

livelihoods

today and tomorrow

June 2009



**W
A
G
E**

**L
A
B
O
U
R**



New Governments have come and settled down! Began work! Bottles are the same. We have to wait and watch whether the wine is different or not. We will be able to witness either way in the first 100 days itself.

Some good news for workaholics - men and women working for 40-50 hours a week live more happily!

As the scorching sun slipped into June, and the monsoon playing hide and seek, the World Environment Day has reminded us of the continuing climate changes and depleting natural resources. International Day against Child Labour has reminded us not to forget that all children out of school are indeed child labour.

Deflation or negative inflation after 3 decades! If this persists it would be difficult for us and it would mean troubled economic situation in the country.

In the struggle for control on forests and other natural resources, the victorious tribes had enslaved the lost tribes. Slaves, in due course, broke their chains of slavery but had to depend on the resource-rich peasants for work and food – food only if you work, otherwise starvation. Slowly, payment of wages in kind for the work began. Next the wages came as money. Differences in wages based on skills and wages in proportion to work output were set in, subsequently. From Life slavery to annual agreements to monthly salaries to daily wages! Many variants and many hues have entered. Gradually not just the land lords, other resource-rich started to use the wage workers. Even the occupational groups started to use the coolies – daily or piece-based. Industrialization accelerated the process. But, slowly and steadily, the wage workers started to unite and organize, into unions. Minimum wages were fixed. Also, the labour contractors came. Contracting head coolies came. We have organized labour. Many more labourers are outside in the unorganized sector.

Of the wage labourers, some are only labourers, some are farmers, some practice traditional occupations, some are literate and some others educated. Some are skilled and some others' skills have no market value. Some earn less than Rs.10 a day and a few others earn more than Rs.100,000 a day. Some are not sure whether they get work next day or not. The wage workers without assets/properties can not access credit. They can eat only if they work. In essence, half of Indians are wage workers. There is no place, profession, site/construction, project or organization without wage workers. A skill development mission with special emphasis on wage earners! It is in this context, the sixth sector, explored by 'livelihoods', is "wage labour".

Puchalapalli Sundaraiyah's birth on May Day may not be an accident! The Communist Gandhi, an architect of early program of redistribution of surplus land and resources to the poor and a leader of highest order who organized millions of farmers and workers! If only our young leadership of the day attempts to move in his foot steps 500,000 strong Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrittidarula Union is an example of organized workers. Palagummi Sainath, a people's journalist and a tireless fighter on behalf of the poor and marginalized is the inspiration to many a development communicator. We still find his early book of collection of articles – 'Everyone loves a good drought' relevant and useful to development fraternity everywhere. Kannatukul Labour Bank shows ways of offering ways and means of providing security and dignity to wage workers.

'My Universities' by Maxim Gorkhy tells us that every individual and every incident are learning platforms – a must for every livelihoods worker. Lives with struggles for survival learn a lot and can give a lot to the world, if they are conscious!

It is necessary that we have smaller administrative units in every level. Plans have to come from the people themselves. For that, the workers who work with people at various levels are required. We hope, the new government(s) does everything to make these real.

Like the monsoon bird waiting for the early showers to quench the thirst, 'livelihoods' awaits with a fond hope of quenched hopes of a better tomorrow. With the faith that you join us in our waiting, I remain.

G. Muralidhar

the 'livelihoods' team

‘livelihoods’ team

Editor in Chief	G Muralidhar
Senior Editor	T Nirmala
Working Editor	K Bharathi Ira Rambe
Edit Associates	B Madhusudhan V Muralidhar M Vijaybhasker Srinivas K. Sridevi S. Rekha
Cartoonist	G Dayanand

5 June - World Environment Day

7

Cover Story 12

Wage Labour

More than 70% of the people in India depend on wage labour for their livelihood. Of this per cent large majority of them are employed in the unorganized sector in both farm and non-farm activities in rural and urban areas. Most of them are illiterate, low or unskilled, low paid and have poor access to resources and information. **‘livelihoods’** attempts to understand the dynamics associated with wage labour....

Apples 22

A Journey into the Woods... 24

For Private Circulation only

For enquiries contact:

AKSHARA Network for Development Support Services,

HIG II B-25 F-6, APHB Colony,
Baghlingampally, Hyderabad - 500044

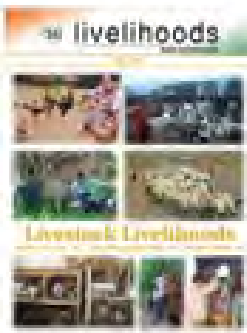
Mobile: 09347802302

www.aksharakriti.org

akshara@aksharakriti.org

Response		4
News		5
Legend	“Communist Gandhi” Sundaraiah	8
Intervention	The Kunnathukal Labour Bank	9
Perspectives	Be Together! Collectivize!	10
Interview	‘Success will come. If it is not today, tomorrow it will be ours’	17
Value Chain	Salt Farming Value Chain	18
Organization	Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union	20
Policy	Scheduled Employment-wise Minimum Wages	27
The Contrasts	Delivery Boys	28
	Type Set Printers	28
Worker	Rural Journalist Palagummi Sainath	29
Books	My Universities	30
Resources	Training Calendar July 2009	31
Story	Story of Buddha, Elephant and Monkey	32
Trends	The Population Growth in India	33
Case studies	Selling Dry Fish Helps Satyamma! Venture Without Feasibility Study	34
‘Yoga’kshemam		35

Response



I would like to thank you for sending me "Livelihoods". It's a very interesting and informative news letter. It provides lot of insights into what is happening in the livelihood arena and various interventions that have been taking place.

K.Balasubramanyam, Sa-Dhan,
New Delhi

Thanks for your constant efforts in bringing out a very informative grassroots level information to sensitize many policy makers and development agencies working in India. I really liked the article on "*Sexual Harassment at the Workplace and its impact on Women's Livelihoods*" published in the May edition. Keep up the good work and I deeply admire the Akshara Team for their efforts. However, I have a suggestion. While converting the

word document into a PDF file, some of the photographs are getting disturbed and loses its effectiveness. The May magazine is an example of this. I am sure the team can take care of this and I am sure it will add value to improve the quality of your magazine.

Ramesh Babu, American Embassy - New Delhi

I enjoy going through your magazine. After going through the latest issue on Livelihood, I felt you should have covered a profile on Mr. C M Ketkar, of Rural Agricultural Institute Narayangaon (RAIN near Pune. This man / RAIN has been a pioneer organisation in promoting goat rearing in India. Apart from this Ketkar is also fondly called as "Neem Man" - he spent several decades in promotion of neem plants in rural India for its multi uses. I am sure you are aware of this NGO and Ketkar. If not give me a call, I can provide you additional over view on this organisation

Toopran Sampath Kumar
Development Cooperation Section (CIDA) - New Delhi

'livelihoods' team deeply condoles the death of Father Ferrer, Spanish humanist and founder of the Rural Development Trust (RDT)



World Day Against Child Labour - 12 June



Cyclone Aila Devastates Sundarbans:

The aftermath of devastating cyclone Aila that ravaged large parts of the West Bengal Delta May 25, 2009 could cause lasting ecological damage to the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, experts fear. Huge displacement caused by the cyclone may force many of the estimated 400,000 people who live among the mangrove forests, the narrow creeks and the wide rivers to enter protected forests, thereby seriously threatening one of the richest but most fragile ecosystems on earth. "The agricultural lands and all water bodies are now filled with saline water. People who get their livelihood through vegetation, fisheries and cattle farming have landed in deep trouble.

European Union & Oxfam To Support Organic Farming & Weavers:

The European Commission has committed a financial support of €750,000 for the cotton farmers, weavers and garment makers in South India under a project to improve livelihood and working conditions of these people. The Commission has been supporting this project since January 2008 and will run the same till December 2011. The project that is being implemented by Oxfam India has a target to ensure 8,000 farmers adopt organic farming and establish direct market access for 1,000 weavers. About 63 percent of the total funds required for the project will be provided by the European Commission while the rest will come from Oxfam.

Campaign For Legal Awareness Among The Poor:

To create legal awareness among the poor and distressed people, the Asian Human Rights Society (AHRs), based in Barasat, North 24-Parganas with the help of the KATWA subdivision's legal service authorities, has started an awareness campaign at various places in West Bengal. The AHRs used to holding seminars on "Human Rights and Legal Awareness" at various places. Mr. Parimal Das from the AHRs said they are inviting into their legal awareness programme those who are not able to pay court fees, explaining to them that they can take the help of the legal service authorities of any court and can fight for their justice without facing financial

hindrance.

India May Fail To Eradicate Hunger By 2015: UNDP Paper

The global financial crisis may keep India from achieving its goal of eradicating hunger by 2015 and other Millennium Development Goals. The UNDP India Senior Assistant Country Director Seeta Prabhu said in a paper titled 'Global Financial Crisis: Impact on India's Poor' that "as the full implications of the global financial crisis unfold, questions are being raised on its impact on India's human development and achievement of the MDGs. India is doing good by the government's definition of poverty, but not as per the World Bank's estimates of proportion of population below the newly defined extreme poverty line of USD 1.25 per day is considered,"

New Diet Regime For Calves:

Kolhapur Zilla Sahakari Dugdha Utpadak Sangh on behalf of Gokul, a milk cooperative in Kolhapur district, Maharashtra trying out ways to save the trade of their two products especially since 2001 the milk collection had stagnated because of the expensive cost of rearing the calves. The products are milk replacer (extracts of grains, soybean and pulses) and Calf starter (calf feed additive with higher fibre, which mature the calf's rumen faster so that it can switch from milk to green fodder earlier). Under the new feeding regimen, a calf is fed on milk for 10 days, after which 50 gm each of milk replacer and calf starter are introduced in the diet. By the fourth week, milk consumption of the calf is reduced to 1.5 liter everyday and 250 gm of green fodder is introduced. Consumption of milk replacer also drops steeply by the eight weeks while that of starter increases. "When fed exclusively on milk, my calves would register a daily weight gain of around 250 gm, but now the gain is about 400 gm more. And they are healthier too," Sagar Killedar, a dairy farmer said. Since 2006, he has raised six calves maturity, something that he had never done in his 15 years as a dairy farmer. RR Patil, animal husbandry head of Gokul said that the products are highly economical compare to imported milk replacers available in the market with price Rs.120 per kg, as the two products

under the brand Mahalakshmi, sells to farmer at Rs.40 per kg. Therefore, the group, Kolhapur Zilla Sahakari Utpadak Sangh, is yet to apply for a patent for the calf starter.

Decreasing Water Levels: Water levels in three-quarters of the world's largest rivers have decreased over the past 50 years, said the US-based National Center for Atmospheric Research. The scientist have linked the decline less rainfall, more evaporation and higher water use. While the water levels in Ganga has decreased, the Brahmaputra and the Yangtze in China have shown stable or increasing flows.

Bihar Farmers Compelled To Sell Rice At Low Price:

Farmers in Bihar are being compelled to sell rice at 'very very low' price which is less than the cultivation cost due to poor procurement by government agencies and Food Corporation of India (FCI), officials said. The rice output in the current season stood at around 75 lakh tons but the state and central government agencies purchased only 12.35 lakh tons and closed the procurement by May 31. Agriculture scientists revealed that out of 75 lakh tons of rice produced, farmers together stored 25 lakh tons of food grains and the rest was available for sale, but the governmental and non-governmental agencies could procure only 12.35 lakh tons, which was less than half of the availability of the product in the market.

Apple Crop Affected Due To Adverse Weather Conditions In Himachal Pradesh:

The apple crop in Kullu has



Garbage littered near Rock Garden in Chandigarh on the eve of World Environment Day. Photo: Manoj Mahajan.

been affected due to lack of adequate snowfall and rains in Kullu in Himachal Pradesh. A good crop of apples requires an average of 1200-1600 'chilling hours', adequate snowfall and rainfall, and suitable temperature at the time of flowering, which this year were unfavorable. To add to the woes of the apple growers there was heavy snowfall on the higher mountain reaches leading to a drop in temperatures affecting flowering of the trees. There was also fluctuation at the time of pollination as the pollinizers (variety of trees used to enhance pollination) flowered before the other varieties of apples affecting the pollination. "The production of apples would be less this year. Normally the production is about 140,000 metric tonnes but the weather this time was not favorable. We are expecting nearly a 40 percent fall in apple production," said Naresh Sharma, Deputy Director, Horticulture Department, and Himachal Pradesh.

Living On Dirty Air: Despite efforts by the US to clean up the atmosphere, the air in many of its cities has become more polluted, said the American Lung Association in its "State of the Air" report. Six out of every 10 Americans—186.1 million people—live in areas where air pollution is life-threatening. Some of the biggest sources are polluting power plant, dirty diesel engines and ocean-going vessels which also contribute to global warming.

Trees, Water & People Named As 2008 Rio Tinto Prize For Sustainability Winner: Rio Tinto and the International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) have announced Trees,

Water & People, based in the United States (Colorado) and working in Central America, Haiti and the American West, as the 2008 winner of the US\$1 million Rio Tinto Prize for Sustainability. Trees, Water & People spokesperson Stuart Conway said he was delighted to accept the Prize at the 2009 International Economic Forum of the Americas (Conference of Montreal) in Montreal on 9th June 2009. "We are absolutely thankful, delighted and overwhelmed with gratitude at being announced the 2008 Prize winner. We now have the opportunity to expand our community reforestation and improved cook stove programmes in

Honduras, Nicaragua, and Haiti. In particular, we will look to use the Prize to leverage additional sources of funding, and increasingly share the work we are doing with other interested organisations," he said.

New Policy For Street Vendors: Five years after adopting the first National Policy on Urban Street Vendors, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has revised it. The policy, much like the previous one, recognises the positive role of street vendors 'in providing essential commodities at affordable prices and at convenient places'. The policy recommends that streets within each city be classified as 'restriction-free vending, restricted-vending and no-vending zones' and registered vendors be allowed to go about their business without harassment. If the recommendations are implemented, statutory plans such as master plans of the existing and new areas of each city will have a provision for vending zones and the norms for allocating space will be put in place. The recommendations also include provision of space for temporary markets and mobile vending in all areas excluding the non-vending zone. However, the policy allows the authorities to evict vendors if they feel vending creates 'genuine public obstruction' of a street.

