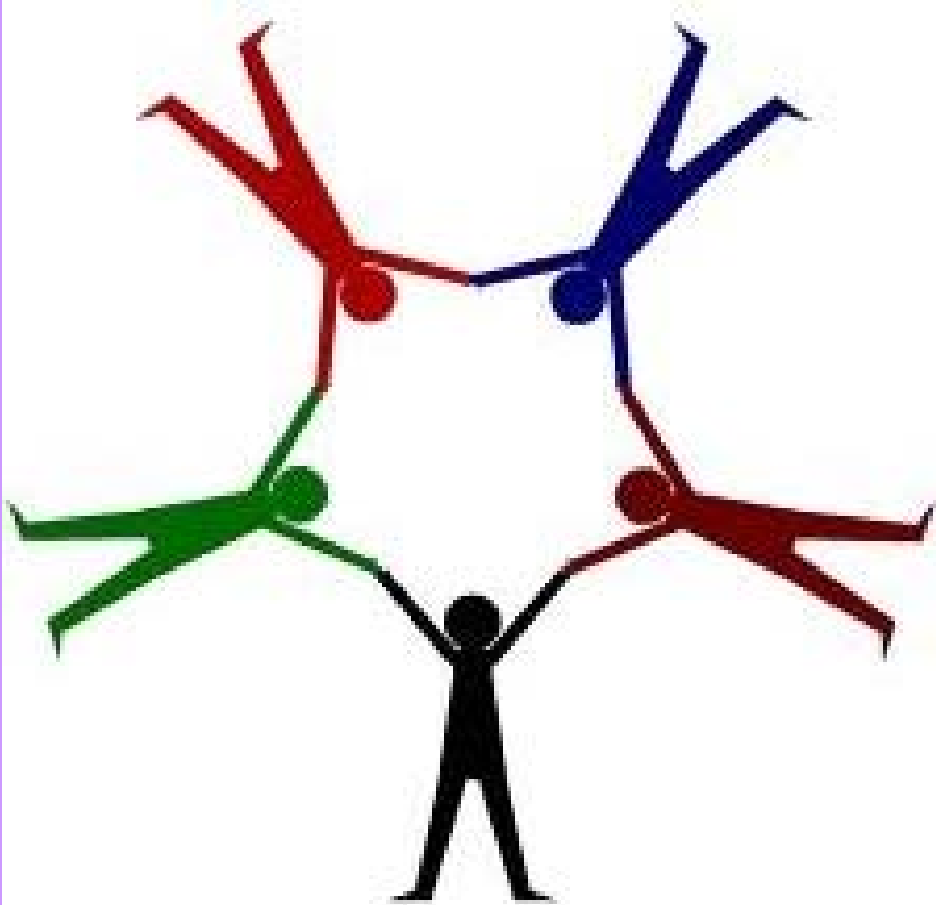


livelihoods

today and tomorrow

September 2011



Livelihoods' Collectives

Towards Inclusive Growth! - 9

Seeds -17

A Great Opportunity, a Serious Danger -26



Happy Krishnaasthami!

Happy Ramzan! Happy Ganesh! Happy Ganesh Shobhayatra!

Happy Teachers' Day!

T-agitation's last lap has begun. It is a strike by all, led by government employees.

'Sense of the House' resolution ends the 13-day Anna Hazare's fast. Hope a strong Lokpal becomes a reality soon.

If you want to have no back problems, keep on juggling physical works and do not do anything at a stretch. Remember to keep smiling.

Let us smile more. Let us act with humanism and humanitarianism as often as possible. Let us make our habitat a better place to live for all. Let us care 'life'. Let there be open knowledge in this world. Let the elderly be respected and cared. Let us eat as much vegetarian food as possible. Let us prevent, reduce and/or cope with disasters. Let us care the affected.

Let us feel ashamed to have poor amongst us. Let us empower our women in rural areas. Let us consume food to our need. Let us become 'non-violent'. Let us remember Gandhi, consolidate Gandhian Thought and accelerate Gandhian Action.

Let there be victory and prosperity to the 'life'.

With more than 30 million women and other poor in Self-help Groups and their federal entities, SHGs have become a growing movement. Differently-abled men and women are becoming SHGs and Elderly men and women are becoming SHGs. They are slowly getting linked to banks. They are expanding to take up activities beyond savings, credit, and insurance and these include solidarity, remittance, equity, social security, caring the vulnerable, collective action, collective purchases and sales. However, we have large number of institutions of the poor in the country. Many more are coming. These include primary agriculture cooperatives, water users associations, farmers' groups, labour groups, shram sakthi sanghas, forest collectives, vana samrakshana samitis, watershed committees, youth/women/senior citizens associations, caste panchayats, MACS, consumers' cooperatives, producers' companies, partnerships, membership-based trusts and societies, marketing cooperatives, ryot-coolie sanghas, education committees, mothers' committees, advocacy groups and associations etc.

Some are registered and some are not. Some are registered in one form or other. Sometimes, suitable forms of association are not available. Tax regime is not fully favourable to all forms of collectives. Some forms have more state control. Some are member-controlled. Some are more democratic and some are leader-centred or manager-centred. Some are equity centred. In this context, 'livelihoods' has focused on the Gandhian 'livelihoods'.

Professor Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf has been legendary anthropologist who influenced tribal livelihoods in Andhra Pradesh, North-east and Nepal significantly. Nadrajan and his Covenant Centre for Development are showing ways to organizing and supporting the producers in a variety of contexts and forms. Raising nurseries and selling saplings/plants is a profitable entrepreneurial activity to be practiced with care and has demand. 'Cooperatives in Agriculture' [part of the series – State of Indian Farmer] by Samar Datta discusses A-Z of farmers' cooperatives in India. Livelihoods in Rural Telangana are discussed in 'Kshetra'.

With the appreciation that Collectives and Collective Action is not new and there are examples across in good numbers, I remain thinking of ways to find, build and nurture collectives in a variety of domains and sub-domains/dimensions and serve the needs of the poorest and the most vulnerable, along with other poor.

