recent years has been on proper monitoring of all the poverty alleviation programmes.

Question 9:

Answer the following questions briefly

- (i) What do you understand by human poverty?**
- (ii) Who are the poorest of the poor?**
- (iii) What are the main features of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005?**

Answer:

(i) Human poverty is a concept that goes beyond the limited view of poverty as lack of income. It refers to the denial of political, social and economic opportunities to an individual to maintain a "reasonable" standard of living. Illiteracy, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to proper healthcare and sanitation, caste and gender discrimination, etc., are all components of human poverty

(ii) Women, female infants and elderly people are the poorest of the poor. Within a poor family, such individuals suffer more than the others. They are systematically denied equal access to the resources available to the family.

(iii) Main features of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005:

- (a) The Act assures 100 days employment every year to every household.
- (b) Initially covering 200 districts, the Act would be extended later on to cover 600 districts.
- (c) One-third of the jobs are reserved for women.

NCERT Solutions for Class 9 Social Science

Economics Unit 4

Food Security in India Class 9

Unit 4 Food Security in India Exercise Solutions

Exercise : Solutions of Questions on Page Number : 53

Q1 :

How is food security ensured in India?

Answer :

Food security is ensured in a country when the three dimensions of food security are taken care of. The three dimensions are:

Availability of food - Presence of enough food for all the persons

Accessibility of food - Absence of barrier on access to food

Affordability of food - Capability of all persons to buy food of acceptable quality Food security has been ensured in India because of the following factors.

- (i) **Self-sufficiency** of food grains - India has become self-sufficient in food grains (as was its aim since Independence) during the last thirty years. This has been because of a variety of crops grown all over the country.
- (ii) **Food-security system**- The availability of food grains has been ensured by the government with the help of a carefully designed food-security system. This system involves the maintenance of a *buffer stock* of food grains, and the distribution of this food among the poorer sections of the society with the help of a *public distribution system*.
- (iii) Implementation of several **poverty-alleviation programmes** having an explicit food security component - Apart from the distribution of food through fair-price shops, the government has come up with several poverty-alleviation programmes that enhance food security; for example, mid-day meals and food-for-work.
- (iv) Involvement of **cooperatives and NGOs**- In addition to the role of the government in ensuring food security, various cooperatives and NGOs are also working intensively towards this direction. Mother Dairy and Amul are two examples of cooperatives involved in ensuring food security.

Q2 :

Which are the people more prone to food insecurity?

Answer :

A large section of people suffer from food and nutrition insecurity in India. However, the worst affected groups are as follows:

- (i) Landless and land-poor households, traditional artisans, providers of traditional services, petty self-employed workers and destitute including beggars (in the rural areas)
- (ii) People employed in ill-paid occupations and casual labourers engaged in seasonal activities (in the urban areas)
- (iii) People belonging to the backward sections of society, namely SCs, STs and OBCs
- (iv) People belonging to economically-backward states with high incidence of poverty, tribal and remote areas and regions more prone to natural disasters
- (v) People affected by natural disasters who have to migrate to other areas in search of work
- (vi) Large proportion of pregnant and nursing mothers, and children under the age of 5 years

Q3 :

Which states are more food insecure in India?

Answer :

The economically-backward states with high incidence of poverty are more food insecure in India. The states of Uttar Pradesh (eastern and south-eastern parts), Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Chattisgarh, parts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra account for the largest number of food insecure people in the country.

Q4 :

Do you believe that Green Revolution has made India self-sufficient in food grains? How?

Answer :

In the late 1960s, the Green Revolution introduced the Indian farmer to the cultivation of high-yielding varieties (HYVs) of seeds. The HYVs (coupled with chemical fertilisers and pesticides) led to a growth in the productivity of food grains (especially wheat and rice), thereby helping India attain self-sufficiency in food grains. Since the advent of the Green Revolution, the country has avoided famine even during adverse weather conditions.

Q5 :

A section of people in India are still without food. Explain.