Garment Workers' Wages Revised After Seven Years: The minimum wages of workers in the garment industry have been revised after a gap of seven years. This is good tidings on May Day, but the fact remains that even after the revision, wages of workers in Bangalore remain lower than their counterparts in places such as Delhi and Mumbai. The Government notification dated March 2, 2009, has fixed basic minimum wage for different categories of garment workers based on recommendations of the Minimum Wages Advisory Committee. According to the notification, a skilled tailor in Bangalore will now get a minimum wage of about Rs. 128 a day (including Dearness Allowance), as against the present Rs. 108 a day. "Today a worker should earn at least Rs. 200 a day, which is the bare minimum requirement for a family to be able to survive on a single earner's wage," says Rukmini V.P., joint secretary of Garment and Textile Workers Union.

India's Inflation Rate Slips Into Negative Zone (Lead): For the first time since the new wholesale price index (WPI) series started in 1995, India's annual rate of inflation has turned negative, falling to minus 1.61 percent for the week ended June 6, leading to fears that this would lead to hoarding of food articles. The inflation rate, which was 0.13 percent in the previous week, had last turned negative in 1977. The WPI for all commodities rose 0.04 percent primarily due to a rise in the indices for non-food articles, manufactured products, and fuel, power, light and lubricants, showed data released by The Commerce and Industry Ministry. Dalip Kumar, head of projects at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), a Delhi-based think tank, said the inflation rate turning negative would lead to hoarding of food commodities. "Demand is low. Traders will now begin hoarding and black marketing food items like fruits, vegetables and cereals. The government will have to take some steps,"

The Orissa State Prepares For The Monsoon: The Orissa state health and family welfare department has come out with an action plan to provide continuous emergency health service during the possible floods in the coming monsoon in the state. Government said round-the-clock control rooms will be opened at the district and block levels which will be in constant touch with the state-level control room functioning in the directorate of health services. Special steps will be taken for those health institutes, which may get affected by the flood and fail to provide services. An adequate number of medical relief camps will be opened in the shelter centres of flood-affected villages. Mobile medical units consisting of doctors and para-medical staffs will be kept ready to rush wherever they are required. Hospital staff from the non-affected areas will be engaged for the purpose and if necessary, staff from medical colleges and hospitals will also be deployed. The state government has also stressed on early collection and storage of medicines and other articles to be used in the flood period at various hospitals across the state. And for sure, ambulances have been readied. ■

5 June - World Environment Day

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Another resolution, adopted by the General Assembly the same day, led to the creation of UNEP.

Commemorated yearly on 5 June in more than 100 countries, WED is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action. The day's agenda is to give a human face to environmental issues; empower people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development; promote an understanding that communities are pivotal to changing attitudes towards environmental issues; and advocate partnership which will ensure all nations and peoples enjoy a safer and more prosperous future.

The theme for WED 2009 is 'Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate Change'. It reflects the urgency for nations to agree on a new deal at the crucial climate convention meeting in Copenhagen some 180 days later in the year, and the links with overcoming poverty and improved management of forests. This year's host is Mexico which reflects the growing role of the Latin American country in the fight against climate change, including its growing participation in the carbon markets. Mexico is also a leading partner in UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign.

There are 12 steps to unite to combat climate change. Whether you are an individual, an organization, a business or a government, there are a number of steps you can take to reduce your carbon emissions, the total of which is described as your carbon footprint. You may think you don't know where to begin, but by reading this, you have already begun.

1. Make a commitment: Reducing your carbon footprint is no different from any other task. Telling people you will reduce carbon emissions may seem simplistic, but even simple actions like announcing your commitment to going carbon neutral can be effective, while the simple act of asking for ideas can lead to creative and innovative solutions.

2. Assess where you stand: It is likely that carbon will eventually be judged as an atmospheric pollutant and regulated accordingly, with consequent costs—and opportunities—for all sectors of society. Knowing where and how you generate greenhouse gases is the first step to reducing them.

3. Decide and plan where you want to go: Based on your assessment of climate-related risks and opportunities, a strategy and action plan can be developed. A plan to reduce carbon emissions will first focus on the type of energy and the way it is used.

4. De-carbon your life: Buildings, fittings and equipment are all proxies for carbon; 'carbon copies' can be chosen based on the least amount of impact they will have on the climate.



Integrating climate friendly criteria into decision making can trigger a ripple effect.

5. Get energy efficient: Improving the efficiency of your buildings, computers, cars and products is the fastest and most lucrative way to save money, energy and carbon emissions. Energy efficiency is about increasing productivity but doing more with less.

6. Switch to low carbon energy: If possible, switch to energy sources that emit less carbon and can reduce costs and emissions.

7. Invest in offsets and cleaner alternatives: There is a limit to how much efficiency you can squeeze from your lifestyle or your organization's operations, or how much renewable energy you can employ. The choice for those who wish to compensate

for their remaining emissions is to fund an activity by another party that reduces emissions.

8. Get efficient: Looking at your life or business through a carbon neutral lens can help you in other ways by increasing the efficiency of resource use, avoiding and reducing waste and ultimately improving your overall performance and reputation. After all, carbon is generally the waste product of producing energy, and reducing waste and becoming more efficient is always a good idea. Integrate the 3R approach—reduce, reuse and recycle—into your thinking.

9. Offer—or buy—low carbon products and services: The market for climate friendly products and services is growing rapidly, from energy efficient products to new renewable energy systems.

10. Buy green, sell green: The market for green products and services is growing rapidly. In many countries consumer surveys report that growing numbers of consumers are willing to buy green products if given the choice.

11. Team up: Many private sector companies are increasingly working with non-governmental organizations, cities or governments to identify and implement best practice solutions to reduce emissions.

12. Talk: The increasing importance of climate change means that companies and organizations will need to communicate. Transparency is critical. The internet and other new media mean that companies, organizations and governments cannot hide behind green wash. This is where tools for verification and reporting guidelines with recognized indicators are critical. One example is the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (www.globalreporting.org). *(This is an abridged and adapted version of an original piece produced by UNEP for the UNEP/Sustainable Development International publication 'Climate Action' www.climateactionprogramme.org)*

Combating climate change and preserving ecosystems services that underpin our economies is an issue for everyone. Every individual's efforts, no matter how small, can contribute to the sustainable development of our economies and communities around the world. ■

“Communist Gandhi” Sundaraiah

Comrade par excellence is what comes to mind when we hear the name – ‘Puchalapalli Sundaraiah’. Though born into a rich landlord’s family, Sundaraiah worked all his life for the cause of the downtrodden and oppressed. He used all his inherited wealth for the cause of the poor. Sundaraiah worked tirelessly towards collectivizing the farmers, labourers and workers. Leading several movements, he gained invaluable insights on various issues related to the problems of the poor. A man of simple living and high thinking, Sundaraiah joins the rungs of great communist leaders in South India and is fondly referred to as Communist Gandhi.

Puchalapalli Sundaraiah was born on May 1st, 1913 in Alaganapadu village of Kovuru taluka in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. His parents gave him the name Venkata Sundara Ramireddy. At a very young age of 6, Sundaraiah lost his father. Even in his childhood, Sundaraiah was very observant of people in the village. He gained good insights about the conditions in the village, gained understanding of the village economy, agrarian relations, caste and class discriminations and status of male vs female in the society. Most of the farmers in his village belonged to the dominant Reddy community. They owned almost 70 per cent of the lands in that village. These rich farmers however seemed to have a very poor heart. The treatment they meted out to the wage laborers was highly unacceptable. The method of paying wages to the workers and the behaviour of the farmers deeply hurt Sundaraiah.



In 1929 when Sundaraiah was studying Intermediate in Madras Layola collage, he got interested to join the freedom movement. In early 1930s, he was attracted to the communist movements gaining momentum across India. After education, Sundaraiah went back to his village and formed agriculture labour union. He also commenced a primary school for the children of agriculture wage labourers’ and taught them. The exploitation of the local shopkeepers in the village disturbed Sundaraiah. Therefore he started a cooperative grocery shop in the village. Sundaraiah obstructed land occupations. He undertook movements to increase wages of the labourers. This movement spread to other villages also. Sundaraiah got requests from other villages to start wage labourer society. In this process, he faced lot of enmity from landlords. Initially Sundaraiah tried to convince the landlords about the payment of reasonable wages to the wage labourers for their work. To counter his force, the landlords made a secret plot to break the unity between Sundaraiah and wage labourers. But they failed in their plan.

Being a member of the Communist party and Congress Socialist party Sundaraiah worked diligently for the formation of the societies of farmers, labourers and youth.

The issue of canceling the resettlement of farmers in Nellore, Guntur, Krishna and West Godavari districts resulted in an agitation during 1936-37. Around the same time Sundaraiah started “farmers movement”. With the help of some of his friends, he sensitized and activated farmers in 1500 villages

from Ichapuram to Madras spreading over 1500 miles, and organized a ‘Rithu Rakshana’ rally. He conducted many farmers conferences to vociferously discuss the farmers problem. In 1944, a huge meeting was held in Vijayawada and nearly 100000 people attended this meeting. Under the leadership of Sundaraiah work was undertaken to de-silt Bandar canal. .

In 1948, under Sundaraiah’s leadership, Communist Party distributed unused lands in the state to the poorest of the poor. Thousands of livestock was also disbursed. The loans given to the poor by landlords, deshmukhs, money lenders were waived. Towards agricultural enhancement, people themselves started digging the canals and ponds. Gramarajya committees publicly announced equal rights to the women. In 1952 after general elections, Sundaraiah was elected from Madras Legislative Assembly to the Upper House of Parliament, Rajya Sabha. Serving as parliamentarian for 3 years, Sundaraiah aggressively highlighted the problems of the poor on the floor of the Parliament.

After the implementation of the first budget in the Parliament on 28th May in 1952, he gave an excellent post-budget speech. He told that plans should be made keeping in view the needs of the people and conditions of the market system in the country. According to Sundaraiah, If a country wants to be self sufficient the purchasing power of the consumer should be enriched. He clearly stated that those who plough the land should also be the owner of the land. Whenever discussions were held on land reforms, a strategic leader vociferously fighting for the cause of farmers manifested in Sundaraiah. In 1955, Sundaraiah was elected as the member of legislative assembly in the mid term elections. Sundaraiah was party to several plans made for the development of the state of Andhra Pradesh and for its bright future. When tidal waves hit coastal Andhra in 1977, Sundaraiah worked extensively to help the victims. He played a vital role in the establishment of People’s Hospitals.

In 1984 Sundaraiah visited China to take part in the activities of the communist party. In 1985, Sundaraiah breathed his last due to illness. Sundaraiah will be long remembered for his relentless efforts to ameliorate the conditions of the poor and the downtrodden. In spite of coming from a family of landlords family, his simple lifestyle and his dedication to the cause of the poor will continue to inspire people across. ■

The Kunnathukal Labour Bank

Job security and the higher social status attached to the membership of the Kunnathukal Labour bank has made more workers come forward to do agricultural work. Indiscriminate increase in labour wages and consequent shift of farmer to less labour-intensive crops and resultant falling in farm employment left everyone in a dire situation. However the efforts of Kunnathukal Labor Bank in Southern Kerala has proved that this situation can be reversed.

Since the mid 1970s, Kerala has set itself on the path of being a chronic food deficit State. Several factors including extreme fragmentation of land holdings, poor irrigation infrastructure, high production costs, low productivity and acute labour deficiency have made agriculture unprofitable and contributed to the deficit situation. Cultivation of rice and the staple food of its three crore people has been unprofitable. Kunnathukal in Southern Kerala is no different.

In Kunnathukal majority of landowners are small holders. With agriculture becoming unviable for most them they took up employment elsewhere and cultivation became their secondary livelihood. Most of them leased out their agricultural lands not because they were big landlords but because cultivation was increasingly becoming unprofitable, forcing them to look for low-paid unskilled jobs elsewhere. This caused wide spread poverty in many households.

In this context, in 1998 Kunnathukal Gram Panchayat embarked on finding a lasting solution to the crisis in agriculture in their region. As a part of People's Plan Campaign, the Kunnathukal Gram Panchayat started experimenting with alternatives. The Grama Sabhas convened in every ward as part of the campaign agreed that the trends noticed in the agriculture sector ought to be reversed if the people's livelihood was to improve. The solution lay in augmenting the income of the farmers and increasing the number of days of employment of the workers. Eventually, the experiments, which started initially in the name of 'Thozhil Sena' (Labor Army), culminated in the launching of the Kunnathukal Labor Bank in April 2000 as a society registered under the Charitable Societies Act.

The Kunnathukal Labour Bank in Southern Kerala is a different kind of bank altogether. More than 500 agricultural laborers of the village are the members. The bank guarantees not less than 20 days of employment every month to its members. It offers them the agricultural tools, machinery and training. Besides providing salary, they get a festival (Onam) bonus, an accident claim through groups insurance and a health card for concessional medical treatment. The payment is made in the form of monthly salaries. The salary depends on the work individual laborers did. In some cases, it is more than Rs.3000. The bank also provides workers credit coupons of various denominations to buy provisions at a village store, run by the women's self help group - 'Samata', formed under the auspices of the Gram Panchayat under the People's Plan Campaign. The customers of the Kunnathukal Labor Bank are the majority of farmers with small landholding, all in the Kunnathukal Gram Panchayat, which has a population of 33,648.

Kunnathukal Labor Bank also undertook "co-operative farming" for landowners. Any landowner in the village can

borrow from the bank, the services of its member laborers for cultivation of crops such as paddy, tapioca, coconut, plantain and vegetables. The "labor loan" need be repaid only after the harvest in the form of wages, with interest at 12.5 per cent. Farming operations in its entirety would be carried out diligently under the bank's supervision. The Labor Bank is also the implementing agency for all public works authorized by the Gram Panchayat, such as the renovation of irrigation tanks, the repair of roads and the construction of houses for the poor.

The Kunnathukal Labor Bank ensures timely availability of workers to the farmers, assures a minimum number of days work and a certain level of economic security and social status to the workers and helped reduce cost of production. According to Divakaran Nair, a worker and a member of the bank's "vigilance team" that reviews complaints said that initially there was a complaint that the new arrangement did not allow the farmer to choose the worker. "But to a worker, the main attraction is the assurance that all members will get a minimum of 20 days' employment in a month," he said. If farmers were allowed to choose workers, it would not have been possible for the bank to ensure this. "This bank, therefore, gives an assurance to the farmers on the quantum of work that each workers would do in a day. It has worked to everybody's advantage," he said. After the harvest season, in order to ensure the minimum number of days' work for its members, the bank undertakes public works on behalf of the Gram Panchayat.