G Muralidhar

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Livelihood's Collectives: In India apart from the SHGs there are large numbers of collectives working since pre independence in various communities (*These communities are cooperatives, producers groups, trade unions, Hawker unions, Farmers Unions, Employees unions, Women organizations, Dalit Associations, Tribal unions, Disable groups, Consumers groups, Watershed groups, Water User Associations (WUA), Vana Samrakshana Samithi (VSS), Labour groups*).

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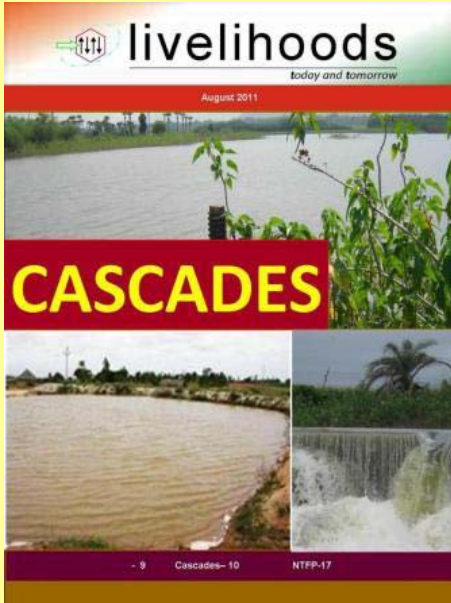
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I saw your August 2011 magazine. It is very good and informative. This month cover story article on chain tanks is informative. In Subsector, NTFP article gives a good analysis.

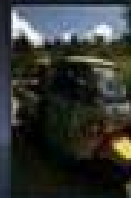
Thanks for sending magazine.

Regards

Swathi

Hyderabad

world tourism day



27 September: World Tourism Day

Urea Sale HACA Counters, Andhra Pradesh: Farmers are flocking to the Hyderabad Agriculture Cooperative Associations (HACA) counter in the Hyderabad for purchasing fertilizers, particularly urea, in view of intensified cropping following good spells of rain. With the arrival of urea stocks, Farmers were seen waiting in long queues at the counter jostling their way into the queue and those behind shouting at them. The farmers close to the counter managed to get their stock, while those at end of were left high and dry. The scene was the same at the DCMC and Gollaguda Society, which also received just a lorry load of fertilizer each. The ongoing strike by the lorry-owners added to the woes of the ryots, with vehicles getting stranded. Farmers of Nalgonda and nearby mandals blamed the Agriculture Department officials for not being prompt in arranging sufficient stocks in view of the lorry strike.

Water Level In Major North India Dams Reaching Maximum Limit, India: The water level in major dams, including the Pong and Bhakra dams, is on the verge of touching its maximum limit due to heavy rains in North India. The level in Pong Dam is 1,387.48 feet against the maximum limit of 1,390 feet; while it touched 518.69 Feet in Ranjit Sagar Dam, its capacity is 520.94 feet. The Bhakra dam saw the level touch 1,667.35 feet against the limit of 1,680 feet, an official spokesperson said on Sunday. Water has also been discharged from the Pong dam in Beas and Satluj rivers, the spokesperson said. Meanwhile, Haryana Irrigation Department released 250 cusecs of water in Dadupur-Nalwi canal from the Hathni Kund Barrage for the first time. Out of the 250 cusecs, 100 cusecs has been released in the Nalwi distributary for the farmers the Ambala district on an experimental basis. The first phase of the Dadupur-Nalwi canal, with a total water carrying capacity of 538 cusecs, had been completed at a cost of about Rs.276 crore. The Nalwi distributary, with a total capacity of 179 cusecs, was constructed to provide irrigation in the Ambala district.

State For Bringing Dairy, Coir Under MGNREGA, Kerala: Chief

Minister urged Rural Development Minister to consider including the rearing of animals, dairy and coir industries, and water management under the ambit of jobs provided in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act (MGNREGA). He wanted the Centre to include livelihood schemes, housing, and toilet construction in the list of works that could be undertaken under the MGNREGA. He also made a request to grant funds under the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Sadak Yojana (Prime Minister Rural Road Development Program) as per the revised estimates as the Public Works Department schedule for undertaking the jobs had been extended. He wanted implementation of road development under the fast track scheme. If the Centre did not approve the revised estimate and allot funds, the burden of providing additional funds would fall on the State government causing more financial constraint; he told that the latter agreed to consider the demand. He sought some relaxation in the conditions stipulated under the program regarding density of population in tune with the habitation pattern in the State. Kerala Minister for Rural Development accompanied him. Earlier, participating in a program at the Travancore Palace, owned by the State government here which houses an art gallery, He announced that soon the government would renovate the building and turn the structure into a cultural heritage centre and build an auditorium with a seating capacity of 1,000 persons. There would also be an exhibition centre, food court and 100 rooms for the Malayalis visiting New Delhi on the premises, the Chief Minister said.

No Problem in Supply of Petrol LPG, Andhra Pradesh: The AP State

government has said that there will not be any problem in availability of petrol and diesel across the State owing to truckers strike for the next two days because the terminals of oil companies at places other than Vijayawada were functioning. Transport Commissioner in a press release stated that the Assistant State-level oil coordinator had informed that tankers carrying petroleum products and cooking gas were moving normally at all terminals, except Vijayawada.

Resource Crunch Hits HIV/AIDS Response, International: The AIDS epidemic in Asia and the Pacific is at a crossroads due to resource crunch, according to a new report from the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). While the region has seen impressive gains — including a 20 per cent drop in new HIV infections since 2001 and a three-fold increase in access to antiretroviral therapy since 2006 — progress is threatened by inadequate focus on key populations at higher risk of HIV infection and insufficient funding from domestic and international sources. Launched at the 2011 International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), the report, titled 'HIV in Asia and the Pacific: Getting to Zero,' found that more people than ever before have access to HIV services across the region. However, most countries in the region are a long way from achieving universal access goals for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The AIDS response in Asia and the Pacific is underfunded, the report found. In 2009, an estimated \$1.1 billion was spent on AIDS response in 30 countries across the region — approximately one third of the funding needed to achieve universal access goals to HIV services. Though China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Samoa and Thailand are funding the bulk of their HIV response from domestic resources, many countries in Asia and the Pacific depend heavily on foreign funds, particularly for the provision of antiretroviral therapy. Increased investment of domestic resources, especially in middle-income countries, is critical for the ongoing regional response to HIV. Funding cutbacks from international donors also

threaten progress in the regional AIDS response. In 2009, international assistance for the global AIDS response leveled off for the first time in a decade, and in 2010 it declined. According to the report, investments to protect key populations from HIV remain insufficient. Among countries reporting detailed expenditure data in 2010, only 8 per cent of total AIDS spending in South Asia and 20 per cent in Southeast Asia focused on HIV prevention among key populations at higher risk of HIV infection. An estimated 4.9 million people were living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific in 2009, a figure that has remained relatively stable since 2005. The majority of people living with HIV in the region are in 11 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Vietnam.

