

RTF Meeting: 17th September 2009
Indian Social Institute, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

Kavita Srivastava: auditorium have been welcomed by Kavita Ji. In previous year also we had organized a meeting on right to food on 11th july. Whether drought occurs or not hunger deaths are increasing day by day. More than 30 crore are hunger in India. Every 2 child out of three is malnourished. Farmers are cultivator of India but more than 70 % of the farmers are purchasing grains for their families. In center when UPA government have came they thought about providing special attention to the marginalized and excluded section. Government should stop land encroachment by big corporate by SEZ.

Today we will discuss about different aspects of Right to Food act. Anuradha will speak about legal aspects, Harsh will explain different major points and Deepa and Madhuri will explain matter of Child and women in RTF Act.

Harsh:

After a lot of juggling this Act have been drafted in India. At first this is not only for Indian but for all persons living in our country whether Bengladeshi or any other. Second the act have been formed by keeping in mind various reason of hunger, supreme court order, different Yojana, agriculture, import and export. All type of groups have been tried to cover. Still there are some part in which few more thinking is needed includes, drought, industrial impact, town, poor persons, fishermen section etc. etc. after this redressal system is still a matter of concern in which more suggestions are invited.

Economic development is increasing rapidly. Agricultural production have increased and we are thinking that no children should die of hunger death. With the help of Act how the situation can be improved should be thought of. Poor and marginalized hand should have weapon to fight against it.

Government is doing a lot but there are still various drawbacks. This should be improved by four ways: 1. to avail NREGS, 2. to avail Subsidized low cost grain, 3. to provide free grains to some vulnerable sections & 4. to provide pension to all vulnerable group.

Madhuri Ji:

There are few groups who are mostly died of hunger:

- Singer women
- Musahar (Tribal persons)
- Disable persons
- Chronically ill persons

What would be the responsibility of government for these few vulnerable sections are tried to cover under this act.

Loot and exploitation has been the case in these days also. More than 70 % of the persons

are still staying in the village despite this the tendency of government has been to promote persons to move from village to industry. Secondly after independence we should have tried to development our country with the development of agriculture but with Green Revolution we tried to promote industrialization also and the cost of food and grains have increased drastically. With the dark effect of these more than two lacs farmers have gone for suicidal death. And now second Green revolution is coming which is promoting corporate farming. Now a days approx 10 big MNCs are selling all grains and 3 big MNCs are regulating circulation of grain in the market under which the control drought and production has gone. The new act has tried to check this. Open import and export rule was not in our country but its been the case in the contemporary arena of Indian market. **Due to dumping.** In past Indian was cultivating edible oil for their own consumption and cost was under control. **40** edible oil is coming from foreign countries due to which cost of oil has increased now a days. Forest and natural resources should be under the control of community and not under the control of Indian government or corporate. Government should work for more than 80 of personas and not for few corporate houses needs a big campaign.

In this act there are few things as follows:

Forest land and water should be under the control of community and general populace.

Our grain will not be allowed to go for export till when our own country will not achieve complete hunger free.

- Open import will not be allowed in the name of providing low cost grains and edible oils. This is just an illusion that by this the cost of grain will decrease. This time the profit of MNCs have increased thrice and cost have gone 30% upward.
- Dumping should be checked up.
- Government import export policy is responsible for farmer suicidal deaths. Farming have increased now a days. Government purchasing policy will like that support cost will save both farmer as well seller.
- Only wheat and rice have been promoted as support cost. Government should promote Jwar, Bazra, Makka ect. Etc.
- Dry land agriculture, cereals, pulse production should be promoted and government should promote the production of these with their policy.

- Only Punjab and Haryana have been selected for purchasing of grains by government by which only these two states cultivation have been promoted. Purchasing should be done from all states.
- The amount of grain is very less with compare to requirement of family which is 25 kg per family. There is a need to demand 50 kg grain, 5 kg pulse and 4 kg oil each family.
- There should be decentralisation of PDSs procurement.
- Entire populace should be provided ration facility and not only BPL.
- There should be a rich index instead of BPL index for ration providing.
- Women should be taken as central head of the family in ration shop, land and all others.