The Kunnathukal Labor Bank has taken up farming on 211 ha of land, most of which was kept fallow. The change this has brought to paddy cultivation in the village is remarkable. According to Agricultural Officer K.G.Girish Kumar who along with former panchayat president Chandramati Amma, Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad activist Ravi Kumar and Vijayan has been a key figure in making the Labor Bank idea come true, in 1999-2000, 52 hectares of land was cultivated. Seventy per cent of the requests for labor force from the bank came from landowners who were either government employees or businessmen. In 1997, only 6 ha of land were under paddy and now it has doubled to 12 ha. For the first time in two decades, landowners returned to paddy cultivation without any compulsion. The Kunnathukal Labour Bank has thus found a win-win solution for both the farmers and farm workers through its interventions.

Somasekharan Nair, a traditional farmer, said that to people like him, the Kunnathukal Labor Bank primarily meant that an institutional mechanism was in place to make the required number of workers available "A farmer can now be sure that a certain amount of work would be completed within a specific period. The Kunnathukal Labor Bank has brought certain verve back into farming." ■

Be together! Collectivize!

Let us pray for reliable monsoon!

In the scorching Sun, missing monsoon and troubling Aila, we can not fault any body for ignoring international days – World Environment Day (5 June); World Day Against Child Labour (12 June); World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (17 June) etc., We may not even realize the day has passed - United Nations Public Service Day (23 June).

UPA firmly in the saddle! Meira Kumar joined as the third in troika of women – President, Head of Governing Coalition, Speaker! President unveiled 100-day plan of action of the Government. We are still awaiting them to announce their plan for the entire tenure of five years. They may not announce! Budget will give some hint of this.

It may be reiterated that it is time to really begin the processes of bottom-up planning, facilitating the people in their communities and neighborhoods to analyze their current reality/livelihoods situation, identify the gaps and opportunities and plan. These can be taken upwards for consolidation and developing district plans, state plans and national plan. To facilitate this and later extend support the communities, their organizations and the local governments to implement the plans, **25,000 development workers/professionals**, may be one for every 10,500 families can be identified with appropriate competencies that include strategic influencing, development orientation, results orientation, tenacity and self-control, and nurtured/mentored for this task. Further, **2.5 million development community leaders/animators** can be nurtured and made available to the communities.

A National Poverty Reduction, Food Security Act (as promised in the 100-day plan) and Universal Education Mission have to come immediately and improved National Employment Guarantee Act, Skill Development Mission, etc., have to work hand in hand.

Scaling-up the self-help movement in the entire country, collectivizing and facilitating the poor in realizing a better proportion of the consumer rupee and meta-skilling them for improving their livelihoods in the changing world on a national scale should be the key focus of the pro-poor agenda of the government(s).

One needs to think how the food security will be delivered. If the method is to procure food and supply to the poor, it can have disastrous consequences. The better method can be transferring the cash difference between the current market prices and the prices promised as the food security prices in the account of the family. NREGA needs to expand the scope to increase 100+ days per person rather than the family and should bring in occupational groups into the fold.

Again, let me say at the cost of repeating myself. In difficult times, exciting times, and challenging times, like the times NOW, one area of concern is sourcing and inducting the dominant talent - for development/livelihoods portfolio, it is people with development orientation and strategic



Perspectives

G. Muralidhar

influencing competencies. Second set of human resources that need to be identified and nurtured is the entrepreneurs from within the community. We should appreciate that the human beings are multi-dimensional and no one solution will suffice all.

Environment/natural resource management, collectives/cooperatives, and marginalized communities have been the main foci of the month.

Visiting cooperatives and knowing how they service the significant needs of their members sustainably has always inspired me. This time it is no different when we visited Mulkanoor and other CDF group of cooperatives, thrift and credit, dairy and other commodity cooperatives. Amidst the visits, we hear that the doyen of Indian Dairy Cooperatives, mentor par excellence, Dr Verghese Kurien was airlifted from Anand to Breach Candy Hospital in Mumbai. As of now, he is stable and progressing well, according to his daughter Nirmala. We are also hearing loud voices seeking Bharat Ratna for him. As his mentee, I think it does not really matter whether he gets this award or not for he transcended all this.

The month has also taken us to the collectives of high risk groups with multiple discriminations – trans-genders, sex workers and men having sex with men. The projects for them are providing clinical services and other support in the domain of health. Collectives have emerged to meet their identity, solidarity, mutual support and advocacy needs, apart from ensuring involvement and participation in these projects. Some of them are able to transact and be part of mainstream collective efforts to meet their livelihoods needs like savings, credit, employment, skills, insurance etc. Yet, some others are not able to meet some of these needs and are able to articulate them. Some of them are also articulating that they want to life with dignity if there are realizable alternatives.

Thinking about the fast-depleting natural resource rich tribal areas consisting of traditional local tribal communities (some of them being 'primitive tribal groups'), migrant tribal communities, scheduled caste communities, migrants and other mainstream population, always throws up a big question – why these areas are poor? What can be done

about them? Abundant land and good rainfall, self-supporting minimal maintenance life styles, do not explain the situation fully. What is the way forward? Is the education, alternative education a way out? Is the micro and small enterprises a way out? Is collectivization a way out? Communities in the margins have to be in the centre stage. This will happen with decentralization. This will happen with smaller units of governance. For example, Adilabad district has to be split into at least three districts, if not more. AP should have at least 40 districts, if not 42. India can have at least 50 states, if not 100.

Then, they may require development workers in large numbers that sit with the communities and help them to plan in their small groups, in their small habitations, in small panchayats, in small clusters, may be around markets/shandies, in mandals, in sub-districts and districts. One per 1000 families may be the need in tribal areas. Every 50-100 families may need an animator to work with them. Planning is the crux. Pedagogy to understand their reality and plan based on the reality within, gaps within and the opportunities outside is the crux.

All of us need to appreciate the processes of marginalization and realize that marginalization, many a time, is based on artificial constructs. Further we need to recognize that collectivization is a necessary element, but not sufficient, in reducing the impact of marginalization and reducing poverty, apart from education, no/low-cost public services and infrastructure. We need to acknowledge that some are potential entrepreneurs, some are potential self-employed service providers (individually and/or in groups), and some are potential job holders in enterprises or with the service providers. They need to be supported differently. Further, the poor cope with their risks through diverse portfolios of multiple livelihoods. We need to think 100 times before tearing apart this basic diversity fabric of theirs.

Yunus, the Nobel laureate, is convinced that social business, rather than charity, is the way to tackle social problems like reducing poverty and tackling marginalization. Should we take his opinion seriously or not? Interestingly, we cannot agree more with him when he says - social business, no matter what you say or do, is a matter of joy. This would mean all thinking and sensitive individuals, if intelligent, should migrate to social business. **Can we go whole hog in persuading more and more talent into social business? Recession is a better time to step up this persuasion. Is not it?**

It is acknowledged that Recession and Slowdown appears to be an opportunity to develop low cost solutions, build internal capacities and multiple skilled human talent, explore new avenues/opportunities and of course, draw the workers/professionals in mainstream organizations to look at alternative social businesses.

In social business, irrespective of its complexity and size, I understand, there are seven different managerial time horizons (or less), from 3 months to 20 years and corresponding seven levels of hierarchy. The people with a shorter time horizon treat next higher time horizon people as their superiors, and so on up the scale. It means, someone, with less than 3 month horizon, treats some other with 3-12 month horizon as the boss. This theory is known as 'requisite organization'.

Typically, social businesses start small, may be on a pilot scale, and want to scale-up later. Being used to organic growth in development domain, scaling up a social business is different cup of tea but an exciting and challenging proposition. Getting social venture capital is critical but just one part of it. While by now, microfinance-based business could be simplified and standardized, robust business models evolved and large doses of private venture equity attracted, the other social business areas are in their formative stages because of their diversity and complexity. Other critical parts of scaling-up process include attracting right talent, deploying appropriate technology, developing marketing strategy and sales function, and having meaningful controls. More than anything, while the entrepreneurs and managements have a concept that is scalable, they need to be ambitious and capable. **Can we identify and mentor them?**

A recent idea, of social entrepreneurs in and around Hyderabad, of getting and being together as a network to support each other and to identify and mentor more and more social entrepreneurs of potentially scalable social businesses, is a step in the right direction.

Thus, the poor have to be organized and their collectives have to engage themselves in the businesses that matter to them. Their leaders have to have big picture and have the ability to manage the talent that works for them. The development workers and the development animators have to be built as a development cadre and be available to the communities to help them to plan up for collectivization and realization of better lives for them. The unemployed and under-employed within them have to be skilled and meta-skilled for realizing better and decent wages than today on a long-term basis. The entrepreneurial amongst them have to be spotted, nurtured and supported for becoming entrepreneurs and build enterprises that provide jobs and/or manage the collective enterprises. The social entrepreneurs, through their social businesses, have to specially focus on the above and help **communities to be together and collectivize in multiple ways** on one hand and ensure availability of products and services the community needs on the other hand at a scale that makes a significant difference.

Can we not invest in identifying and building these for the community? Should not we?

Now is the TIME.

Of course, it is not new. There is already a trickle, may be in small streams. We need to scale them up into rivers. We, those of us within us who have realized this, need to take responsibility to lead, inspire and mentor individuals, ideas, initiatives, interventions and institutions to build pilots, leaders, relationships, levers and legacy - because we love life; because we love communities to have decent livelihoods that do not eat into the capital of next generations; because we want to learn and disseminate the learning; because **we belong together**. Of course, for sure, we have reasons to believe that we live the change we are articulating, and walk the talk.

Can we exhaust ourselves in this? It takes time, energy and dogged persistence. It can be extremely tiring and frustrating. Yet let us get going, as we are optimists to the core! ■

Wage Labour

More than 70% of the people in India depend on wage labour for their livelihood. Of this per cent large majority of them are employed in the unorganized sector in both farm and non-farm activities in rural and urban areas. Most of them are illiterate, low or unskilled, low paid and have poor access to resources and information. But this force contributes to more than 60% of India's GDP. Thus they remain deprived of their due share. 'livelihoods' attempts to understand the some of the dynamics associated with this large section of workforce - wage labourers...



Any person who lives mainly by selling his/her labour power to an employer for a wage is considered as a wage labourer. S/he may or may not have assets like land and even if they have such assets income generated from them will usually be less than the income one gets from selling labour power. Therefore such persons are also considered to be wage labourers. Based on this categorization, in India, more than 70% can be considered as wage labourers. This reveals enormity of their population, a strong force to reckon with and a challenge posed to the policy makers, development professionals and social transformation activists.



Wage labour is largely concentrated in the unorganized/informal sector including agriculture, handloom, fishing, construction, infrastructure sector, handicrafts, beedi rolling, domestic workers, self-employed petty enterprises etc. Many of them are illiterate, unskilled and low paid, occupying the



lower economic rungs in the country. Even with a cursory look one can understand the mind-boggling diversity of the activities in which wage labour is connected. Wage labour constitutes an important part of both rural as well as urban workforce. Though most of them constitute unorganized and informal workforce, they cater to the multiple needs of the workforce in the organized work sectors.

According to the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, “Unorganized/Informal employment consists of casual and contributing family workers, self-employed persons in unorganized sectors and private households; and other employed in organized and unorganized enterprises not eligible for paid sick or annual leave or for any social security benefits given by the employer”. In India nearly 93%

of the total workforce of 460 + million belongs to the unorganized/informal sector. Of this 93% unorganized workforce, about 55% are self-employed, 13% constitute regular workforce and 32% casual workforce. These workers contribute to more than 60 per cent to India’s GDP growth, 68 per cent of income, 60 per cent of savings, 31% of agricultural exports and 41% of manufactured exports. As per the estimates of National Sample Survey 2005, one-third of the informal sector workforce comprises of women. Child labour, as a proportion of the workforce, has steadily declined with rising school enrollments though it are still large – 1.3 million in 2001 – with high visibility, as it is concentrated in selected industries and locations, often producing goods for export.

Much of the wage labour emanates from Indian agriculture sector. However, due to the ongoing crisis in agriculture sector, most of the small and marginal farmers as well as large number of agricultural labourers are barely able to eke out a living. The crisis is more vivid in the case of dry-land agriculture. Rural artisans like weavers, potters, carpenters, black smiths etc traditionally dependent on farming community, basically producing goods or services required for farmers are now forced to move out of their occupations. Distant and dynamic markets, competition from new and big players and other influences of globalization is transforming many into wage labourers. The traditional small players are not able to market their small quantities of produce in the distant markets and therefore are moving away from their traditional occupations. As they have no other marketable skills and have less opportunity to learn new skills, these people are also joining the bandwagon of wage labour.

Percentage Distribution of Workers	Rural (93-94)	Rural (04-05)	Urban (93-94)	Urban (04-05)	Total (93-94)	Total (04-05)
Farmer, Fisherman, Hunters, Loggers and Related Workers	76.1	69.5	26.6	25.5	57	52.1
Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators and Labourers	13.0	17.3	22.5	22.1	14.3	16.5
Sales Workers	4.3	5.2	15.7	15.5	8.1	8.5
Professional, Technical and Related Workers	2.1	2.5	5.1	5.4	2.8	3.1
Service Workers	2	2.4	20.9	21.4	10.8	11.7
Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	0.9	1.7	3.4	5.4	4.4	5.9
Clerical and Related Workers	1.5	1.4	5.9	4.8	2.6	2.3
Others	0.03	0.03	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

About NREGA

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) passed in 2005 is being implemented across India with the aim to increase the number of employment days of the rural poor. Under the Act each rural poor household is guaranteed at least 100 days of work in a year. The works undertaken include constructing bunds, roads and such other works to improve village infrastructure. The Act provides for giving statutory minimum wages, legal entitlements to workers on working hours, rest, drinking water in place of work, first aid facilities, some risk coverage etc. The Act also forbids the use of contractors in the works. Usage of machinery is also not encouraged where feasible.

The Act is being implemented in various states with varying degrees of success. Apart from providing employment NREGA is also serving other objectives such as generating productive assets, empowering rural women, fostering social equity etc. However, issues like engaging contractors, using machinery, delay in issue of job cards, providing more than one job card to a single family, delays in payments, payments of less than the minimum wages, and absence of work site facilities etc have come to the fore. Many states did not succeed in providing all the 100 days of employment.