Welfare Pensions to Go Up, Kerala:

The Cabinet on decided to hike various welfare pensions, including that of fisherfolk, to Rs.400 a month. Chief Minister told the media after a Cabinet meeting on that Rs.14.40 crore would be spent additionally to increase the pensions to fishermen from Rs.300 a month to Rs.400 with effect from April. Arrears due from January this year would be paid before Onam. The Chief Minister said that pensions payable from all welfare funds under the Labour Department too would be increased from Rs.300 to Rs.400 a month. Arrears would be cleared before Onam. He said that workers of defunct factories of Alind, Travancore Rayons and Comtrust (Kozhikode) would be paid Rs.5,000 as advance to be adjusted against money due to them. The Onam advance of eight categories of workers under government such as part-time contingent employees, non-muster roll and seasonal workers, grass-cutters and permanent labourers and non-permanent labourers and casual labourers in various government departments would be enhanced from Rs.1,000 to Rs.1,200 a month. Workers registered with lottery agents' welfare fund would be paid festival advance of Rs.1,000 for the first time. Pre-primary teachers and ayahs would be given Rs.500 and resource teachers of special schools, Rs.1,000 for the first time. He announced that the ex gratia to workers of defunct public sector

units, private factories and estates and coir manufacturing units too would go up. While the factory workers would be paid Rs.2,000, estate workers would get Rs.1,000. The ex gratia payment for cashew and coir workers would be Rs.600. Workers of Neendakara Port would be paid Rs.2,000

GHMC to Develop Infrastructure With Outlay of Rs. 813 Crore, Hyderabad:

Chief Minister has given his approval to a proposal to develop infrastructural facilities and civic amenities in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits at a cost of Rs. 813 crore. CM also agreed to allow the GHMC to collect profession tax in its jurisdiction area, a job hitherto handled by the Commercial Taxes Department on its behalf. As per the present rules, the entire amount collected by way of profession tax will have to go to the civic body. But the GHMC is getting only 95 per cent of this amount as the Commercial Taxes Department is holding back 5 per cent as "service charges" for collecting it. Hyderabad Mayor and GHMC Commissioner said if the tax collection was handed over to the civic body, the amount realised would go up by Rs. 150 crore annually as it would be able bring more professionals into the tax net. They said the GHMC was poised to get another Rs. 150 crore through motor vehicle tax as the Chief Minister had also agreed to allot 10 per cent of the tax (Rs. 676 crore annually) to the civic body.

19.31 Lakh Tonne Sugar For September, India:

The Centre has allocated 19.31 lakh tonnes of sugar for release in September — 17 lakh tonnes for sale in the open market and 2.31 lakh tonnes for distribution through the public distribution system. This quota will be sufficient to meet the domestic demand next month, says an official statement. The government has asked factories to sell the entire non-levy (for sale in open market) quota, including the sugar processed from imported raw sugar, by September-end. It has, however, extended the

deadline for selling the August free-sale quota till September 14.

Biometric Card Scheme Launched, Tamil Nadu:

Chief Minister launched, through videoconferencing, the biometric smart card scheme for the disbursal of monthly pension given under social security schemes. Initially, 24,004 beneficiaries in 268 villages belonging to three taluks of three districts were covered. The Thoivalai taluk of Kanyakumari District accounted for 3,562 beneficiaries; Manaparai (Tiruchi) - 9,882 beneficiaries and Kattumannarkoil (Cuddalore) - 10,560 beneficiaries. The participating public sector banks were Indian Bank (covering 8,448 beneficiaries), State Bank of India (6,646 beneficiaries), Indian Overseas Bank (4,848 beneficiaries), Bank of India (2,572 beneficiaries) and Canara Bank (1,490 beneficiaries). The opening of Savings Bank accounts for beneficiaries and distribution of biometric smart cards formed part of the scheme. The smart cards would have the visual image and the SB account number of the beneficiary. Each month, banking correspondents would visit the beneficiaries with hand-held machines, which would be used for insertion of cards. Even printouts could be generated from the machines, a senior official said. To mark the inauguration, Ms Jayalalitha handed over the cards to seven beneficiaries. ❖



**15 September
International Day For
Democracy**

Professor Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf

Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf or Christopher von Fürer-Haimendorf (1909 Vienna – 1995 London) was an Austrian ethnologist. He spent about forty years of his life doing fieldwork in Northeast India and in the central region of what is now the state of Andhra Pradesh and in Nepal. He died on 11 June 1995 at the age of 85 and was Professor of Asian Anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), where he built up the largest department of anthropology in the country by the time he retired in 1976.

He was born in an Austrian aristocratic family in Vienna on 22 June 1909. Very early he developed an interest in Indian culture, having read Rabindranath Tagore as a young man. He studied anthropology and archeology in Vienna and was most influenced by Robert von Heine-Geldern. He made his thesis on the tribal social organization in the Naga Hills.

In 1927 he entered the Esianische Akademie at the University of Vienna to study anthropology and archaeology. He received his PhD. in 1931, for his thesis comparing the social organization of the hill tribes of Assam and north-west Burma. His thesis was based purely on book research as he did not have a strong financial backing to conduct extensive field research. The opportunity for field-work came only later when Haimendorf worked as a Research Assistant in Vienna between 1931 and 1934. He left London in 1936 to work among the Nagas of the Assam Province, in Northeastern India.

