

Displaced Communities

Violation of Right to Food in Bahraich (U.P.)

Denial of BPL (Below Poverty Line) Ration Cards 456 displaced families

Background:

Bahraich is one of the most backward districts of UP. Though it has rich natural resources in terms of water and forest but the main source of water is Ghaghra river which is being converting in curse due to its shifting of course in the Middle Western part of district as well as floods also.

Since 2000 this river is shifting its course in the range of Sukaipur to Bhauri village in Fakharpur block of Mahsi Tehsil. The main pressure was on Golagnj, Baundi, Silauta, Bhauri and Dariyapur Khurd of the area. About 900 families in the year 2000 and 300 families in 2001 have been shifted. The main occupation of these families was agriculture but the river has submerged all the land into the river and converted into the sand. Due to erosion, the people have shifted him to the safer places. Anyhow, the people have escaped their thatched and reuse for making their new huts.

There is no land with local Grampanchayats. This is because distribution of land by panchayats to landless people and harijans in last few years. The victims have arranged land for their resettlement after paying rupees 5000 per bigha to such landholders to settle themselves. Now this area is also in the mouth of Ghaghra. There were some land of Sc people, which were used for this purpose. Thirty-five families are living on the roadside of Maraucha –Banudi road and 47 families are living on allotted land by administration in Bhirwa village.

Government have provided space for more than 168 families in village Bhirwa but the people are not preferring on this land because of its only a space for living purpose and 8 km away from their friends and helping people. This is sandy land. There is no forest and pond in this area. There is no scope of labour work why the people did not like to settle them on this allotted land.

Jogapurva (Baundi) is most dense resettled area for displaced people. There is problem of sanitary system. People go to open field. There is more pressure on less land. Women are facing crucial problem due to this situation.

Now, this is the cropping season of paddy. Normally people have the food grains for one season i.e. for six month. There is no chance for cropping due to loss of land. People are only dependent upon labour work. There is no scope of labour work in the local area and out side cities like Lucknow, Delhi, Ludhiyana and Amritsar etc. People are going these cities and coming back due to no availability of labour work. This is the main cause of problem arises of food security. There is not only problem of food security but also for labour security as well as loans to maintain their daily needs.

Food Problem

The food needs were fulfilled by agriculture before the erosion of lands by river. They are also getting vegetables, fruits, fodders etc from the land. The subsidiary income source was animal husbandry. People were also getting milk and its by-product that compensates the nutrients needs have the people and providing the medium status of nutritious. Due to change in source of income from agriculture to labour work, the above situation has been also changed. They are only fulfilling the grain requirements only and losing other supportive nutrients.

Visthapit Sangharsh Morcha (a peoples organisation of displaced) with support of FIAN-U.P.. has been arranging meetings with victims to create a pressure on government. This meetings has

disclosed this problem several times. Because of such burning problem, Morcha (Front) has conducted a survey to know the facts of food problem amongst displaced people. The findings of the 453 such families are given below-

- The displaced people have no grain. Only some of them have grain up to 20 kg of wheat or rice.
- Daily need of food grain per family is 2 to 4 kg .
- Only some people have 7 to 10 days of food requirement only. The base of this food grain is either loan or labour work.
- Most of the people have no food grain. They only fulfilling their needs through purchase of grain and use them same evening and next morning. Again they go for search of either labour work or loan. They must have to find one solution for food.
- The displaced people of the year 2000 have loan for their food requirement during last 15 months. The loan provider is only local moneylender and providing money at the rate of rupees 10/hundred/month.
- The purpose of loan is only for food, medicine and migration.
- The most of the loan size is rupees 2000 to 5000.
- Due to displacement most of the women and children are facing malnutrition.
- The economic and psycho-social condition of the last year effected people is worst than current year due to suffering of 15 months without fulfilling their minimum needs.
- The average family size of the displaced people is 5.79.
- There is only 2188 kg of wheat, 170kg of rice, 23 kg of pulse available with 453 families with population of 2626 and daily intake of grain is 1225 kg grain and 80 kg of pulse and vegetable.
- The total loan to these families is rupees 11,20,900 and used for food and medicine.
- The entire loans have been taken from moneylenders, which comes on flat rate of rupees 10/100/month. The annual rate of interest to these loans is 120%. The monthly interest comes to rupees 11, 209 and yearly is 134508.
- The people have gains these loans since August 2000. None of the people have repaid their loan.
- People are facing food problem. During survey it was felt that this very crucial position to discuss about livelihood where there is no hope in the eyes of sufferers.

BPL Cards-

Visthapit Sangharsh Morcha and FIAN-U.P. team members have organised an intensive survey for identification of displaced people who have APL (Above Poverty Line)cards. During the special drive of Morcha 456 families have been identified for BPL cards. District Supply Officer Mr. Anand Srivastava has given instruction to their sub-ordinates for performing the changing of APL cards into BPL cards. Below given table show the status of the situation-

Serial	Name of Village	Identified Number of families for BPL cards
1	Jogapurva	163
2	Bhirva	33
3	Silauta	56
4	Golaganj	93
5	Bhauri	111
-	5	456

Morcha has continuous intervention in this matter with local administration. The group pressure of the people and team has created such outcome. DSO office has changed more than 50% work at their own risk and informed to the government for the situation and requested for changing of BPL in to Antyoday Cards. FIAN International has also supported to the issue at International level and written letter to Planning Commission of India and State Government for positive response at their own level.

To follow the raised question FIAN-U.P. and Right to Food Campaign-U.P. has advocacy with PDS department and district administration and have a survey of poor families who have no BPL cards. During this special drive , 456 families have been identified for BPL cards. District Supply Officer Mr. Anand Srivastava has given instruction to their sub-ordinates for performing the changing of APL cards into BPL cards. Below given table show the status of the situation-

Serial	Name of Village	Identified Number of families for BPL cards instead of APL ration card.
1	Jogapurva	163
2	Bhirva	33
3	Silauta	56
4	Golaganj	93
5	Bhauri	111
-	5	456

The concerned organisations are organizing continuous intervention in this matter with local administration. The pressure of the people and team has created such outcome. DSO office has changed all the identified families and provided BPL cards and written letter to government for the situation and requested for changing of BPL in to Antyoday Cards. But in March 2003 the District Supply Officer (DSO), Bahraich who deal the Ration Cards system has been cancelled the BPL Ration Cards.

[Base line Information provided by Mr. Dhruv Kumar of Ghaghra Visthapit Morcha]