Overall, NREGA claims to have increased the bargaining power of the rural wage labour. This, as it may sound good from the point of view of the wage labour, it has proved costly for the small and marginal farmers. Shortage of labour and high cost of labour where available is making agriculture an expensive proposition for the small and marginal farmers. As per the Act works should be provided to the rural poor in agriculture lean season but this rule is being flouted in many areas. Therefore, either providing for 100 days of employment strictly during non-agriculture season and/or evolving mechanisms to link NREGA works with the labour needs of small of marginal farmers may give some relief.

One of the objectives of NREGA is to slow down migration of the rural poor into urban centers in search of work. Whether this objective has been achieved or not is a matter of debate particularly in the changing context where income from migration is becoming a significant part of the earnings portfolio of the poor. Further, World Bank in its 2009 report says that mobility of labour is a yardstick of development. In Indian context, improving rural infrastructure relating to health, education, storage, agro-processing and others that will improve the quality of life of the rural folks can be aggressively pursued. At least this may considerably slow down distress/push migration.

One other lacuna in NREGA is that though the Act created a good avenue for employment, it has not created opportunities for people to graduate out of unskilled work. There is hardly any scope for the labour to learn new skills. Trainings and skill building can be add-on components of the Act.

The second largest workforce in the rural areas can be seen in the handloom sector. Competition from non-handloom textiles, constrained access to market for the weavers and other factors has created a vacuum in this sector for quite some time now. Many weavers are today working as labourers on their own looms. Being cash-poor coupled with limited access to credit, the weaver is not in a position to invest money for buying yarn and colours etc. thus creating fertile conditions for depending on a master weaver both for supply of inputs as well as for marketing his finished products. The weaver weaves clothes as per the specifications of the master weavers for which the weaver will be paid wage based on the number of pieces s/he make or the number of days of work on the loom for production. These wages are so low that the producer of the cloth does not even get 30% of the consumer rupee.

The situation is no different in the case of the fishing community. Most of the poor fishermen who cannot afford to buy a good mechanized boat and fishing nets work as wage labourers on big boats and trawlers. In spite of having the skill to fish and greater appetite for risk, the fisherman is being reduced to being a fishing labourer. Lack of access to cheap credit in many areas seems to be the key culprit.

Significant number of workers, either to make their ends meet or to earn some surplus money during non-agricultural season or otherwise, are increasingly travelling from rural areas to semi-urban and urban areas in search of work. Income from migration has become a significant component in the earnings portfolio of the rural poor household. Having left their traditional occupation and not having alternative skills, most of them are taking up unskilled labour works.

Construction sector is the one sector that absorbs more wage labour after agriculture. Apart from construction we can find wage labour mostly in transport, hotel and retail sectors.

The woes of migrant labour are innumerable. Individuals or families engaged in construction labour are continuously moving from one construction site to the other. Because of





this continuous migration, they live a very low quality of life without proper housing, water and sanitation facilities. They are unable to enroll their children into schools and these children end up as labourers at these construction sites. Unable to establish their identity at the migration site, they are not able to access any government schemes like PDS etc. Most of the construction labourers depend on a master who search work for all the labour in his group. Hence their ability to find work heavily depends on these masters who exploit the labourers by giving them very less wages. Moreover women workers face lot of sexual exploitation from their masters.

Where migrant labour has left families behind in the villages, the responsibility and vulnerability of women and the elderly has increased largely.

While the organized workers enjoy steadily rising wages, improved working conditions and above all job security, it leads to excessive capital intensity. Unorganized workers, on the other hand, suffer from below subsistence level of wages, and abysmal working conditions with practically no income or social security. In short, wages are "too low" and employment too scarce and insecure. Most of the wage labour is insecure of employment. Employment is highly seasonal. In lull seasons, they migrate to other places in search of work. They live in very harsh conditions in the migrated area and their children are left with no education and no opportunities to learn any skills other than what their parents are doing.

The situation of the workforce in the urban informal sector seems to be somewhat better than their rural counterparts particularly in terms of their earnings and diverse employment opportunities. However, though wages in the urban informal sector are marginally higher than those in rural areas, they are still much lower than the wages in the urban organized sector. Further, the unskilled work done by wage labourers involves lot of risk but they have minimal to no awareness of any risk reduction strategies and/or risk coping mechanisms. Many of them work in hazardous conditions but still unable to demand their employers to provide any safety nets.

The wages of urban unorganized workers vary significantly depending on their skills, occupations, experience and location. With the spread of infrastructure, growing market based relationships between the organized and urban informal sectors are discernible that could potentially lower the entry barriers in labour intensive industries and services, giving rise to opportunities for acquisition of new skills, enhancement of existing skills and for self-employment.

Since, large number of the workforce possesses no skills or training suited to the dynamic market their chances to take up alternative employment are bleak. Also, socially, a large number of the unorganized workers belong to the oppressed and exploited sections including scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. They are not organized and do not have strong platforms/leaders to fight for their rights. Because of all these reasons their economic lot has failed to improve even after five decades of planning.





Indian State has made legislations to protect wage labourers from exploitation. One such is the Minimum wages Act. The Minimum Wage Act, 1948 provides for fixation and enforcement of minimum wages in respect of schedule employments to prevent sweating or exploitation of labour through payment of low wages. The Act requires the appropriate government to fix minimum rates of wages in respect of employment specified in the schedule and review and revise the minimum rates of wages at intervals not exceeding five years. In September 2007, the national minimum floor level wage was increased to Rs 80 per day for all scheduled employments from Rs 66 in 2004. However, in agriculture, as the production is decentralized and geographically dispersed, government has little ability to effectively administer the minimum wage laws. Even where it is possible (as in urban industrial sector), enforcement of the laws is not easy, as most of the employment contracts are informal, difficult to be verified by courts. Moreover, due to illiteracy, workers have little knowledge of their rights; even if they do, they are too poor to seek redress from administration or courts. In a situation of excess labour, possession of a job is probably of far greater value than to seek officially mandated minimum wages for it. Moreover they are not organized enough to question this exploitation.

Though wage labour constitutes a significant number they are highly heterogeneous lot in terms of the occupations they are engaged in. Therefore it is great challenge to organize them. There are no simple solutions, easy methods to organize these people and help improve their lot. Bringing them closer to rights, upgrading their skills,

providing new skills, scaling up of their activities, building support systems and institutions, providing them with risk coverage, developing solidarity networks, providing credit at cheaper rates of interest, improving working conditions, cooperative farming, sensitizing and influencing the civil society organizations, law makers, state machinery and corporates etc. are some of the diverse approaches and strategies that one needs to take into account.

We need to develop strategic objectives and sector specific objectives and corresponding programs to achieve them. There are issues of wage labourers which can be addressed only by central government. There are certain new laws to be promulgated and old laws to be strictly implemented to protect the interests of wage labourers. There are certain issues which civil society organizations such as political parties, advocacy groups, media, and human rights organizations need to take up on a priority basis. We need to identify and bring such issues into the agenda of above said organizations.

There are issues not only of basic needs like food, shelter but also things related to quality of life like health, education, leisure etc. Apart from wage hike, there are issues related to productive assets. How can we convert wage labourer into an owner or member of producer collective? There are some welcoming trends like NREGA, insurance cover for workers, social security for unorganized sector workers, welfare boards for construction workers etc. How can we improve upon them and expand should be the question of our concern. ■

‘Success will come. If it is not today, tomorrow it will be ours’

One man from Biriyanipeta village, Srikakulam Mandal, Srikakulam District, struggled as a daily-wage labour with many jobs to lead his and his family's life. His situation however ameliorated after he became the Vice-Sarpanch in his village. This man is Reddy Papaiah and "livelihood" had a chance to talk with him and present his perspectives....

Question: What is your name?

Answer: I am Reddy Papaiah.

Q: Please tell me about yourself?

A: I belong to Biriyanipeta village, Srikakulam Mandal, Srikakulam district. Since I was born, I am residing in this village only. At present I am 52 years old. My family includes my wife and one son and two daughters.

Q: Can you tell us about your childhood?

A: I am the youngest of my three brothers. In my in my family, I was very much interested in studies. In 1972, our family faced lot of economical problems. Therefore I had to discontinue my education after 10th class because of my inability to pay the examination fees. At the same time, there was a strike in the state of Andhra Pradesh. This disrupted the school and classes were boycotted. Since then, I could not continue my studies.

Q: What about your marriage?

A: My mother was suffering from cancer. After knowing about her situation I decided to get married early. I got married in 1983. We have 3 children, 2 girls and 1 boy. Not long after my marriage, my parents died. Both Mother and Father died at the same time.

Q: Then what happened after your parents died?

A: Me and my siblings shared the joint property. I got 80 cents consisting of 30 cents wet land and 50 cents dry land. Income from this land was enough to cover only 60 percent of our living costs. I worked as labourer to cover the rest of the expenses.

Q: What about your wife, is she helping you to cover the family cost?

A: My wife is not able to help me in this aspect. She also ill. My family depends entirely on me. After having three children life became more tough. My income was not sufficient to cover the living cost. I got muscle pains. The situation became even more difficult because every time I tried to work for small jobs to earn more money, I was hurting.

Q: How long did you live in this situation?

A: Me and my family lived in this situation until 1985. I took up many kind of jobs to cover our living costs. And in 1985, Food Corporation of India started the building construction at Amudalavalasa. I got the job as a daily wage labor there.



Q: What about your family's situation after you got that job?

The family situation got better. I started earning Rs.15000 per annum. This income covered all family expenses including education and health.

Q: How long you worked for Food Corporation of India construction work?

A: I worked there for three years, until 1987.

Q: After that, what kind of job did you get into?

A: Food Corporation of India was implementing the construction work under the DPS (Direct Payment System). It appointed 35 members that was working as permanent workers. Because of that, daily wage labors got only 2 or 3 months work. Again, my family faced financial problems and again I started to worked on whatever job that I can do.

Q: What job did you take this time?

A: I worked as agent for Sahara India. The situation did not turn so well but at least the living cost was covered. But then, not long after that, I became the Vice Sarpanch.

Q: What made you get the Vice-Sarpanch position?

A: I got elected as a ward member in Gram Panchayat and at the same time I got the Vice-Sarpanch position. Since then, the situation become better. I paid all my debts and I also got a house of one Lakh worth.

Q: What about the your children's education?

A: I always tried to continue my children's education. I did not want them to face the same difficulties like I did. I want my children at least to study till degree. I joined them in to a private school. However when our economic situation became difficult, I failed to continue my elder daughter's education. She dropped at intermediate. But now, my son and younger daughter are studying degree. Also, my elder daughter has learned tailoring and she makes some money with her skill.

Q: What lessons did you get from your life?

A: Yes. Man always wants to reach a good position in life and no one should cultivate bad habits. I also wanted to lead a good life. I would not get jealous about someone reaching higher positions.. I am satisfied with my current situation. Success will come. If it is not today, tomorrow it will be ours.

Salt Farming Value Chain

Salt is the most commonly used item in the food consumed by the human beings. Its scientific name is Sodium Chloride (NaCl). Making salt from sea water is very much similar to agriculture and hence it is called salt cultivation. As salt is universally consumed by everyone irrespective of their economic status, it has strategic and emotional importance. The importance for the hinterland was such that a Minister was appointed for salt during the Mauryan period (324-301 BC). The importance of 'Salt Satyagraha' in India's freedom struggle needs no introduction.

Salt is produced from the sea water by solar evaporation method. The great scientist Beauma introduced this method. The quantity of salt extracted from the sea water is purely based on the salinity of the water and is directly proportional to the salinity.

India is the third largest salt producing country in the world (after the US and China) with an average annual production of about 148 lakh tones. Sea salt constitutes about 70% of the total salt production in the country. Salt manufacturing activities are carried out in the coastal states of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa, West Bengal, Goa and Rajasthan. Among these states Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan produce 70 per cent, 15 per cent and 12 per cent of salt respectively of the total salt produced in the country and cater to the requirement of all salt deficit and non-salt producing states.

The subject of salt production comes under the purview of Salt Commissioner, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion), Government of India. This commissionerate is responsible for policy formulation with respect to salt, leasing of lands earmarked for salt production and implementation of various schemes. The 'Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute' conducts research into various aspects of salt farming.

Salt is used both for human consumption and industrial processes. Industries directly related to food that use salt are the producers of iodized salt, pickles, biscuits, bread,



snacks, ready made food items, hotel industry and fast food industry. Salt is used in several industrial processes. The industries which use salt in their processes include Rice Boilers (to add in rice), Dairy plants (cleaning of cans and chilling plants) solvent extraction units, animal feed makers, leather industry, pharmaceuticals, textile manufacturers, cement industry, fertilizers, tooth pastes, soaps and detergents, tobacco companies, fish ponds etc.

Private sector plays a dominant role contributing over 95% of the salt production, while the public sector contributes about 2-3%. The co-operative sector contributes about 8% whereas the small-scale sector (less than 10 acres) accounts for nearly 40% of the total salt production in the country.

Salt is cultivated on government lands, that are leased out. But a few large lessees control a vast area of the salt farms, to the disadvantage of smaller farmers. In a village on the coast of Tamil Nadu it is observed that out of the total 754 lessees, only 6 are major lessees and control nearly 60% of the land. The remaining 748 are minor lessees who control less than 2 acres of land each. This great disparity in land distribution is a continuation of the British legacy and nothing much has changed even after independence.

Inputs	Pre-production	Production	Marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Motor ◆ Power supply ◆ Platforms ◆ Wood slates ◆ Water ◆ Labor ◆ Baskets ◆ Bags ◆ Plastic pipes ◆ Toddy leaves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dividing lands in to two parts ◆ Leveling the canal and pouring salt water along with partitioned land ◆ Construction of small wall using the clay around the partition ◆ Pur water in to partitioned land, land leveling, removing water, adding salt to the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pump water from the bore well in to the partitions ◆ After water converts to brine, let it into smaller partitions ◆ Start collecting salt and depositing it on the nearby platform ◆ Clean the salt from mud residues by pouring water ◆ Drying the salt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lifting the sand into gunny bags ◆ Transporting the salt to the premises of the agent ◆ Selling salt to the middlemen

The lives and livelihoods of hundreds of small farmers and thousands of wage labor are critically dependent on this sector. Wage laborers in salt sector face inhuman working conditions and discriminatory wage rates apart from the various health problems, which are common to all. The salt workers are categorized as casual, contract and seasonal. All the labor engaged in salt farming struggle to meet their basic needs like food, water and shelter etc. Their wages range from Rs 80/- to Rs 100/- per day depending on their skill and capacity. Among the salt workers, 70% are men and the rest are women.