During the early 40's he shifted base to Hyderabad, which was under the jurisdiction of the Nizam at that time. Haimendorf undertook some remarkable field-work among the Chenchu, Reddi and Raj Gond communities. Many of these communities were tribal and very little was known about their way of life. The **Chenchu tribe provided him with a point of** comparison to the Naga tribes he has studied earlier. Four years after he started working the Hyderabad region, he was offered the post of Special Officer and Assistant Political Officer to the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). Although the brief of his official position was to monitor the security threat posed by the partial occupation of neighbouring Burma by Japan, the posting really offered Haimendorf the opportunity of conducting in-depth field-work during 1944 and 1945. By the virtue of his position in NEFA Haimendorf had the rare opportunity to study remote tribes like Apa Tanis of Arunachal Pradesh.

At the end of the World War II, Haimendorf was appointed as Advisor for Tribes and Backward Classes to the Nizam's Government of Hyderabad to deal with the complicated issue of land reforms. In the course of his work, he set up various educational and other schemes for tribal peoples, all with the aim of preserving and

safeguarding indigenous cultures and languages. He also accepted a teaching appointment at Osmania University. After spending a little more than a decade in the Indian subcontinent, he received an opportunity to be lecturer at the SOAS in 1949. Within months of his appointment, he was made Reader, and then Chair of Asian Anthropology in 1951. During his 25 years as Professor, until his retirement in 1976, Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf saw the department through a period of exceptional growth, always encouraging his colleagues and students to conduct field-work as frequently and intensively as possible in order to produce qualitative results. In 1953, when the Kingdom of Nepal was opened its doors to the world, Professor Haimendorf was quick to grab the opportunity to visit the country and thereby added a third area of expertise (after the Northeast and Hyderabad) to his work. He was the first foreign anthropologist to be allowed to work in Nepal. He was at first drawn to the Sherpas of Eastern Nepal, partly because of their reputation in the scaling of Everest, but more particularly because of the stark contrast they provided in terms of religion and culture to the populations of tropical India with whom he had been previously occupied.

In each of the areas he visited, he studied the languages and culture of three to six communities. He published ten ethnographic monographs based on his field-work, including *The Chenchus* (1943), *The Reddis of the Bison Hills* (1945), *The Raj Gonds of Adilabad* (1948), *The Sherpas of Nepal* (1964) and *The Konyak Nagas* (1969). He also published several other volumes of essays and theoretical works, including *Morals and merit* (1967) and *The tribes of India: struggle for survival* (1982), which drew heavily from his fieldwork. For over forty years Professor Haimendorf travelled, filmed and wrote extensively on the peoples of the Central and Eastern Himalayas and Central India. There are not many anthropologists who can rival his 3650 pages of published ethnography describing a dozen tribal groups.

As a person, Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf was courteous, genial and extremely personable, with a wide circle of friends. After anthropology, his second love was the classical music of his native, Austria, which helped to give him solace in old age though he never took to modern opera productions. Most of his colleagues were unaware that he was a devout Catholic who went to Mass every Sunday when in London. After his wife Betty's demise in 1987, he suffered a slow and distressing decline. His Requiem Mass at the Carmelite Church in South Kensington on 23 June last year included an address by his successor at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Professor Adrian Mayer; a translation of the song 'Happy we are' written by Gond villagers about the return of Haimendorf and superb choral renderings of Bach and Mozart. ❖



Livelihoods of Rural Telangana

Telangana, Rayalaseema and Andhra are three distinct regions in Andhra Pradesh state. Telangana region consists with 10 districts namely Adilabad, Karimnagar, Warangal, Khammam, Nalgonda, Mahaboobnagar, Sangareddy, Nizamabad and Hyderabad.

Telangana is the largest region of the state covering 41.47% of its total area and it has also 40.54% of total state population. It falls under the semi-arid tropics. The region is on the Deccan Plateau and regularly faces drought and has high levels of chronic poverty.

Agriculture and agriculture based livelihoods are prominent in rural areas of Telangana. Most of the area is rain fed in Telangana. This region is in high altitude and not well suited for major irrigation through gravity flow. In earlier times minor irrigation system was developed in every village in the Telagana region by the rulers like Kakathiyas, Qutubshahi and Asafjahi rulers. The tanks were the core in the irrigation system which was providing support to livelihoods of people at various levels in the region.

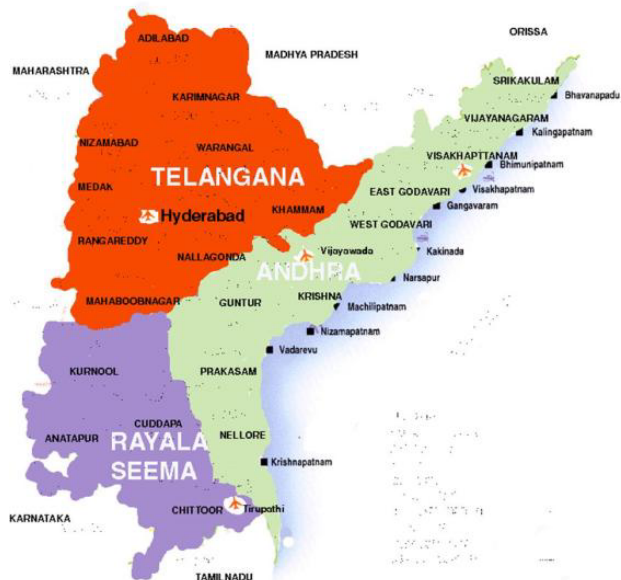
Telangana witnesses approximately 975mm of rainfall between June and September every year. Paddy is cultivated drawing water from the tank irrigation system and wells.

Agriculture and agriculture based livelihoods are prominent in rural areas of Telangana. Most of the area is rain fed in Telangana. This region is in high altitude and not well suited for major irrigation through gravity flow. In earlier times minor irrigation system was developed in every village in the Telagana region by the rulers like Kakathiyas, Qutubshahi and Asafjahi rulers. The tanks were the core in the irrigation system which was providing support to livelihoods of people at various levels in the region.

Maize, jowar, pulses, groundnut and sesame crops are cultivated in dry land areas as rain fed crops. Warangal and Nizamabad are major rice producing areas in Telangana region.