Answer :

The food insecure: A large section of people in India suffer from food and nutrition insecurity. This group of 'the food insecure' includes landless agricultural labourers and small farmers, casual labourers in the urban areas, people belonging to the backward social sections such as the SCs, STs and OBCs, people belonging to the backward regions, migrants and a large proportion of pregnant and nursing mothers, and children under the age of five years.

Government's efforts: The government has played a key role in ensuring food security for the poorest sections of society through various schemes such as the public distribution system, mid-day meals, food-for-work and rural employment guarantee. However, due to certain failings, a number of people still go without food.

Three dimensions of food security: Food security is ensured by ensuring food availability, accessibility and affordability. When either of these dimensions of food security is neglected, the overall system of food security gets adversely affected.

Negative effect on food availability: Through the Food Corporation of India, the government purchases food grains from states with surplus production. These food grains are stored in granaries and distributed in the food-deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society under the various government schemes. However, instances of hunger are prevalent despite overflowing granaries. The storage of massive food stocks has more often than not led to wastage of grains and deterioration in their quality. As a result, the availability of food grains is affected.

The increase in the minimum support prices (prices at which the government buys food grains from farmers) of rice and wheat has induced farmers to divert land from the production of coarse grains - the staple food of the poor - to the production of these crops. This again affects the availability of food.

Indian agriculture is largely dependent on the unpredictable monsoons. Only a small part of the national cultivable land is well irrigated. During times of delayed or low rains, the overall productivity and availability of food grains gets negatively affected.

Negative effect on food accessibility and affordability The food procured by the government is distributed via the fair-price shops at a price lower than market price. However, most public-distribution-system dealers resort to malpractices like diverting food grains to open market to make profits, selling poor quality grains at ration shops, irregular opening of the shops, etc. Such actions make safe and nutritious food inaccessible and unaffordable for many of the poor.

Lack of proper monitoring of schemes: The lack of proper implementation and proper targeting of many of the poverty-alleviation programmes have led to their lack of effectiveness in ensuring food security. Despite good intentions, many of the schemes

of the government have not reached the deserving poor. Hence, a great number of people are still food insecure.

Q6 :

What happens to the supply of food when there is a disaster or a calamity?

Answer :

When there is a disaster or a calamity, the production of food grains decreases in the affected area. This in turn creates a shortage of food in the area. Due to the food shortage, the prices go up. The raised prices of food materials affect the capacity of many people to buy the same. When the calamity occurs in a very wide spread area or is stretched over a long period of time, it may cause a situation of starvation. A massive starvation can take the form of famine.

Q7 :

Differentiate between seasonal hunger and chronic hunger.

Answer :

Seasonal hunger is related to cycles of food growing and harvesting. This is prevalent in rural areas because of the seasonal nature of agricultural activities, and in urban areas because of the casual labour (e.g., there is less work for casual construction labour during the rainy season). This type of hunger exists when a person is unable to get work for the entire year.

Chronic hunger is a consequence of diets persistently inadequate in terms of quantity and/or quality. Poor people suffer from chronic hunger because of their very low income and in turn, inability to buy food even for survival.

Q8 :

What has our government done to provide food security to the poor? Discuss any two schemes launched by the government?

Answer :

The government has ensured the availability of food grains with the help of a carefully designed food-security system. This system involves the maintenance of a buffer stock of food grains, and the distribution of this food among the poorer sections of the society with the help of a public distribution system. The government has also come up with several poverty-alleviation and food-intervention programmes that enhance food security; for example, the Antyodaya Anna Yojana and the National Food for Work Programme.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

- (i) Launched in December 2000, it caters to the families below poverty level.
- (ii) Under this scheme, one crore of the poorest among the BPL families covered under the targeted public distribution system were identified.
- (iii) Twenty-five kilograms of food grains were made available to each eligible family at a highly subsidised rate (Rs 2 per kg for wheat and Rs 3 per kg for rice)
- (iv) The quantity of food grains was enhanced from 25 to 35 kgs with effect from April 2002.
- (v) The scheme was expanded twice to include a greater number of BPL families. By August 2004, 2 crore families were covered under this scheme.