The salt labor is a seasonal work, which commences in January and continues up to July. Generally, the laborers take advance from the owner of the salt farm. Therefore, they are bonded to the owner and have to be available every day at the salt farm for work. If they do not have work, then they go home. Thus, this is more like casual labor in the industrial establishments.

Since salt manufacturing is an activity requiring skill, most of the laborers lose their job after preliminary operations such as forming the crystallized bed, formation of bed, bunds etc. The other labor also find it difficult to lead their life after the salt cultivation season is over. During the months of August to December, all the labor is idle without any earnings. The salt workers have no other alternative, except to do salt manufacture related work and so their livelihood is vulnerable. Despite the fact that these laborers are crucial for the existence of the salt industry, their livelihood is insecure and their life expectancy is also affected by the adverse and hazardous working conditions to which this industry pays less attention.

The salt manufacturers mainly depend on sea and bore water. In the summer season, sea water gives good quality crystal salt. After producing the salt the big farmers follow the process of iodination. Only the major lessees take up this process. The produced salt is sold through different channels. Major quantity of salt is sold through middlemen. Some quantity is sold to local fish processing plants in the nearby areas.



Major quantity of salt is sold through middlemen. Some quantity is sold to local fish processing plants in the nearby areas.

Gaps in salt manufacturing:

- ♦ The farmers are facing problems in storing the salt. Especially the minor lessees don't have proper storage platforms and sheds. Hence, they sell salt at lower price.
- ♦ There is no internal road links for transporting salt from the pans
- ♦ Small salt farmers are dependent on the money lenders for working capital requirement, which adversely affects the price of the salt.
- ♦ Simple value addition like iodination is not practiced by small farmers (due to small scale production and high investment cost of machinery and lack of proper

institution for collective action in this regard).

- ♦ Manufacturers face the problems of transportation. There is no rail connectivity to transport the salt to other states, while transportation by road is costly.



Gaps in salt labor:

- ♦ Lack of skills relating to other livelihoods
- ♦ Dependency on land owner is high for consumption loans.
- ♦ Absence of representation/ association for labor.
- ♦ Inadequate water intake by the labor severely injures the renal system. Working in the salt pans results in premature retirement from the work due to sickness.

Interventions in salt manufacturing:

- ♦ Providing storage facility along with arrangements to meet consumption needs and facility to repay existing loans can increase the holding capacity of the farmers and enable them to wait for a good price.
- ♦ The supply channels feeding sea water to the area under salt cultivation are silted. De-silting is the need of the hour to maintain adequate water supply to the salt pans.
- ♦ Storage in the field is the major problem for the minor lessees. Storage could help the manufacturers to sell their produce when the prices increase.
- ♦ Due to lack of internal roads, manufacturers are facing problems in lifting the salt from fields. Internal roads have to be provided in the fields.
- ♦ By investing in small iodination plants, which are available at a lesser price, the smaller farmers can benefit by getting a higher price for their salt.

Interventions for salt farmers:

- ♦ To work out the group insurance for the entire salt labor family with the help of salt commissioner.
- ♦ Work out the EPF for salt lessees with the help of EPF commissioner. This will help in providing pensions for the workers.
- ♦ To supply and to educate the labor on safety equipment like goggles, gum boots, gloves for hand and a hat. It would reduce the health problems.
- ♦ Provide loan to take lease of salt pan for cultivation.
- ♦ Providing them sufficient skills that can give them some employment in off seasons. ■

Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union

Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU) has been working at the grass roots level to promote land rights, wages, employment programs, and sustainable economic alternatives in collaboration with other mass organizations to ensure the rights of agriculture workers and marginal farmers.

Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU) is a state federation of agricultural workers, rural workers and marginal farmers' unions in Andhra Pradesh. It is a federation of 354 mandal level trade unions of agricultural labourers, rural workers and marginal farmers spread over in 15 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The current member Of APVVU is 4,75,000. Adivasi associations based in 9 districts and shepherd unions from 2 districts are associate members of the union. At the operational level, there are 354 mandal level cadre, 15 district secretaries one state general secretary & state gender secretary and secretary for national coordination works full time for the union.

APVVU is a first registered state level federation in the state of Andhra Pradesh under trade union Act of 1926. The union came into existence in the year 1991 and formed as fully fledged federation at state level is in 1998.

APVVU came into being to pursue the following objectives:

- ♦ To launch various campaigns with in Andhra Pradesh and also in India to combat the negative implications of globalization on agriculture, peasants and workers
- ♦ To promote the struggles of agricultural workers and marginal farmers to take control over the natural resources – land, water and forests in their localities to contribute to its development.
- ♦ Protect and promote the rights of Dalits, gender equity struggles, Adivasis, artisans & rural workers, agricultural workers and marginal farmers in the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- ♦ Promote the collective working culture among other social movements and agricultural workers unions both within the state and at all India level.
- ♦ Advocacy, lobby with the state and national elected representatives for the new legislations on health and safety; National Minimum Wage policy; Umbrella Legislation for un-organized; Comprehensive Agricultural Labourers Act; Employment Guarantee Act, & right to information
- ♦ To educate and promote Dalits participation in rights assertion to eradicate untouchability practice and implementation of SC & ST(POA) Act.
- ♦ Join hands with other mass movements both nationally, and internationally to struggle against WTO and its negative implication on agriculture and labour sector

APVVU is a democratically evolved people's organization where everybody comes from peasant background as agricultural workers or small and marginal farmers. The

elected leadership are also from similar such background though for time being they don't directly work on the fields. The Committee leaders, mandal leaders, district and state leaders are elected from the local unions. This makes APVVU a 100% people's organization. The functions of mandal unions are coordinated by 287 secretaries, at the district level coordination is by 13 district Secretaries and at state level there is the the leadership of one General Secretary and one Gender Secretary. There is one coordinator for the national & international relationships along with raising necessary resource for the campaigns.

APVVU main goal is to organize the unions for economic rights. But there are many issues that APVVU works to put on the agenda to bring the members to a better condition with their economic rights.

One of the issues is land. Agricultural workers, tenants and marginal farmers are the rightful owners of the land. The Indian Land Reform laws advocate redistribution of land. Despite two rounds of land reform legislations in India the surplus land acquired and distributed among rural poor has been less than 2% of the total cultivated area, whereas the extent of land redistribution in other Asian countries has been 43% in China, 37% in Taiwan, 32% in South Korea and 33% in Japan.

Besides land, the agricultural workers in India get under wage in spite of Minimum Wages Act being in force where revision of wage rate happens once in every half-decade. In India there are more than 320 million people earning their bread by working as agricultural workers and they live below poverty line. Due to advent of green revolution, introduction of hi-tech methods of agriculture, the agricultural workers are pushed out of the employment reducing to 110 working days in a year. As a result hunger deaths and suicidal deaths are increasing year after year. Even after 52 years of independence, there is no law which covers the security of this labour force.

Moreover, the gap between the wages earned by men and women is significant. And made the labourers to believe that women should not be equally earning with men. The women carry 65% of agricultural operations but they are paid less than the men for the same work. Seasonal migration also has become regular phenomena particularly every summer. And another issue is the implementation of Tenancy Act. As per the law, the tenants and the landowners should get 3:1 ratio respectively but in reality, it is exactly in reverse side.

Dalit discrimination and gender issues are also the issues that APVVU has on its agenda. The discrimination against Dalits has been perpetuated everyday in every village in many forms. In fact, agricultural workers are comprised of

70% of Dalits and there is no way the union can afford to leave the task of tackling these issues when we are talking about empowerment of the agricultural labourers. As well, women from agricultural sector carry on 65% of agricultural operations. Women are the best resource managers though they are paid less. The women in Agriculture sector face the problems of patriarchal culture and values, caste discrimination and the economic exploitation. Therefore, women are exploited in thrice.

Since its inception, APVVU has made many efforts on many activities and the work is still going on.

APVVU is fighting for land distribution. The union worked on village wise data collection on the details of land alienation and pending land disputes and then they compiled and categorized the total land particulars throughout the state. The union also developed the posters, pamphlets and educational materials on the land issue to educate and to get the solidarity of the people in local level. APVVU also used press and media to take the issue to the general public in order to get their support. This union also decided to launch land appropriation struggles in a systematic manner to reclaim the land while taking necessary and non-violent steps to restore the land rights.

APVVU is campaigning for comprehensive agricultural workers Act. APVVU used posters and pamphlets to educate the people regarding the bill and need for the Act. It also organized district wise seminars, rallies, public meetings to highlight above the issue. Mandal wise mass programmes has been organized demanding the government to introduce the bill. And the networking among the unions both within and outside of the state was organized to chalk out common action to pressurize the government.

APVVU demands the minimum and equal wages. In this context, the role of the union is at two levels one is educating the workers about the minimum wages and demand the state to consider agriculture work as a skilled work. To actualize this, the union struggles for wage hikes in every peak season of work by using pamphlets and wall writings with propaganda strategy. The union also demands the state to consider agricultural workers as skilled workers by way of post-card campaign and demanded the state to fix the minimum wage.

APVVU is working on implementation of Tenancy Act. To achieve this implementation, APVVU formed area wise networks within the union to pressurize local authorities in entering the names of tenant farmers in government records and pressurized landlords to make agreements with the sharecroppers on the agreeable rules between them to execute the share cropping method. Moreover, the union works on negotiated, pressurized and demanded strategies that have to be evolved to demand for the increase the share according to the law.

APVVU continuously put efforts to abolish untouchability practices and monitoring atrocities against Dalits. Related to this issue, the agricultural workers union at mandal level involves in education, motivation and organizing Dalits and agricultural laborers together to work against the discrimination. The State level union has been focusing on this issue by launching campaigns at state level and also joining hands with national level interventions. Further the state union has been instrumental in monitoring

the atrocities and providing timely support in terms of legal and representation to the state and S.C. and S.T. Commission.

APVVU is struggling on Gender issues. The union stands to protect and promote gender rights not only among the members of the union and also in the society at large. The union has incorporated the demands of land ownership in the names of women with 70% of the land appropriated are assigned in the name of women. Housing programme and development programmes should be sanctioned for women and women should have equal access to common property resources. Furthermore, children both girls and boys should be given equal preference in the family and also resources and education while to abolish child labour and bonded child labour are in the first place of the union's demand about children.

From all activities that APVVU has been done, below are some retrospective experiences:

- ♦ Land appropriation & distribution among landless - so far 150,000 acres appropriated and distributed in the names of women
- ♦ Release & rehabilitate bonded labour - 16,000 labors released over a period of one decade
- ♦ Negotiate for minimum & equal wages - this has made a culture among the unions to demand and negotiate for wages in every season.
- ♦ Conducted survey on 58 forms of untouchability practice in 4432 villages of 11 districts of AP and submitted to Justice Punnaiah commission
- ♦ Build networks/alliances between the mass organizations, which are working against WTO, Britain Wood Companies and against the neo-liberal policies of globalisation. Also, led struggles against World Bank anti-people funding projects, engaging the campaigns against WTO demanding, "India quit WTO and World Bank Quit India".

APVVU is not only active in India but it is also participating at international level. P. Chennaiah on behalf APVVU, presented *Struggles of Landless Agricultural Workers* on the launching of CAWI (Coalition of Agricultural Workers International) on Dec, 2005 in Penang, Malaysia. This union also the key participants in the People's Caravan on Food Sovereignty and the People's Convention on Food Sovereignty People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS). APVVU also affiliates to IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations). Together with other 21 The Asian Peasant Coalition (APC) countries, APVVU observing October 16, 2006 is observing October 16 as the World 'Foodless' Day as food crisis remain an enormous predicament of countries whose governments act in contrast of the interests of the people and in favor of U.S. imperialism, local big landlords and traders.

APVVU has provided the much needed common platform for a large section of people engaged in diversified occupations of the unorganized sector. A commendable fete indeed! The platform provided space for the poor and marginal sections of the society to voice their concerns and get their issues addressed. APVVU has created a model that many trade unions can explore and adopt. ■

Apples

Apples are by far the world's favorite fruit. They contain modest amounts of nearly all essential nutrients, there by resulting in the age old saying of 'an apple a day, keeps the doctor away'. The global apple production is about 450 lakh tones. 71% of which is consumed fresh while 20% is processed into value added products and about 9% into other products like packed natural apple juice, cider, jams, dried apple products etc.

China, not surprisingly, is the largest producer of the apples in the world with a production of about 200 lakh tones, which is equivalent to the combined production of nine top apple-producing countries of the world. The average per capita consumption of fresh apples in Europe is estimated to be about 23 Kg, as compared to about 2-3 kg in India. In India, it is essentially the upper sections of our society that consume apples on a regular basis. India is the ninth largest producer of the apples in the world with the production of about 13 lakh tones per year. However, 4,500 tones of apple juice concentrate are produced per annum which amounts to 0.64% of the global production. Of the 13 lakh tons of apples produced in India, 58% comes from the state of Jammu and Kashmir, 29% from the state of Himachal Pradesh, 12% from Uttarakhand and 1% from our North Eastern states.

In Himachal Pradesh, apple was introduced by the British in the Kullu valley as far back as 1865.

However the colored delicious variety was introduced to the Shimla hills in 1917 by an American named Satya Nand Stokes. This variety, including all its sub-varieties, has been the main cause of the economic change experienced by the modern & progressive apple growers of Himachal.

There are six major problems faced by Apple growers:

1. The unavailability of CA storages. The harvesting of apples in Himachal begins around the 20th of July and slowly picks up to about 700-800 trucks per day by the 15th of August. The selling of apples in India essentially happens through the commission agents (Artis). These commission agents deal with the distributors or wholesalers (Ladanis) who in turn send the product to various parts of the country to the retailers. The price our farmer gets is around Rs. 20-30 per kilo, however the same fruit is retailed at a price band of Rs. 80-120 per kg. A huge difference of Rs. 60-90 per kg is pocketed by the middlemen and transportation people. Since the farmer is not in a position to hold back his product during the harvest season – either financially or because of the lack of appropriate storage facility, he is forced to send his fruit to these mandis or wholesale markets where a definite nexus between the commission agents and the wholesalers forces the farmer to sell his product at a very low price. The profit from the apple crop, the bulk of which should right fully be coming to the farmer, is divided amongst the well organized cartel of middlemen.