Most farmers in

Telangana region are small farmers. According to the latest agricultural data (covering 1995-96), 59% of farmers are marginal farmers own less than 1 hectare of land and 23% own between 1 and 2 hectares. In other words, 82% of farmers belong to the category of small and marginal farmers who own less than 2 hectares of land. Together, they have access to only 43% of the 4.3 million hectares of land cultivated in Telangana (out of 11 million hectares under cultivation in the entire state in 1998-1999). It is



noteworthy that landless, small and marginal farmers own 70% of the livestock raised in the region, comprising of cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat, pigs and poultry.

In spite of recent socio-economic changes to agriculture and agrarian structures, the proportion of food crops grown has remained high in the Telangana region: 73% of all cultivated land is under food crops. This is compared to only 38% in the neighbouring Rayalaseema region, where commercial crops like groundnut have displaced the traditional millet-based cropping systems.

The contrast between the state's hinterlands and its coastal belts goes beyond environmental factors. It extends into two essential cultural domains, language and food culture. While sorghum and millets are the traditional staples of the Deccan Plateau, rice is the major cereal consumed in the coastal areas. Millets are strongly associated with the rural identity and the slow, seasonal rhythm of life on the Deccan. The difference can be observed at various levels in terms of social, political and economical context.

Apart from agriculture, a significant number of people are working in coal mines in Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Warangal. Most of the people in the region depend on Toddy tapping and beedi making. In the recent period, due to urbanization, people are opting for jobs mostly in the service sector and migrating to other states and nearby cities in search of livelihoods which can pay them well so they can cope with the rising cost of living. ❖

Towards Inclusive Growth!

Towards Inclusive Growth!

Happy Krishnaasthami! Happy Ramzan! Happy Ganesh! Happy Teachers' Day!

Many International Days just passed by – for instance - World Humanitarian Day (19 August), and International Literacy Day (8 September). September/October is a month of international days. We await International Day of Democracy (15 September), International Day of Peace (21 September), Right to Know Day (28 September), International Day of Older Persons (1 October), International Day of Non-Violence (2 October), World Humanitarian Action Day (8 October), International Day of Rural Women (15 October), World Food Day (16 October), and International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October).

Anna Hazare's 13-day fast yielded a 'Sense of the House' resolution of Lok Sabha on Lok Pal! Investigations into Jagan's wealth are in progress! Meanwhile, CBI arrests 'mining' Gali Janardhan Reddy. Telangana agitation takes up a decisive step forward: All People's Strike since 13 September.

The streams of thought and work that continued to dominate the month include livelihoods and collectives of the poorest, vulnerable and other poor.

Planning Commission has released its approach paper for 12th Five Year Plan – towards Faster. Sustainable and More Inclusive Growth.

It aims 9 percent growth for the Twelfth Plan. To achieve rapid growth, the economy will have to overcome constraints posed by limited energy supplies, increase in water scarcity, shortages in infrastructure, problems of land acquisition for industrial development and infrastructure, and the complex problem of managing the urban transition associated with rapid growth. Greater efforts also need to be made in agriculture, health and education to ensure inclusion of the most excluded and sometimes invisible parts of our population. All sections of society – government, farmers, businesses, labour and concerned citizens – have to adopt newer, more effective ways of pursuing their activities, so that we can collectively achieve our lofty goals.

For growth to be more inclusive, Planning Commission argues for –

Better performance in agriculture; Faster creation of jobs, especially in manufacturing; Stronger efforts at health, education and skill development; Improve effectiveness of programmes directly aimed at the poor; Special programmes for socially vulnerable groups; and Special plans for disadvantaged/backward regions

Further Planning Commission articulates –

Target at least 4% growth for agriculture, particularly non-cereal foods, animal husbandry and fisheries; Technology must focus on land productivity and water use efficiency; Farmers need better functioning markets, infrastructure, storage and food processing; Expand RKVY; Redesign MGNREGS to increase contribution to land productivity and rain-fed

agriculture, but with convergence with NRLM; Higher priority to watershed management; Universalization of secondary education by 2017 and Raising Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education to 20 percent by 2017; Expenditure on health by Centre and States to increase from 1.3% of GDP to at least 2.0%, and perhaps 2.5% of GDP by end of 12th Plan;

Team Anna has lesson for us, livelihoods/development workers in the pursuit of poverty reduction. Big Picture, Visioning, Belief that resources flow in, Strategic Planning, being always ready with a plan, willing to revise it as many times as required, plan broken into tiny pieces of micro-plans, diligent start-up/initial plan, a small team of committed and tireless workers with complementary skills (12 for Jesus, 12 for Vivekananda!), Teamwork yet clear individual accountability, faith in the leader, drawing in charismatic social, religious and public leaders into the fold, open to supporters without yielding the leadership, symbols (name, logo, brand building), ICT use, working with/on media, feed the media faster than media gets information on its own, access to quick logistics as and when required, etc., are the key elements in taking the effort forward. Hope we keep them in mind when we build 'efforts' towards reducing poverty.

Of course, we need to learn to be at least as good as what we ask others to be. We need above board in legal/statutory compliance. We need to keep accounts of

every pie that comes in and that goes out. We need to be reasonably careful in spending the money despite its abundance realizing that we are only trustees.

Recently, when National Council of Rural Institutes want to establish a national award to a rural institute with outstanding performance in working with the poor, we have asked them to look at and score on the following criteria –

Poorest and Most Vulnerable Focus, Significance and Uniqueness of the contribution, Demonstrated loyalty to the work, community, theme in the long-run, Outreach, Impact of the contribution, Community's stake, Scalability and Replicability, Self-reliance and Future Sustainability, Vision and Plan Forward, Leadership, Governance, Management and Systems Committee's Overall Impression on Loyalty's, Gandhian Thought, Hope we are not off-the-mark.

Sustainable livelihoods and decent quality of life in the context of inclusive growth paradigm is in the organization of the poor, the poorest and the most vulnerable so that they realize the benefit of the growth and access their rights and entitlements and the right to live, decent livelihood portfolio, good education and good health. The architecture of the institutions of the poor owned by the poor with human resources from within them working for them is the way forward. This is hard work spanning over long periods of time. Let us be in the movement to build leaders and mentors to build and be with this architecture. ❖

Perspectives

G Muralidhar

Livelihoods' Collectives

In India apart from the SHGs there are large numbers of collectives exist that have been active since pre independence in various communities (*These communities are cooperatives, producers groups, trade unions, Hawker unions, Farmers Unions, Employees unions, Women organizations, Dalit Associations, Tribal unions, Disable groups, Consumers groups, Watershed groups, Water User Associations (WUA), Vana Samraksnana Samithi (VSS), Labour groups*). These collectives are working in many fields to deliver economic benefits and social development of the communities. They are working on many kinds of problems, waging numerous struggles for the people's rights and facilitating various kinds of services to the members and also to the non members.