National Food for Work Programme

- (i) Launched in November 2004, it caters to 150 most backward districts of the country.
- (ii) Its objective is to intensify the generation of supplementary wage employment.
- (iii) Any rural poor in need of wage employment and having the desire to do manual unskilled work can avail of this programme.
- (iv) It is a 100 per cent Centrally-sponsored scheme. The food grains are provided to the States free of cost.
- (v) The district collector is entrusted with the overall responsibility of planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and supervision.

Q9 :

Why is a buffer stock created by the government?

Answer :

A buffer stock of food grains is created by the government so as to distribute the procured food grains in the food-deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society at a price lower than the market price. A buffer stock helps resolve the problem of shortage of food during adverse weather conditions or during periods of calamity.

Q10 :

Write notes on:

- (a) Minimum support price**
- (b) Buffer stock**
- (c) Issue price**
- (d) Fair-price shops**

Answer :

(a) Minimum support price- It is the pre-announced price at which the government purchases food grains from the farmers in order to create a buffer stock. The minimum support price is declared by the government every year before the growing season. This provides incentives to the farmers for raising the production of the crops.

The rising minimum support prices of rice and wheat have induced farmers to divert land from the production of coarse grains - the staple food of the poor - to the production of these crops. The rising minimum support prices have raised the maintenance cost of procuring food grains.

(b) Buffer stock- It is the stock of food grains (usually wheat and rice) procured by the government through the Food Corporation of India. The purchased food grains are stored in granaries.

A buffer stock of food grains is created by the government so as to distribute the procured food grains in the food-deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society at a price lower than the market price. A buffer stock helps resolve the problem of shortage of food during adverse weather conditions or during periods of calamity.

(c) Issue Price- The food grains procured and stored by the government are distributed in food-deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society at a price lower than the market price. This price is known as issue price.

(d) Fair-price shops- The food procured by the Food Corporation of India is distributed through government-regulated ration shops. The prices at which food materials are sold at these ration shops are lower than the market prices. The low pricing is to benefit the poorer strata of society. This is why these shops are called fair-price shops.

Fair-price shops keep stock of food grains, sugar and kerosene oil. Any family with a ration card can buy a stipulated amount of these items every month from the nearby ration shop.

Q11 :

What are the problems of the functioning of ration shops?

Answer :

The public distribution system (PDS) is the most important step taken by the Indian government towards ensuring food security. However, there have been several problems related to the functioning of ration shops. The food grains supplied by the ration shops are not enough to meet the consumption needs of the poor. As a result, they have to depend on markets instead. The average all-India level of consumption of PDS grains is only 1 kg per person per month.

Most public-distribution-system dealers resort to malpractices like diverting food grains to open market to make profits, selling poor quality grains at ration shops, irregular

opening of the shops, etc. Such actions make safe and nutritious food inaccessible and unaffordable for many of the poor.

Under the targeted public distribution system, there are three kinds of ration cards: Antyodaya cards (for the poorest of the poor), BPL cards (for those below poverty line) and APL cards (for all others). Prices of the food materials are fixed accordingly. Under this system, any family above the poverty line gets very little discount at the ration shop. The price of food items for an APL family is almost as high as in the open market, so there is little incentive for them to buy the items from the ration shop.

Q12 :

Write a note on the role of cooperatives in providing food and related items.

Answer :

Along with the government, cooperatives are also playing an important role in ensuring food security in India, especially in the southern and western parts of the country. The cooperative societies set up shops to sell low-priced goods to the poor. Out of all fairprice shops running in Tamil Nadu, around 94 per cent are being run by cooperatives. Mother Dairy, in Delhi, is involved in providing milk and vegetables at controlled rates decided by the government. Amul, responsible for the White Revolution in India, is a cooperative involved in providing milk and milk products. The Academy of Development Science (ADS) in Maharashtra has been involved in the setting up of Grain Banks in different regions. It organises training and capacity-building programmes on food security for NGOs. Its efforts are also directed towards influencing the government's policy on food security. Thus, through these examples, it can be seen that cooperative are playing an active role in the distribution of food and related items.

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