2. The Government through a Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) meant to help farmers get a fair price from the middlemen, procures culled and low grade fruit at Rs.5.25 per kg. However, they flood the wholesale market with these low grade apples at the same time as when the farmer brings his good quality produce to the market. Now, quite obviously this results in a drop in the price by as much as Rs.100-200 per carton, causing an over all loss of about Rs.200-300 crores to the farmers.

3. The unavailability of the reefer vans for transportation of fresh apples under regulated atmospheric conditions to preserve their naturalness etc.

4. Most of the apple growing areas are in remote parts of the mountains in our country. The arterial roads which connect these areas to our national highways are in a very sorry, dilapidated state. These arterial roads in turn, connect with the apple growing areas via unpaved Roads, which get severely damaged during the rainy season. The rainy season incidentally is also the apple harvest season. This allows the transporters who come from outside our states to blackmail the farmers on the rate of transporting both the raw material as well as the packed apples to and from the market.

5. The high price and poor quality of insecticides and pesticides have also been one of the major reasons against increasing the productivity of apples in H.P.

6. The production of apples in both the states of J&K and H.P. is one of the major sources of economic sustenance in these regions and therefore, rightfully deserves a priority status.

Sadly, as a direct result of lack of appropriate infrastructural facilities for post harvest handling, the extent of loss is reported to be about 14% of the total apple production. Quantified at 1,82,000 ton's, it works out to a loss of a whopping Rs.100 crores annually.

In order to maintain the apple industry in good health so that it successfully serves the purpose of providing economic betterment to the farmers, generating direct and indirect employment for rural youth and empowers our farmers to successfully compete with imported products. The following points need to be considered urgently.

1. Since apple is a fruit that can be stored successfully, 'Controlled Atmosphere' cold stores, with a capacity to store about 50-80 Lakh cartons, urgently need to be set up at strategic locations. The availability of these storage facilities would greatly assist in controlling the supply of apples between mid August and end September, as per market demands. This would result in the farmer getting a uniform price of Rs.30-40 per Kg, through the entire season. The stored apples can then be sent to the



market after the end of December when apples from Kashmir have sold out and the market is empty. This will benefit the farmers and greatly assist them in competing with apples imported from the U.S., Chile, and New Zealand etc., which retail at approx. Rs. 100-150. per Kg.

2. The state government has been implementing the Marketing Intervention Scheme (MIS) from 1990-91 for all fruits including apples, in order to check the exploitation of fruit growers by the middle men and to provide a reasonable price for their fruit. The scheme is implemented with the collaboration and approval of the Central government on 50-50 basis where in the losses are shared. Though this is a very good initiative taken by the Govt. its execution needs a little fine tuning:
 - a. Culled and low grade apples procured through the M.I.S. should be at double the present price that is approx Rs 10 per Kg.
 - b. The fruit procured by the government should be on cash and carry basis so that the poor and needy growers get instant relief rather than the present practice of payments being made after 18 to 24 months.
3. The fruit procured under the MIS should not be sent to the market at the same time as the farmer sends his high quality fruit, as this causes a significant slump in the price amounting to Rs. 100-150 per box there by causing an over all loss of 200-300 crores to the apple growers. Instead the Government should profitably use this fruit for making processed fruit products.
4. An alarmingly high quantity of about 5 lakh tons of cull and low grade apples - which don't find acceptance in the fresh fruit market - remain without effective and profitable utilization. This large quantity should be processed into value added products. Otherwise it would be a big national waste. At present the total installed apple processing capacity in the country is about 55,000 tons per annum, 64% of which is the capacity of a single unit installed in the private sector in Kashmir a few years back. It would therefore be advisable that a number of apple processing plants are set up in the apple growing areas. These units could include the production of AJC; apple bars, dehydrated apple chunks for breakfast cereals and baby foods , apple juice in bottles or tetra packs, apple purees, jams and marmalades, apple wine etc.
5. In order to ensure the uniform quality of apple in size, colour and freshness, proper sorting, grading and packing facilities need to be set up. Concerned government agencies should offer economic incentives and soft loans at low rate of interest to entrepreneurs



setting up these facilities in Apple growing Zones.

6. For transportation of apples under controlled conditions, the government should encourage the purchase of reefer vans and provide cash subsidies for the same.
7. Urgent improvement is required in the road network in Apple growing areas. This would assist in:
 - a. Preventing transporters from exploiting the farmers
 - b. Preventing losses being occurred due to roads being blocked as a result of landslides etc.
8. Setting up of 'Fast track' or 'single window' centers for speedy clearance of projects to set up fruit processing units or C.A. stores.
9. No effort to make a change can be successful unless it is a well informed as well as a well coordinated effort. To this end, effort should give center stage to the Indian Apple growers Association. This organization, made up of progressive apple growers, key members of the Himachal fruit & vegetable growers association as well as key members of the Uttarakhand fruit and vegetable growers association, is best qualified to identify areas that need correction. In addition, because of its diverse membership it can successfully fine tune the implementation of any plan according to the unique needs of each region.
10. Provide 'tax holidays' and other relevant incentives to actively encourage the setting up of joint ventures between investors and the Indian apple growers association, to set up multi-faceted fruit processing units, specialized packaging units, C.A. stores, etc.

However, these ventures will not be successful without the active participation of the 'International federation of Agricultural Producers', in providing guidance and assistance in getting the access to the best technology available in the world and in helping the develop of the products for the international markets as well as develop international markets for the products.

The said points above is tried to highlight the bane of Apple growers in Himachal for long. Therefore, comprehensive efforts from all institutions can assist the apple growers of Himachal, in making their fair and legitimate requests for certain infrastructural assistance to be finally become a reality. (Speech from Mr. Rajeev Chauhan). ■



A Journey into the Woods...

Lush green forests, rolling hills, streams trickling intertwined with the colorful and intricate culture of the adivasis is what many of us may romanticize when we think of the tribal lands. True indeed for a tourist! But the realities of the day-to-day life of the people living in these areas do not seem to be all that romantic. A visit to the villages of Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh, more so in the summer months throws up a stark reality and dark contrast – splintering heat, leafless brown forests, dried up ponds, streams and wells, barren agriculture fields, hungry and thirsty livestock and more.

Situated in the northern part of the Deccan plateau bounded on north, east and west by Maharashtra, Adilabad lies in the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. It is the fifth largest district in the state but ranks lowest in terms of population. Nearly 43 per cent of the total area in the district is forest area. The district receives an average annual rainfall of about 1045 mm. The Ganges of the south, River Godavari drains into the district skirting the southern borders separating it from Nizamabad and Karimnagar districts. The Penganga forms northern boundary of the district while the Wardha and Pranahita rivers form the northern and eastern boundaries. Another feather in the cap of Adilabad district is

its rich reserves of minerals like coal, iron ore, limestone and clays. The district ranks first in earning revenue from minerals.

Endowed with such richness in terms of natural resources, Adilabad remains one of the poorest districts in the state, a puzzle yet to be solved fully. High levels of poverty, poor nutrition, high levels of illiteracy barely touching 18% among the tribal communities, rain-fed agriculture characterize most of Adilabad today.

Adilabad is home to a considerable number of tribal populations. Nearly 17 per cent of the population in the district belongs to scheduled tribe category. Gonds constitutes the largest tribe followed by Lambadis/Banjaras. Kolams, Thothis and Mannewar communities are classified as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Other tribal communities include, Naikpods, Pradhans, Andh, Koya and Yerukula. A sizeable population of scheduled castes and other communities have migrated from Maharashtra and settled in both tribal and non-tribal areas of the district.

To understand Adilabad from what I can see and listen, I set myself on a journey into the tribal land this summer in May/June. The severe heat conditions somewhat disrupted my





plans to walk from village to village. So I hopped in and hopped out of local transport, occasionally stealing an opportunity or two, to walk when the sun showed

some mercy, to reach the villages. Most of the nights were spent in the villages with the community and intermittently a few at the base station in Utnoor to reflect and chalk out a way forward. I could visit 10 villages (Suryapet, Waipet and Chemanguda in Indervelly mandal, Marlawai and Gauri in Jainoor mandal, Lakshettipet in Utnoor mandal, Kodibaguda, Aanduguda, Babulguda and Anarpalli in Keramari mandal)

Adilabad in my imagination should be under the green sky! Oh well, it is summer, most trees have shed their leaves and made the forest brown. But where is the forest? The reality I saw which got reinforced after listening to the people there is that, the forests have been rapidly depleting for about two decades now. More and more forest is being cleared each year to make room for new agricultural lands. Illegal felling of trees is on-going. Vana Samrakshana Samati (VSS) is rarely seen in action. While fruit bearing trees in the forest are almost minimal to extinct, other trees producing Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) are also on the decline. The NTFP procurement by Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) shows a declining trend across all commodities. Some of the Gond youth say they have never seen a 'Banka Chettu' (Gum Kharaya tree) so far. Whatever NTFP is procured for selling, much of it is done by Kolams and Gonds. 'Ippa Puvvu' (Mohuwa flower) seems to be collected in significant quantities by Lambadis and even non-tribals settled in the tribal areas. The flower is being extensively used to brew liquor for local consumption and sale to the neighboring villages. While the elders in the tribal villages still exhibit some affinity to the 'Kheda' (forest in Gondi language), the youth seem to care less. Even among elders they painfully recollect how life was a tough-going when their primary source of living was forest. But some Gond elders were also pondering if the disappearing forests were causing the erratic rainfall in Adilabad today. Warm winter followed by long summer this year with unseasonal stint of summer storm robbed the Mohuwa trees of their flowers!

Agriculture has become the primary livelihood for most of the tribal communities today. Agriculture has created some sense of security for the tribal communities and in some areas tribals are using forest, only for collecting firewood. Agriculture being predominantly rain-fed, the crops that are being cultivated includes cotton, soy bean, red gram, black gram, green gram, jowar, some maize and some wild rice. **People across want to be able to grow two crops.** This need is voiced loud and clear by all except Kolams. A tribe still blissfully contented may be! Among the tribals where they have more than about 5 acres of land, they seem to be leasing out the extra land to non-tribals for cultivation. My understanding pending objective analysis, says that most

tribal households use only family labour to work in the fields. Using labour from within the village on a reciprocal basis also exists. But rarely do they hire outside labour to work in their fields. Therefore for any household to manage beyond 5 acres may pose a challenge with barely any kind of mechanization or any capacity to engage paid labour. But with two crops (Kharif/Rabi), they can recycle the family labour. Felling of trees, rain water run-off, top soil erosion and depleting ground-water levels in some areas seem to be defining the landscape of Adilabad today. Some watershed works were done earlier and some more are in the pipeline to stop these malicious trends. Community ownership of watersheds and watershed maintenance is the key which people say was grossly ignored earlier. Adilabad was once littered with tanks, people say. Where are they?



While most of them are selling the agriculture produce in the nearby towns, Kolams seem to have been caught up in the tied-up sales to the trader from whom they take fertilizer and other inputs on credit. They also take bullocks on lease for about Rs.5000 a year from the neighboring Lambadi villages and pay it back by working for them. Some efforts are being made to collectivize farmers into cooperatives of cotton, soy and red gram but these are mostly picking up in areas with assured production year after year. This means the farmers relying on the vagaries of monsoon are yet to get a break.

Agriculture may have no doubt resulted in less drudgery in the tribal life compared to hunting and food gathering lifestyle but threat to food security in these areas might be lurking around the corner. Poor nutrition is anyway the current reality. While hunting and food gathering trips are steadily becoming ceremonial, not so much yet among Kolam, Public Distribution System (PDS) white rice has crept silently into the plates of the people. Red rice more nutritious than PDS rice is only seen in Kolam houses. Jowar is still grown for home consumption and is used to make Rotis which are steadily becoming unpopular with the youth. Red gram and to some extent black gram are used to make watery Dal. Soy being a wholesome pulse is yet to make any dent in the tribal diet. Green vegetables and leafy vegetables are almost absent. People only eat some select varieties like beans, bottle gourd, brinjal, tomato, onion, chilli and even these become absolute rarity in summer. Kitchen gardens seem to be quite unpopular. Sad but true many prefer to grow cotton and soy cash crops in the last bit of their land. Vegetable cultivation in the fields is not taken up. Horticulture trees are almost hard to find. While game from forest is a rarity now, goats and poultry are mostly used as liquid cash. Eggs are used to hatch chicks. People own local cows that give hardly any milk, just enough to make the first cup of tea in morning look little less brown. Loss of forests and cultivation of cash crops may also pose a threat to cattle fodder sooner than later.

In some of these villages Common Property Resources



(CPRs) like lakes are in a state of disuse paving way for non-tribal outsiders to negotiate and make deals on terms unfavourable to the local tribals. The lake in Waipet village produces 4 varieties of popular fish which would mean an annual income of not less than Rs.2 to 3 lakh for the village of 100 households collectively. But the spirit of collectiveness is not strong in the village and the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are mostly disintegrated to take up any collective activity. Similarly, Babul trees, a good source of timber are today rarely seen in Babulguda, a Kolam village named after the tree. Thanks to illegal felling by outsiders and poor awareness of the Kolams who only got a pittance in return!

Apart from agriculture and some collection of NTFP, wage labour constitutes the next major source of earnings for the Gonds, Naikpods and Kolams. Naikpods extract date palm toddy but only in very small quantities and nothing compared to the palm toddy tappers in other parts of Telengana. Kolams do some weaving with bamboo (only baskets and mats) but at a very subsistence level. Pradhans and Thotis are traditionally the religious and cultural service providers for Gonds but this has become their tertiary occupation with changing times. Currently, works under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and Indira Aawaas Yojana (IAY) are engaging people in the non-agriculture season. While a good chunk of the supervisory jobs in these schemes like field assistants, mastris/building contractors have gone to the Lambadis and other non-tribal settlers, the Gonds, Kolams, Naikpods and other tribes are engaged in unskilled labour works. Much of the transport whether transporting inputs for agriculture or house construction and others or transporting people in auto rickshaws is squarely taken over by Lambadis and non-tribal settlers in these villages. Lambadis also make money brewing arrack (country liquor) and selling timber illegally felled. Kirana shops of any reckoning seem to be the forte of Lambadis and non-tribals. While migration among Gonds, Kolams,

Naikpods is seldom except for day labour in neighbouring villages, it is prevalent among Lambadis.