आस्था क्रेडिट को-ऑपरेटिव सोसायटी लि.
AASTHA CREDIT CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.

.Cooperatives: Cooperatives are voluntary associations to meet the common economic, social and cultural needs of the members. These associations are jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprises. These cooperatives are worked for the needs of the members and wider interests of the community. The cooperative movement in India is 107 years old with the first cooperative being setup in 1904. The cooperatives can be classified into different categories based on their objectives, purposes and activities. They work for consumers, small farmers and small producers. The values like self –help, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity, voluntary and open membership, democratic control, economic Participation, autonomy, training and information and concern for

Co-operatives

Values:

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles:

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice .

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership:

Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control:

Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation:

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence:

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter to agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information:

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives:

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community:

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.



communities are the core issues for the cooperatives.

There are many kinds of cooperatives in India like producers' cooperatives, consumers' cooperatives, marketing cooperatives, housing cooperatives, credit cooperatives and farming cooperatives etc. Cooperatives have influenced communities to create well known models like AMUL, Mulkanoor Cooperative Society, Shri [Mahila Griha Udyog](#) Lijjat Papad and SEVA.

The "Cooperative Credit Societies Act, 2004" came into existence at a time when farmers were facing indebtedness and poverty some initiatives were anticipated to address these problems. Today nearly 5.45 Lakh individual cooperatives are functioning across the country. This is the largest movement in the country.

Some forms of cooperatives are discussed below in brief to understand their need and functioning.

Consumers' Cooperatives: These cooperative societies are formed to provide products and services at cheaper rates to the consumer by reducing the distance between the producer and consumer in the supply chain. These societies establish direct linkages with the manufacturers and wholesalers' and they purchase in bulk and sell those at cheaper rates among the members.

Producers' Cooperatives: These societies are formed for small scale/micro producers or manufacturers . These societies help their members in establishing units, procuring inputs, processing and marketing the products and services.

Marketing Cooperatives: These cooperative societies are formed to market the producer's products. These societies bridge the gap between the producers and consumers by restricting the role of middle men in marketing

the members' products. These societies purchase the products from small producers and store the products in warehouses and sell to the wholesalers or companies directly at favorable time.

Housing Cooperatives: These cooperative societies are voluntary associations. These societies' purchase land from and construct houses for the members and transfer the houses to them. The members will pay the amount for houses in installments. Some societies provide financial support in association with the various financial institutions to the members for house construction.

Credit Cooperatives: These societies provide credit to the members at low interest rates. They collect funds from their members in the name of share capital and deposits. These societies help the people from the clutches of money lenders.

Cooperative Farming Societies: These cooperative societies formed to provide higher profits to the small and marginal farmers. The members contribute capital, land and labour for collective farming activities.

In dairy sector AMUL (Anand Milk Union Limited) is biggest model in dairy cooperative sector. AMUL was founded in 1946 and has a turnover of \$2.17 billion (2010-11) with 735 employees and 2.8 million milk producers. It has largest milk processing capacity in Asia. It has established 48 sales offices, 3000 wholesale distributors and 5 lakh retailers spread across the country. It exports its products worth with Rs 157 crores to 37 countries.

Apart from these cooperative societies, there are other manifestations of collectives which are playing significant roles in serving the needs of the communities. Some of them are trade unions, farmers associations and agriculture labour unions, women associations, dalit organizations, tribal organizations, shrama shakthi sangalu (SSS), watershed groups and water users associations



(WUA), vana samrakshana samiti (VSS),

Trade Unions: The trade unions are formed predominantly for economic benefits and for improved working conditions. These trade unions have political motivations and ideologies. There are many national trade unions like All Indian Trade Unions Council (AITUC), Indian National Trade Union Council (INTUC), and Centre for Indian Trade Unions (CITU), Bharathiya Majdhur Sangh (BMS). Many of these were established before independence. There are many trade unions at state level like Singareni Karmika Sangam (SKS), Chathishgadh Mukthi Morcha (CMM). Most of the trade unions are affiliated to the various political parties while some are independent.

The trade unions initially worked on the agenda of improving working conditions in factories. In 1875 the first commission was appointed to investigate the working conditions in factories. Based on the commission's recommendations The First Factory Act was enacted in 1881.

There are various commissions and committees formed for the improvement of working conditions and consider issues raised by the trade unions struggles. Wage board, Labour welfare departments, Central Industrial Relations Machinery and Indian Labour Conference are some such bodies instituted to look into the welfare of workers in the factories.

In 1990 New Economic Policies (NEP) were introduced in Indian. Under the NEP regime, the government has implemented many reforms with Liberalization, globalization and privatization as their essence. State led welfare economy gradually shifted to market oriented economy. This also meant there was a shift in labour policies. **The balance was now tipped in favour of the industry. Elements such as contract jobs The lockouts were used to pressure the workers to accept the existing conditions in factories. The workers were forced to accept the situation. These were weakened the trade unions. Workers lost their rights including their job security.**

Gradually, most of the trade unions began to confine themselves to the economic benefits to the worker like wages, pension, bonus, Provident Fund (PF), allowances. Apart from these economic demands the trade unions fight for the rights of workers in workplace. Most of the trade unions did not have a social or cultural agenda of the workers.

The Chhattisgarh Mines Workers' Union (CMMU) which belongs to Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (CMM) created a new model in trade union movement in India (CMMU was



founded by Sankar Guha Niyogi).

It believes that trade unions should concentrate on the life of the workers as a whole and not just the 8 hours they spend at the workplace. CMMU runs a hospital for the workers family members. The CMMU also provides employment opportunities to the unemployed in the Biloy and Rajpura areas. The CMMU also waged struggles against liquor consumption and abuse at various levels. CMMU's motto is "Sangharsh aur Nirman" and it has implemented it in a creative manner.