Deepa Sinha:

For children here are few provisions specially because more growth happens only at this age group. There are few things which have been said broadly in this draft:

- There should be universalization on Anganwadi centre. Every village should have one anganwadi. There should be few basic facilities in anganwadi such as toilet, water etc. there should be two anganwadi worker in each anganwadi centre.
- Breast feeding should be made available to every children till first six month after birth. Mother should be promoted for this .
- Every mother should be provided at least Rs. 500 till six month per month.
- Every child till age 0-3 years should be avail take home food and children of the age group 3-6 years should provide cooked meal in the anganwadi.
- Every school should have kitchen and cook for mid day meal and cook should be provided with minimum wage.
- In our country most of the women are working for their children there should be a rearing house in every place for those children.
- Malnourished children should get treatment in PHCs with special attention.

Biraj Patnaik:

Government's thought:

In june a draft have been made which said about minimizing the existing facilities also which have been criticized vastly.

There are different group in the government who are thinking in different way. One group is thinking of curtailing facilities. One group is saying to delay it for next three years. But we have to create a situation like we did at the time of NREGA.

Kavita:

GM seed will be abolished widely from our country. We will not allow genetically modified seed and food to come in our country which is harmful for our health.

Dalit Adhikar Sangathan: (Paul)

The cause of hunger in India is not lack of food but primarily hierarchy, cast system and segregation in the society which should be removed. Dalit, Adiwasi and Muslim community have challenged such discriminations also needs to be addressed in this act. Grievance redressal have not been dealt seriously need more suggestions. Rehabilitations, MID day meal scheme, untouchability practices should be addressed seriously. This act would bring in massive employment if implement. Negligence has been a common in the dalit discrimination. The Grievance negligence has been defined clearly which would bring out further strengthening of the process. Today also approx 70 % of the resources are not reaching to the community would be dealt in our campaign to achieve our goals. After the act we also will have to try to implement this act with the active participation of community.

Jan Swasth Abhiyan:

We have been circulated a draft three days ago with discussion:

Education bill have been passed. Right to food and health is under process. With our intervention community have benefited a lot despite few drawbacks. If the draft will go back against our genuine demanding will be our defeat. There are two gaps which we feeled in chapter 2:

Implementation of the act and its regulation should be defined in a clear draft.

It's a highly intersectoral area so a strengthen governance is needed other wise different department will deny in implementation by saying other departments responsibility.

Voice from general populace:

Along with Indian west Bengal has also started Jangal jameen fight which should be included in right to food act. Universalization of PDS should be done. In the denial of Food security act there should be strict provision of punishment. In case of emergencies of drought, flood or any disaster government should provide continuously food and supplement till when community attains their original life as before. In case of any hunger death family of the died person should be provided sustainable food and livelihood.

In food security act agriculture should be addressed primarily to achieve food security. Without saving farmers we can not achieve food security. Now government policy whether corporate farming, GM seed or others are hazardous to farmers which do not motivate child of farmer to continue with farming which should be tackled seriously. In this bill if we will exclude WTO, national and international policies, BPL selection policies, and import export policies the bill formation would be worthless. There is a need to see agricultural policies which finally lead to food security.

We will have to deal seriously with the natural resource enablement rather entitlement. SEZ snatches entire land from farmers and gives to big corporate house. Lack of seed is a big problem now a days. The persons who are talking about Green revolution should think about the availability which is now going to the hand of big corporates. With the unavailability of seed agricultural production have effected badly should dealt properly.

Right to food act is appreciable but there should be a limitation of it. Before 20 days no body knows about palm oil but now mustard oil have been beaten by palm oil. Multi crop cultivation should be tackled with right to food act.

It would be right if RTF would be in separate section. Each and every programme should be monitored that the particular amount have been spent in such section and its implementation. There should be a provision of social audit for every right to food act processes.

The resource of food should be taken in to account in right to food act. In this campaign along with right to food various global issues should be thought of. We should link it with right to dignity also. What has been of rules which have been formed in past 60 years should be thought of. No government have shown his commitment in any process whether it be NREGS or food security act. Campaign should think about it seriously and start their own agendas apart from government with out getting trapped in it.

GM seed should not be allowed in our country as it is poisonous for us. Right to Food is not limited to just Mid day meal and ICDS but includes wide aspects. We will have to change our voice instead of saying Coarse grain to nutritious grain which is a part of healthy food. We should also include food security act with social and cultural aspects which is joint with the farmers of India. We will have to demand to decentralize this PDS system structure. If community will demend coarse grain than it would be made available is just government voice to keep them back hence we should not accept such gaps. Community should be promoted to maintain PDS system in which grain would be procured locally and distributed there which also lead to decrease in the cost.