Adilabad district ranks very low in terms of literacy at around 40 to 50 per cent and this number is only 18 per cent among the tribal communities. While considerable youth among Lambadas have gone beyond 10th class and some have even completed Bachelors and Masters, few among Gonds have been able to achieve this. Kolams are the worse off. Most of their children returned home from Ashram schools after failing 10th class. The quality of education in the schools both in the villages and also Ashram schools are below acceptable standards. The fear of Math and English is not quelled even after 10th class and most go on to take Bi PC in Intermediate, not because Biological sciences interest them but because they fear Math. Educated youth in all these villages univocally stated that they desperately need some career counseling after 10th class. They also feel the need for acquiring computer skills and spoken English. I specifically thank the youth of Marlawai who spent 9 hours with me and helped me understand their perspectives.

People say, summer means few diseases in the villages. Come monsoon, mosquitoes with malaria parasite invade. I therefore escaped with just some sore throat and cold. Bore water is safe to drink but some villages have open wells and some caution needs to be exercised there. As I was concluding my trip, then came down a couple of monsoon showers. Weather got worse, it became extremely sultry. I hope the villages will have a good monsoon season, good harvest and happy celebrations. Polalu festival is coming up soon and Diwali is celebrated with much fanfare.

Having concluded my maiden visit to Adilabad, I jotted some areas like Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) & Credit, Food Security, CPRs, Plantations (Horticulture and others), NTFP, and Career Counseling into which I look forward to get more insights during my next visit to the tribal land. ■

Nirmala

Scheduled Employment-wise Minimum Wages

in Central Sphere (Rs. Per Day)

Sl. No.	Scheduled Employment	Category of Workers	Basic Minimum Wages	V.D.A.	Total Wages	
1	Agriculture					
	Area	A	Unskilled	114	17.22	131.22
			Skilled/Clerical	137	20.37	157.37
		B	Unskilled	104	15.66	119.66
			Skilled/Clerical	125	18.79	143.79
		C	Unskilled	102	15.65	117.65
Skilled/Clerical			115	17.22	132.22	
2	Construction or Maintenance of Roads, Runways or in Building Operations including laying down underground Electric, Wireless, Radio Television, Telephone Telegraph and Overseas Communication Cables and similar underground Cabling Work, Electric Lines, Water Supply Lines and Sewerage Pipe Lines					
	Area	A	Unskilled	81	10.78	91.78
			Skilled/Clerical	123	16.54	139.54
		B	Unskilled	78	10.78	88.78
			Skilled/Clerical	116	15.83	131.83
		C	Unskilled	66	9.34	75.34
Skilled/Clerical			99	13.66	112.66	
3	Employees Employed in Loading and Unloading in (i) Goods-sheds, Parcel Offices of Railways (ii) Other Good Sheds, Godowns, Warehouses etc. and (iii) Docks and Ports					
	Area	A		89	12.23	101.23
		B		70	9.35	79.35
		C		66	9.35	75.35
4	Workers engaged in Stone Mines for Stone Breaking and Stone Crushing					
	Area	1. Excavation and removal of over burden with 50 metres lead/1.5 metres lift	Soft Soil	103.33	18.19	121.52
			Soft Soil with rock	157.78	27.28	185.06
			Rock	208.09	36.38	244.47
		2. Removal and stacking of rejected stones with 50 metres lead 1.5 metres lift		82.44	14.55	96.99
		3. Stone Breaking or Stone Crushing for the Stone Size of	1.0 inch to 1.5 inches	646.44	112.79	759.23
			Above 1.5 inches to 3.0 inch	552.12	96.4	648.52
			Above 3.0 inches to 5.0 inch	322.69	56.39	379.08
			Above 5.0 inch	264.47	46.39	310.86
5		Employees Employed in Non Coal Mines For Work Above Ground		Unskilled	66	9.34
	Skilled/Clerical			94	12.94	106.94
	Employees Employed in Non Coal Mines For Work Below Ground		Unskilled	78	10.78	88.78
			Skilled/Clerical	115	15.83	130.83
6	Employment of Sweeping and Cleaning excluding activities prohibited under the "Employment of Manual. Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993" *					
	Area	A		180	180	
		B		150	150	
		C		120	120	
7	Employment of Watch and Ward* Without Arms					
	Area	A		180	180	
		B		150	150	
		C		120	120	
	Employment of Watch and Ward* With Arms					
	Area	A		200	200	
		B		170	170	
C			140	140		

* Rate as per draft Notification of Central Government Employment Certification

Delivery Boys

Shining Livelihoods



Type Set Printers

Declining Livelihoods



Rural Journalist Palagummi Sainath

Sainath was born in 1957 from a distinguished family in Andhra Pradesh. He is the grandson of former President of India, V. V. Giri and was educated by the Jesuits in Madras at Loyola College. His preoccupation with social problems and commitment to a political perspective began when he was a student in college. He is a graduate of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi where he was part of an activist student population. After receiving a Master's degree in history, he launched his career as a journalist at the United News of India in 1980 where he received the news agency's highest individual award. He then worked for the Blitz, then a major South Asian weekly in Mumbai with a circulation of 600,000, first as foreign affairs editor and then as deputy editor, which he continued for ten years.



The International Monetary Fund-led economic reforms launched in 1991 by Manmohan Singh constituted a watershed in India's economic history and in Sainath's journalistic career. He felt that the media's attention was moving from "news" to "entertainment" and consumerism and lifestyles of the urban elite gained prominence in the newspapers which rarely carried news of the reality of poverty in India. "I felt that if the Indian press was covering the top 5 per cent, I should cover the bottom 5 per cent", says Sainath.

He quit Blitz and in 1993 applied for a Times of India fellowship. At the fellowship's interview he spoke of his plans to report from rural India. When an editor asked him, "Suppose I tell you my readers aren't interested in this stuff", Sainath riposted, "When did you last meet your readers to make any such claims on their behalf?" He got the fellowship and took to the back roads in the ten poorest districts of five states. It meant covering close to 100,000 km across India using 16 forms of transportation, including walking 5,000km on foot. He credits two sympathetic editors at the Times with much of his success in getting the articles published in their present form; since it is one among the very newspapers that has been accused of shifting the onus from page one to page three. The paper ran 84 reports by Sainath across 18 months, many of them subsequently reprinted in his book, 'Everybody Loves A Good Drought'. For more than two years, the book remained No.1 amongst non-fiction bestsellers on diverse lists across the country. Eventually, it entered the ranks of Penguin India's all-time best sellers. It is considered the handbook for NGO activists, with its direct reporting style and sharp focus on social and economic cleavages in society. Typically Sainath, he gave all the royalties from this huge best-seller to fund prizes for young rural journalists.

His bestselling book, 'Everybody Loves a Good Drought', helped focus public attention on the condition of India's rural poor, increasing public awareness and support. In the last

decade, he has spent on average three-fourths of the year with village people, reporting extensively on agrarian crises due to the neo-liberal policies like globalization, privatization and related government policies and the shift in its priorities, on the lack of sensitivity and efficiency by the government and the bureaucracy and on farmer suicides in Wayanad, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra and on the plight of dalits, writing articles for various newspapers.

Sainath is currently the rural affairs editor of The Hindu and contributes his column to India Together. One of his more recent projects, on dalits, for The Hindu, is nearly complete, and he is planning a book based on this work. This project covers a gigantic area across 15 states in India. He has already covered 150,000 km and has five

more states to go. When the newspapers were unwilling to fund beyond a point, Sainath spent from his own resources, his savings, his provident fund, his gratuity - avoiding corporate sponsors. His current project is on the agrarian crisis nationwide, particularly those regions where its effects are most severe. He has filed over 100 reports on the agrarian crisis in recent years. He has also himself taken all the photographs that go with those reports. The pictures are documenting the families of the suicide victims makes up the only photo record of its kind in existence.

Sainath accepted over 30 other national and international journalism awards and fellowships in 26 years as a journalist, including the Ramon Magsaysay journalism award which he accepted in 2007 in the category of Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts, the European Commission's Natali Prize in 1994 and the Boerma Journalism Prize from the UN FAO in 2001 (along with CNN International's Jim Clancy), the Amnesty International global award for human rights journalism in 2000, the PUCL Human Rights Journalism Award, and the B.D. Goenka award for excellence in journalism in 2000. In June 2006 Sainath won the Judges' prize (newspaper category) in the 2005 Harry Chapin Media Awards. In 1984 he was a Distinguished International Scholar at the University of Western Ontario and in 1988 at Moscow University. He has participated in many international initiatives on communications such as the second and third round table on Global Communications sponsored by the UNESCO (1990 and 1991) and in the UNHCR sponsored World Information Campaign on Human Rights (1991). He was conferred with the prestigious Raja-Lakshmi Award in the year 1993 from Sri Raja-Lakshmi Foundation, Chennai.

Mr. Sainath's contribution to journalism is singular in post-Independent India. No one before had took the cause of rural India with such passion and mainstreamed reporting. Through his work on the India's social problems, Sainath changed the nature of the development debate in his own country and across the world. ■

Books

Book Summary

Name: **My Universities**

Publisher: **Progress (Moscow)**

Author: **Maxim Gorky**

"My Universities" is the almost like Maxim Gorky's biography among his other famous books "Mother" and "My Childhood". This book has been translated into many languages of the world and has seen publication of many editions.

My Universities is a narration of author's interaction with various vulnerable people in his student life. Gamut of people with whom he interacted includes petty shop owners, alcoholics, small time robbers, students, progressive thinkers who were mostly poor living in dark rooms, living in adverse life conditions facing hardships, conflicts and cruelty that poverty poses.

On the outset thought it looks like narration of stories based on people's lives and authors interface with them, it unravels a deeper analysis of various dimensions of poverty, series of uncomfortable situations that poor people are put into, tough decisions they need to make and cruelty brought in by poverty. Author also narrates how they deal with those situations and go ahead with their lives.

Gorky himself comes from a poor family, he had to do many petty jobs like working on shop floor, cleaner in a hotel, cooli and grocery shop to support himself and pursue education. He would work all day and studied in the night. There are instances when he has had enough money just to drink a tea. Book also gives an experience of author's personal experience of poverty as well as sweetness of satisfaction that one gets at the end of a day's hard work. He shares that those were the moments when he felt close to nature. In his well crafted narration the author shares that each such interface, tested him, enlarged vision and offered learning that would match what university education could have offered.

The book begins with authors' arrival to Khazan province of Russia to study in university there. In this different land

he starts staying with the family of his high school friend who are in extreme poverty, where he learns a lot from the difficulties and conflicts faced by his friend's mother in providing food to her children. He moves out of this household and starts living in free shelter homes, where prostitutes, alcoholics, rouges and cooli workers lived where he gets introduced to Narodni group which is passionate to help these suffering people. From this interface he learns that only those who love fellow men are capable of exploring ways of leading a meaningful life. Later he works in shops that were sympathetic and helpful to revolutionaries. These places also had secret library, which made police suspicious of every one working there. The Author explains the difficulties he faced while escaping from police.

The Author being an expert in making bread, finds job in a bread making unit. Though he works throughout the day, Gorky would continue reading books. He becomes part of a study circle where he gets to read writings of Tolstoy, Chow ho and many more writings available as seyclo-style copies. As advised by leader of study circle he moved to Kanova dovo on the banks of Volga River. He met Ohole and his comrades, who were working towards building farmers cooperatives. This angered rich farmers and attacked this group. The group escaped fatal attacks three times during which one comrade gets killed and house in which they were living is burnt down. The house also had a rich library which got burnt along with the house. Moving on he started doing small time work on ships where he makes friendship with one Mr. Ramoss and moved to a new place Kalmik. Book concludes by informing that he found work in the fishermen cooperative.

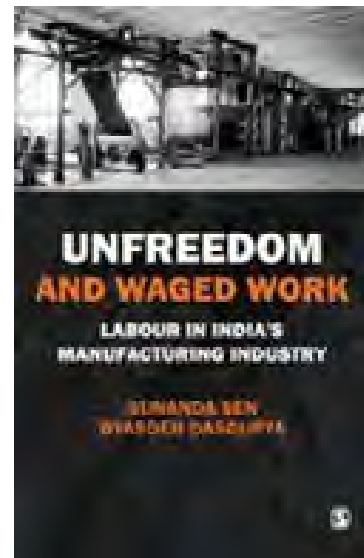
The book is set in 19th century oppressive Russian society. In spite of living in such hostile environment and facing hardships he emerged as talented writer of the world which is evident in this book. The book is an example for all those who believe that life itself is a university and every situation, people and organisations we interact with has something to offer for learning and reflection. ■

New Books

Name: **Unfreedom and Waged Work - Labour in India's Manufacturing Industry.**

Publisher: **SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd.**

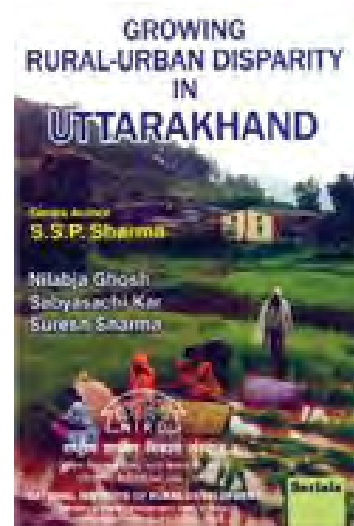
Author: **Sunanda Sen & Byasdeb Dasgupta**



Name: **Growing Rural-Urban Disparity in Uttarakhand**

Publisher: **Serials Publication**

Author: **S.S.P. Sharma, Nilabja Ghosh, Sabyasachi Kar & Suresh Sharma**



Resources

Training Calendar July 2009

No	Course Offered	Date	Venue	Institution
1	Participatory Livelihood Assessment Tools	16-18	Orchha, Madhya Pradesh	TARA Livelihood Academy Contact details: E-mail: mpandey@devalt.org Website: www.devalt.org
2	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning	02-04	Orchha, Madhya Pradesh	
3	Effective Documentation and Report Writing	29-31	Orchha, Madhya Pradesh	
4	Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects	07-09	New Delhi	Sambodhi Research & Communication Pvt. Ltd. Contact details: E-mail: sunil@sambodhi.co.in, trainings@sambodhi.co.in
5	Corporate Social Responsibility and Rural Development	13-15	Anand, Gujarat	IRMA Contact details: E-mail: bcp@irma.ac.in Website: www.irma.ac.in
6	E-business Modeling for Rural Enterprises	13-15	Anand, Gujarat	
7	Effective Leadership, Organizational Communication and Conflict Resolution	27-31	Anand, Gujarat	
8	Micro Financing Livelihoods	14-19	Both Gaya, Bihar	The Livelihood School Contact details: E-mail: info@thelivelihoodschool.org
9	Marketing for Livelihood Promotion	06-11	Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	
10	Planning, Managing and Guiding SMEs	20-24	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	BIRD Contact details: E-mail: bird@sancharnet.in, bird@bsnl.in, birdindia@yahoo.co.in
11	Joint Forest Management	20-24	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	
12	Financing of Tenant Farmers	27-28	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	
13	Formation and Financing of SHGs	13-17	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	
14	Financing of Dairy and Poultry Projects	13-17	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	
15	Eight Skills of Leadership Excellence	27-31	Pune, Maharashtra	NIBM Contact details: E-mail: progofficer@nibmindia.org
16	Food Security - Concept and Practice	Yet to be Announced	Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	Akshara Gurukulam Contact details: Email: akshara_gurukulam@aksharakriti.org Website: www.aksharakriti.org

Source: Training Calendar 2009-10 published by Sa-Dhan (The Association of Community Development Finance Institutions), Website: www.sa-dhan.net ■

Story of Buddha, Elephant and Monkey

We can reflect on where we can "make things better" by less action -- even temporary withdrawal. We can look also at where in our lives we are currently making well-meaning but inappropriate interventions, like the monkey; or where we are being of significant service, like the elephant. The story of Buddha, Elephant and Monkey beautifully narrates the appropriateness of interventions.....