The trade unions cover only 5% of the workers who are working in the organized sector. Large number of workers are in unorganized sector working with low wages, inhuman working conditions, without rights including job security. The trade unions are facing new challenges which were designed by the privatization and globalization. The trade unions should restructure themselves to meet these challenges.

Farmers Associations and Agriculture Labour Unions: Most of the farmer associations belong to the various political parties. Only very few are apolitical. Farmer's association's raise many issues like pesticides, fertilizers, seeds prices increase, minimum support price, crop insurance, crop loans and genetically modified seeds. Agriculture Labour Unions have been formed by leftist parties like CPI, CPM and CPI (ML) parties. It mainly concentrates on issues like land distribution to the landless agriculture labour, wage increase and demand to provide work.

Women Associations: Women associations are formed to secure and protect rights of women. These organizations work on various issues related to women in many ways like waging struggles, formation women council centers, running women health care centers. Most of the women associations mainly waged struggles against attacks on women, repressions practices on women in the name of traditions, equal rights for women. Some organizations are running skill based training centers along

with struggles.

Dalit Organizations:

Dalit organizations are usually formed for to protect the interests of the dalit community. These organizations work on various dalit issues like protecting dalit rights, providing legal assistance, providing education and assisting to access various government schemes for dalits. They also fight against discriminatory practices prevalent against dalits.



Tribal Organizations: Tribal organizations voice concerns regarding rights of tribal and providing services to the tribals. Various activities are taken for economic and social benefits of tribal. These groups are working for providing education facilities, health facilities and legal services to the tribal. Along with these activities some groups are waging struggles for protection rights on forest and land also waging struggles against money lenders exploitation and forest department atrocities. Few tribal groups which are influenced by extreme leftist parties are waging armed struggles against exploitation and atrocities.

Shrama Shakthi Sangalu (SSS): Under MGNREGA Shrama Shakthi Sangalu (SSS) were initiated in Andhra Pradesh for to access work days in MGNREGA and monitor the work. Each group has one mate to coordinate the work at community level.

Watershed Groups and Water Users Associations (WUS): Watershed Groups and Water Users Associations

(WUS) are established for watershed and tank management by the community. Recognizing the fact that innovations can be sustained when there is sufficient community participation in a systematic way, NGOs and also government have formed watershed groups and WUS. These groups participate in designing and implementation of the watersheds and tank management.

Vana Samrakshana Samiti (VSS): Vana Samrakshana Samitis (informal forest protection collectives) are involved in planting and conserving forests.

Apart from these there are various other groups like Hawker groups, street vendors groups, occupational and work based groups, slum dweller groups, auto driver unions, displaced people associations, disaster victims groups, Dabba Vala Association in Bombay and issue based groups are functioning at various levels in the country today.

Since pre-independence, collectives, irrespective of their being formal or informal, have played a significant role in addressing the needs and promoting a sense of solidarity in communities. They augmented the community's access to better markets and in the process increased their income. Collectives in their myriad form generated awareness among the groups at various levels.

Importantly, collectives have been instrumental in providing bargaining power to their members thereby supporting them in their socio-economic development. Collectives have been agents of development that have helped the marginal and vulnerable to reach their needs and fulfill their demands which were otherwise difficult to realize. ❖



September 5 Teacher's Day

Nursery

Srinivas reddy belongs to Etuka Nellore Village, Punganoor mandal, Chittoor district. He studied up to 10th class. He is married and has two sons. His sons attend school. Srinivas owns seven acres of land.

	Particulars:	Amount
1	Fixed Investment: Land, Water tank, bore, Trays, wire net and others	100000-00
	Expenditure:	
2	One employee for watering monthly salary	6000-00
3	Labor charges for monthly cost	2800-00
4	Seeds cost monthly (Tamota,brinjal,mirchy)	3000-00
5	Fertilizer and pesticide monthly cost	3500-00
6	Compost cost monthly	2000-00
A	Total monthly Expenses	17300-00
	Income:	
7	Monthly income by sale of Chilli	18000-00
8	Monthly income by sale of Tomato	6000-00
9	Monthly income by sale of Brinjal	5000-00
B	Total Monthly Income	29000-00
	Total Profit (B-A)	11700-00

Like other farmers in Etuka Nellore, Srinivas also depends on agriculture for income. Earlier, farmers could not access plants for horticulture easily. So, they had to go to Punganoor (the mandal headquarter) in order to purchase horticulture plants. It was the only nursery in the vicinity of a few villages and the supply fell way too short of the demand. Srinivas Reddy saw this gap and sensed a viable opportunity for setting up a nursery.

He started the nursery on his own land. Initially, he required an amount of Rs 1,20,000/- to set up the nursery. He had Rs 50000/- as savings and borrowed the remaining amount from his relatives at 24% rate of interest. Srinivas Reddy is now running three nurseries in the mandal. ❖

Doing Bit For My Family

Q. What is your name?

A. My name is Madanala Radha. I am 42 years old.

Q. Where are you from?

A. My native place is Athinaram Village, Narsapur mandal, Medak District.

Q. Where do you reside in Hyderabad?

A. We live in Nehru Nagar, Bagh Lingampally in Hyderabad. We have been living here for the last 30 Years.

Q: Do you have any property in Hyderabad?

A: Yes, we have two plots in the apartments which the government gave us.

Q. What is your educational qualification?

A. I discontinued after completing class 9 as my father thought it is futile to educate girl children.

Q. How many members are there in your family?

A. There are eight members in our family. We have three sons and one of them is married. My uncle and aunt also stay with us.

Q. What do your family members do?

A. My husband has been working in Slate School as a driver for the last seven years and my eldest son also works in the school as an accountant. My second son is working in a TATA showroom near Uppal bus depot. My youngest son is in the second year of engineering. I run a *kirana* shop. My uncle and aunt are aged and therefore do not work.

Q: How much amount spending on your children's education?

A: The eldest and second sons have finished their education. Presently only our youngest son is studying. We pay Rs 30,000/- per annum for his college fees. The actual fee is Rs. 60,000 but my son is getting a scholarship of Rs. 30,000 from the government.