Karnataka RTF campaign has been very active by which we have met with different political parties and MLAs. We have several demands on our own. PDS shop should also sale fruits, vegetables, eggs and other essential items. More than 20% of the fruit and vegetables are getting rotten every year through out country which should be make available to general persons.

Marx Communis Party:

The linkage between production and procurement is being discussed through out the day which government is not able to tackle hence are talking about green revolution. Few

things of the Government document is being opposed by our party. APL will not be provided anything from government and he talks about only rice and wheat which is not tolerable. Our demands have been for drought and prices of the food. PDS should not be targeted but universal. It should be at least 35 Kg and of Rs. 2 kg per family. Kerosene, pulse, sugar and other products should also be provided in subsidized rate. There should also be livelihood policies. Government will have to devise food grain procurement policy for entire country. There should be clear cut accountability and transparency of government in food security act. We should go with crude demand in front of government with clear cut points and go for discussion upon government draft.

Sachin: (Memorandum to Prime Minister):

We on behalf of right to food India writing to you for drought prevailing in our country. Drought is getting in its worst in India. Human and cattle are dying of hunger with the lack of food. Women and children selling have been reported in different area. Drought should be dealt with the immediate effect. In the drought prevailing area NREGA should be implemented properly. All disabled, old age person and adivasi should be provided pension. Through PDS anganwadi should be provided proper grain for community. Time of food should be like this pregnant women could also get one day meal on time. Non school going children should also be provided with one day meal. All anganwadi and school should be provided with pure drinking water. In every village 5 bags grain should be stored which should be provided to drought affected area.

Medha Patkar:

Here all persons are present who are fighting for right to live in which right to food, education and health are coming. In society persons are living who are dependent upon natural resources and hence we should put our demand against government for our basic rights. In these resources, whose ownership is there and how distribution will occur should come in preamble surely. In this country the view of government both in state as well centre is wrong but this campaign should be to fight against it. There are three aspects strategic change, political discussion and implementation for which we have to fight in campaign. There are segmentation in the society because of which all persons are not getting required resources. Grain storage in FCI should be come in general populace eye should be demand of campaign. At least in Tehsil level there should be a planning for village development. Government should define the parameter of declaring waste land and productive land. Agro industries should be added value which provide livelihood to the farmers which is now to promote corporate house. Land allocation is going to real estate builders and corporate houses. Rehabilitation policies should be clear to check displacement disaster. Land owner should also be in joint hand instead of in the ownership of male head of the family. Draft has brought about so many things which can be discussed. Interstate migration law is made but has not been provided by government or industrialist. So there should be a clear cut policies and regulations for the implementation of this. Grain bank formation is a good approach but how it could be linked with PDS and NREGS is a deplorable thing. The matter of town food supply and security is still missing in the draft which should be discussed further. After Gram Sabha

resolution legal action would be taken should be defined further. A forum should be made with Committee and commissioner. How listing would be done if universalization will not be accepted at this time. Penalties should be applied as ST & ST prevention of atrocity act in case of denial of right to food demands.

Harsh Mandar:

Drought is this big buzz in our country through which entire populace is suffering and the worst is the situation with tribal. There is a need to start NREGS work immediately in the drought affected area. A regular PDS and MDM distribution should be made functional in these areas. Minimum wage should be made Rs. 100 in all areas especially drought affected area. Cost of food have increased three times in that account this minimum wage of Rs. 100 is also less which should be increased.

Voice from assemble for Drought:

NREGA implementation irregularity is affecting worstly drought affected area. In Baran although it has not been declared drought affected area the crop has not been as per expectation is a matter of concern. 9 Malnutrition (Children) deaths have been reported in Brahmpura village of Baran district. This death toll is coming with the interval of every two to three years and the government is well worse with this. Despite this if government is not taking any drastic step is the greatest mistake. Same has been the case with Shivpuri and Sheopur district of MP. In different part of Rajasthan drought is the disastrous case by which animal and human beings are affected. It should be dealt seriously.

Stragegy:

Shefali (Third World Sanstha):

Delhi head quarter. We work for WTO and Free Trade Agreement. Although government have said that we will bring out a food security act and without asking any state or community going to make 10 big agreement with MNCs for Agriculture to sale our country food and crop. If we will do these agreement than we will get cheaper food but only 20% food is in business which is in control of big MNCs such as Cargill and like wise. These MNCs are doing business of these crops. Commodity price fluctuates upwards as well down wards but company mint money all the time. At the time of chronic hunger the profit of these companies went four times high. We will have to at first understand and then oppose vigorously these pacts. Government is saying that we do not have money for NREGS process on the other side, If we will decrease our custom duties then how income will increase hence we should strictly oppose it.