Once the Buddha felt really sad at the bickering going on between the monks at his monastery. In spite of all his teachings, in spite of the fact that his followers were basically good people who wanted sincerely to be on the Path, if there was one lot that wanted this -- the others wanted that. If there was one group that believed strongly in something, there would be others who believed something quite different. If one lot perceived things one way -- why, then, of course others perceived it in quite the opposite way. If some people were satisfied with something -- you can be sure there was an equal number who were not!

The people were human. The Buddha was human (something we tend to forget). Growing quite sad with all of this discord, he told them he was leaving the place for a while to allow them to find their own way to sort out their issues, and smiled gently as Ananda, his close disciple, wailed, "But, how?"

He left to live in solitude in the forest.

The forest was silent, the forest was peaceful; the forest was also cold. The Buddha climbed halfway up a small hill and found a sheltered cave near a small pool that provided a source of water for drinking and bathing, even though the water was icy cold.

As news of the Buddha's presence spread among the forest creatures, the birds and animals began to come by to breathe in his holy presence -- and yes, to worship the Holy One, as only they really knew how.

Among the creatures of the forest, a wise old elephant noticed how cold the water in the pool was, and made it his task every evening to roll down a huge rock from the very top of the hill, after it had been heated by the rays of the sun. Pushing and shoving mightily, he got it to finally end up -- SPLASH -- in the little pool near the Buddha's cave, where it warmed the water for the Lord Buddha's bath.

Then, each morning, with great effort he pushed and pushed, his mighty forehead against the huge rock, to get it back up to the top of the hill, so it would get heated by the sun again. Day after day, he rolled the huge hot rock downhill into the pool, bowing to announce to the Buddha that the task was done. Monkey noticed all of this as he jumped around all over the place. Monkey too loved Lord Buddha. He too wanted to show his love and make an offering. So he went off swinging and leaping, climbed up a tree, snatched a good bit of a large honeycomb, fleeing the angry buzzing bees, and almost fell over Lord Buddha as he made a bumbling-tumbling bow before him, waving the dripping honeycomb in an awkward but joyous offering.

Lord Buddha smiled. Then Lord Buddha gently shook his head. "No," he said to Monkey, "I know you mean well, but to squeeze honey from that will kill the bees still inside. We cannot harm them." And he instructed Monkey to leave the comb next to the tree from which he had broken it off, so that those bees could rejoin their hive.

We can happily assume that Lord Buddha returned, when Ananda came to tell him that there was more peace and understanding now at the monastery. But we don't know if he returned after many days or many weeks or many months or many years. ...

The devoted elephant and monkey and their gifts find a place in the enduring story and icon of the Wednesday Night Buddha ... and all of this finds a place in our own hearts and lives too.

We can reflect on where we can "make things better" by less action -- even temporary withdrawal. We can look also at where in our lives we are currently making well-meaning but inappropriate interventions, like the monkey; or where we are being of significant service, like the elephant.

And we can joyfully own our Buddha-nature, our higher, nobler selves, every one of us. As the Buddhists teach -- we are all Buddhas; only perhaps densely clouded.

May Story color and bless your lives. ■

The Population Growth in India

Population Size and Growth, India, 1901 - 2001

Census year	Population (000s)	Growth Over Decade		Multiple of 1901 Population
		Number (000s)	Percent	
1901	238,396	0	0	1.0
1911	252,093	1,3697	5.7	1.1
1921	251,321	-772	-0.3	1.1
1931	278,977	27,656	11	1.2
1941	318,661	39,683	14.2	1.3
1951	361,008	42,428	13.3	1.5
1961	439,235	78,147	21.6	1.8
1971	548,160	108,925	24.8	2.3
1981	683,329	135,169	24.7	2.9
1991	846,421	163,092	23.9	2.6
2001	1,028,737	182,316	21.5	4.3

Source: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, Census of India 2001: Series-1: India, General Population Tables (2006)

Projected Population of India (in millions) by Broad Age Groups, 2001 - 2026

Year	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026
Under Age 15	365	357	347	340	337	327
15 - 59	593	672	747	811	860	900
60+	71	84	98	118	143	173
Total	1029	1112	1193	1269	1340	1400

Source : Office of Registrar General, India

Source of both figures are taken from Report of the Working Group on Population Stabilization for The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012), Government of India Planning Commission, New Delhi. ■

Out of Poverty **Selling Dry Fish Helps Satyamma!**

Komaranipet is located at Gara Mandal in Srikakulam district and near to Bay of Bengal. In that village, one of the main livelihoods of the people is selling the dry fish. In this village Dhumma Satyamma is a one of such dry fish seller. As a dry fish seller, nowadays, Dhumma Satyamma is living peacefully and happily with her husband and her youngest son. She has 6 children, three boys and three girls. All are married but for the youngest son. Satyamma did not achieve this quality of life just like that. She struggled a lot, worked very hard saved every bit of her earnings diligently.

About 30 years ago, Satyamma's husband worked as a daily labor. All income that he earned most of the time were spent on alcohol. Not only that, after her husband came back home from work and having alcohol, he harassed Satyamma either physically or mentally. With that situation, Satyamma's family faced lot of economic problems. Because her husband spent the money on alcohol, the income was not sufficient to cover the living cost, barely enough even for food! Satyamma was forced to live in the situation where her children went hungry and also suffered from diseases.

Unable to continue living in that miserable situation, Satyamma took a decision. She took the responsibility to cover family living cost by earning the money as dry fish seller. With help of loan from the neighborhood, she started

the business with Rs.1500. With that money, she bought a basket for the fish, weigh scale and others equipments needed for her business as a dry fish seller.

The fresh fishes for Satyamma's dry fish business care supplied from fish market at port near Komaramanipeta, Mogadalapadu. She brings the fishes and adds salt and dry the salted fish. Satyamma sells the dry fish in different villages nearby her village. She earn a profit of approximately Rs.50 or Rs.60 per day.

At the same time, she also took the responsibility of raising her children and performing their marriages. Thanks to the savings she has from the money that she earned, she covered her three daughter's dowries. She also took to taking care her husband who suffered illness because of addiction to alcohol until her husband became healthy. Also, from her savings together with the loan she got from government, she built a house. Satyamma continues to save for the future.

Even today Satyamma continues to sell dry fish. Slowly but surely, Satyamma's life and her family's life is getting better. Moreover, her son is now earning better and he gives some money to her. Satyamma proved that with continues hard work one can lead happy life. ■

Broken Lives

Venture Without Feasibility Study

Choppala Narasanna has been living in Tuppelamorsu village, Gattu Mandal, Mahaboobnagar District of Andhra Pradesh. Together with his wife, Narasanna lives with his two sons.

Narasanna family's livelihood was entertaining people with puppetry. They lived on this livelihood until Narasanna realized that the interest in puppet show was declining. Since then, he had thought to change his livelihood from puppet show player in to the mobile movie theater. With the idea of having the mobile movie theater, he thought that with this business he will earn good income by moving from one village to others.

To set up the mobile movie theater, Narasanna straight away took some loan and also sold all the assets that he had to invest the towards the equipment needed. He brought one projector, white screen, tarpaulins, transport auto and others equipment needed to support to transform his idea of mobile movie theater in to reality.

After all equipments were ready, Narasanna started his first tour business. He and his team had their first business trip for 15-20 days. They moved to several different villages with the mobile movie theater and played the movies in those

villages. After 20 days, they returned home. In the first business trip, he earned good money and got good profits. But after the first business trip, he only earned little money and the worst thing was the income could not even meet the business's expenses.

This situation continued. His income level did not improve but his expenses started increasing. Narasanna is confused. Even if he keeps the business or leaves the business it will do him no good. Both are unviable options.

Narasanna now realized that the situation he is facing right now is because he did not assess the feasibility of the mobile movie theater business. He remembered that once he got the idea, he straight away jumped to the business. Moreover, he still had some debts to pay.

Narasanna is now aware that livelihoods are dynamic and this realization is very important. Also thorough assessment is needed before starting new business. If people do not take care of this aspect when starting new ventures, the chances that they will fall into poverty are high.

Narasanna continues to live in the dilemma of what to do with his mobile movie theatre. ■

'Yoga'kshemam

New Government(s) in action! We were wrong. Now, we are not sure whether the youth are the victors really. Yet we know youth have to take charge of us, the country. Agatha Sangma, the youngest minister in the new government, represents this hope.

With near stable numbers in Lok Sabha, UPA did not find the need to come up with a common minimum program for the government for five years. However, President Pratibha Patel unveiled an 100-day program for the government. We need to wait for the Budget to know more of the intentions and plans. With a women troika – President, Governing Coalition Head and Speaker, in lead, we can be sure of 33% women reservation bill passed.

Since we are at the beginning of the five-year term, we can initiate true bottom-up planning processes, by positioning high quality **development workers** (say 25,000 in the country, one for 10000 families) and building local development leaders in each village and neighborhood, some 2.5 million of them! It is also the time to think about a **National Poverty Reduction Mission**. As we progressed reasonably well on the Total Literacy, there is a need for **National Universal Education Mission** for offering education to all up to the age of 18, including offering space and support to the students beyond the school hours. This, with the strengthened Skill Development Mission, with clarity on the competitive edge based skills, can make a huge difference to the poor and not-so-poor.

Meanwhile, Swine Flu has been declared a Pandemic by WHO. Satyam's new owner, Tech Mahindra, went in for public offer. Some 5000-10000 jobs are being reviewed. 26/11 investigations and trials are still inching forward. Prime Minister and Leader of Opposition are patching up. India and US are coming closer publicly.

Between Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day, the scorching summer has extended into June and the monsoon has been playing mischief. The schools and colleges have opened.

This month was spent broadly on – thinking/planning for support and advocacy of livelihoods thinking/practice in general and collectives in particular and collectives of the marginalized. As ever, we could not escape being in the flows of the universe. Supporting in the efforts to revitalize governance in a national collective support organization, 'watching' walking the talk in tribal areas and coping with new realities around have also occupied the mind. I have also agreed to be an Adjunct Professor of a Business School in Hyderabad. A transition to 'Portfolio Entrepreneur' has begun! An idea to use a network of entrepreneurs to mentor more of them has emerged. Let us see how it grows!

With frequent travel, I need to readjust my fasting practice. While on travel, fasting can be from immediately after lunch on Thursday to just before dinner on Friday, so that it will be less 'troubling' to others around. Otherwise, it continues to be the same 36-hour fast on Friday. I could step up efforts in my **struggle with 'silence'**. I have also received a silent and gentle reminder of reducing stamina.

Some lessons, life taught a 90-year old woman, Regina Brett, are worth mulling over for making our life happier and

more blissful and they include:

- Life may not be fair but it is still good; when in doubt, just take the next step;
- Take a deep breath; Agree to disagree; Make peace with the past
- Stay in touch; Cry with someone rather than alone;
- Do not compare with others; What others think of you is none of your business;
- Change is constant; Everything can change in the blink of an eye but don't worry;
- Get rid of anything that is not useful, beautiful or joyful;
- When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer;
- Now is special; today is special; Go with the flow; Choose life always;
- Forgive everyone, everything; All that truly matters is that you loved; Yield
- The most important sex organ is the brain;
- No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up; Believe in miracles

G Muralidhar

These, if we take time to mull over and start practicing in our own way, guarantee lasting happiness, fulfillment and joy in life!

I have got re-endorsement for the thinking of low-maintenance life and bio-regeneration during the month so that the world remains a better place to live for us and for our successors.

In the play of the souls in the milky way, and through the flows of universe, this month endorsed that the arrows deliver more than the bows and the strings of the bows, **if only we learn to release the arrows** and get out of being caught up, even if it means slowing down.

Can we do this? **Yes, if we pursue Atma Yoga**. The focus is on the arrow, the sharpened arrow, the direction, the flow. This 'atma' yoga calls for seeking yoga in actions, thoughts and words, feelings and spirit, in the context of this flow. This happens with flowing continuously, frequently and regularly in the direction of natural flows of universe, as directed by guru, the archer through the string of the bow and mastered through discipline and practice.

Krishna guarantees absolute bliss to the atma yogi, the soul, if s/he immerses in relentless yogic practice of setting aside all doubts and dilemmas, and surrender completely to the will of the Guru with firm faith, unswerving devotion and loving contemplation. **S/he shall be released in the direction of flows of the universe and liberated**. By choosing to work on the purpose of better life for all life, with realization of the ability to do so, s/he takes responsibility, acquires leadership and serves all 'life'. This is 'liberation'. Krishna asks not to have fear.

Join us in the world of yoga – celebrating all dimensions of our being and flowing through the raas of the souls. You will not regret it. ■



Back to School