Shalini (Grain Sanstha):

Free Trade and World Market.

The courage which has been shown to broaden this campaign is really appreciable. If we have to make strategy with this Food Security Act we have to integrate all aspects and put a challenge to help our country. We should have clear position on World Trade and what is our critic of trade land development should be thought of. For food security food production should be dealt properly. Farmer right act 2001 taught us the right will be under limitations what ever would be your demand. Not only government but no any department is taking pro-people strategy for investment. By which way the money which is coming for trade is flowing should be understood. I would invite right to food campaign to understand and implement cross learning process for free trade agreement and privatization of resources.

Anne: Strategy for RTF Act

There is a big difference between NREGA fight and RTF fight today. Now this government is in majority and hence the situation is not that much strengthen. For the first time a campaign has formed in which 10000 persons have gathered and gave banner campaign in Delhi. After independence this was first time when so many sangathan have united together for single issue of NREGA whose result is not in front of us. Now we have to put double or rather triple force to bring about this RTF Act. We will have to gather our strength for the fight. In front of parliament there should be a big Dharna for Right to Food and that too be with Sari Banner during winter session. To meet UPA Chair Person Soniya Gandhi for the RTF Act and make parliament person understand for the issue. We will have to meet with different cabinet minister for the issue. In November a national level sammalen would be organized in Delhi in the issue of Drought and Food Security. How to tackle our grievance redressal immediately is also a matter of concern upon which there should be talk in State and national level. We will have to start talk with different Civil Societies, NGOs, and Political Parties. At the time of rally and sammelan at District and State level a memorandum should be given to Prime Minister for Food Security Act.

Jan Breman:

When I came in 1960s I have seen people hungry and struggling with death. We must not underestimate these groups. Although there have been much improvement but still hunger is prevailing. Rs. 45 a days is average wage for Gujarat persons. They are struggling for two time meal a day. They do not have money to fulfill basic needs such as food, shelter and water. Great number of persons does not even have shelter of their own. Because of unadequate food, shelter, water, shelter, employment 10 lacs of persons are still bounded labor in India. They are bounded laborer in their land owner home. People should have right to basic entitlements such as right to food, education and health. Government, politicians and thinkers are not taking steps in providing these to general populace of the country. Social scheme laws which have been formed last year is a big step which had been taken by government and now food security is the next which is to be dealt with. There should be a balance between political, social and economical system of India which can be achieved with the campaign of different Civil Societies and

communities by which policies could come out from lower level to upper policy maker side.

Madhwan (Parliamentary Research):

We learnt that how MLA thinks and how we should deal with them in any case. There are different prongs in Food Security Act and there is not a clear aspect. By this food security act will come but will not be implemented properly. There is a lot of political pressure upon ministries also to bring out a bill. If before coming the bill we will make them understand our demand will be included. There are a lot of financial implications. Planning commission and ministry of law will also have to include in the process. At first they will ask about cost analyses. So at first the campaign will have to do cost analysis task and ways of cutting costs. There is a need to give committee a draft and demands for the act.

John Dreez:

At this time we do not have any power for the act although we have written few drafts. First of all we will have to strengthen our right to food campaign. There are few suggestions for the act. At first a small team will have to be formed who will be sending different delegations time to time. Second we will have to go to our constituencies in a big way with community in our state and district level. Thirdly we will have to link our demand with drought. Government is postponing Act in the name of drought. We will have to change government's this thought. Sixth is that we will have to indulge media in the campaign.

Few demands:

To increase production of food and grain in the country.

To universalize PDS.

Pension and maternity benefit should be made available to all beneficiaries

Weaker and excluded section needs to be given special attention.

Grievance redressal should be strengthen.

On 26th November 2010 we are going to organize next meeting (gathering) at delhi in front which will include 1000 persons in which we will include different political parties and make them put their thoughts to bring out this Act. Last week of October will be declared as Food Security week which will be celebrated in different states. We will make alliance with different organizations of RTF in different place. We will make a pamphlet for our demand which could be mailed from RTF campaign side to all of us. In the month of October we will put presentation or rally in our own place.

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