Q. Do you have any assets/property in your native place?

A. Yes, we have four acres of land that receives no irrigation. We have been leasing out that land for the last thirty years. We get two bags of rice from the tenants once in a year. The land I well looked after by the tenants. We also own a house in the village.

Q. Why did you come to Hyderabad?

A: We suffered losses in agriculture. We used to cultivate to paddy and sugarcane. Our investment exceeded the income we got from our produce. Due to this loss we decided to leave our village for Hyderabad as advised by family and friends.

Q. How many years has it been since you opened your *kirana* shop?

A. We opened this shop eight years ago (2003).

Q: What are the items you sell in the shop?

A: I sell items like biscuits, cigarettes, chocolates, crane packets and small sweet and hot items, match boxes, water packets and etc.

Q. Where do you purchase these items?

A. My Husband purchases the items from wholesale shops in Narayanaguda and Chikkadpalli once a month. Some items are delivered by business agents to the shop. After selling the items I pay the agents their share. Sometimes my sons also help me in procuring items.

Q. What is the monthly profit from this business?

A. I earn a monthly profit Rs 3000/- from this business. Sometimes, it is more than Rs 3000/-.

Q. What was the purpose of starting this business?

A. We had to meet expenses like our children's higher education. Since my husband's salary was not sufficient to cater to those needs, we decided to start the shop.

Q. What kind of challenges do you face while running the shop?

A. There is a wine shop near my shop and because of this I face some problems when some people drink and come to my shop and argue. Sometimes, even children come to my shop to buy cigarettes but I did not give them any as they (cigarettes) are harmful. I have my children, how can I support such harmful practices. During rainy season there is a dip in the business. Earlier, I had never engaged in any work but now I am determined to continue with the business despite the challenges. My husband is supportive and encourages me to continue.

Q. Who looks after financial matters in the family (like distributing the income for specific purposes)?

A. My husband and I have been taking care of finances in our family.

Q: Has there been any change in your living standard in the past eight years?

A: There have been some changes in our standard of living. We consume nutritious food, purchase good clothes and we purchase TV. We also gave good education to our children. There are lot of changes in our life style.

Q. Tell us about your future?

A. We will expand our business after my husband will retire from his job. I have been saving up for this purpose.

Q. Do you have any message/learning that you would like to share with others?

A: I have seen some people waste away their incomes for unnecessary purposes My suggestion is that we should save some amount from income for the future. ❖

Seeds

Seeds are a primary input in agriculture. The efficacy of other agricultural inputs is determined by the quality of seeds used. The availability of quality seeds, appropriate for agro-climatic conditions in sufficient quantity and at affordable prices to farmers has long been a focal point in the Indian agriculture policy.

There is a strong co-relationship between the quality of seeds, seed replacement rate and the yield. Seed replacement rate can be explained as the percentage of area sown out of total area of crop planted in the season using certified seeds other than the farm saved seed.

Seed cleaning is done in three steps:

- * Pre-Conditioning and Pre-Cleaning Operations;
- * Basic seed cleaning operation; and
- * Upgrading the quality of cleaned seed

Pre-conditioning and Pre-cleaning:

Pre conditioning involves shelling, debearding, of seeds. This is a necessary step to the remove impurities such as stones and clods. Also, seeds which are larger in size than desired, lighter in weight and smaller in size than the crop seed are all removed.

Basic Seed Cleaning:

The seeds are cleaned and graded in this step. Some varieties of seeds do not require any further cleaning after this stage and are made into final products.

Upgrading the Quality of Cleaned seed:

The various processing operations conducted after basic cleaning to further improve seed quality are regarded as upgrading operations. The choice of upgrading operation required depends on the type of contaminants and crop seed.

The Indian Seed program complies to the limited generation system for seed multiplication in a phased manner. In this system there are three generations of seeds:

- * Breeder seed;
- * Foundation Seed;
- * Certified Seed.



Breeder Seed:

Breeder seed is born out of the nucleus seed. It is produced by the

originating breeder or by a sponsored breeder.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) along with the National Research Centers, All India Coordinated Research Project of different crops, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) are responsible for the production of breeder seeds.

ICAR also promotes sponsored breeder seed production program through the National Seeds Corporation (NSC), State Seeds Corporation (SSCs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) etc.

The allocation of responsibility for production of breeder seed is done on the basis of the facilities and capabilities of the various centers. made to various centers as per the facilities and capabilities available at the centers and the availability of nucleus seed of a particular variety.

The production of breeder seed is reviewed every year by ICAR-DAC in the annual seed review meeting.

Foundation Seed:

Foundation seed is the progeny of breeder seed or from a foundation seed whose origin can be traced back directly to a breeder seed. The responsibility for production of foundation seed has been entrusted to the NSC, SFCl, State Seeds Corporation, State Departments of Agriculture and private seed producers, who have the necessary infrastructure facilities. Foundation seed is required to meet the standards of seed certification prescribed in the Indian Minimum Seeds Certification Standards, both at the

field and laboratory testing.

Certified Seed:

Certified seed originates from the foundation seed. Certified seeds are required to meet the standards of seed certification as laid down in the Indian Minimum Seeds Certification Standards, 1988. In case of self-pollinated crops, certified seeds can also be produced from certified seeds provided their origin does not go beyond three generations from foundation seed.

Certified seed production is organized through State Seed Corporation, Department of Agricultural Farms, Cooperatives etc. The certified seeds are distributed through department outlets at block and village level, cooperatives, outlets of seed corporations, private dealers. The efforts of the State Governments are being supplemented by NSC and SFCI which produce varieties of national importance. The production of certified seed by NSC and State Seed Corporations is mainly organized through contract growing arrangements with progressive farmers. SFCI undertakes seed production on its own farms. The private sector has also started to play an important role in the supply of quality seeds of vegetables and crops like hybrid maize, sorghum, Bajra, cotton, castor, sunflower, paddy etc.

The state governments prepare estimates of the requirement of certified seeds on the basis of the area sown under different crop varieties, area covered by hybrid and self-pollinated varieties as well as the seed replacement rate achieved.

Policy Initiatives:

The Seeds Act, 1966 marked the first major legislative measure with regard to regulation of quality of seeds. The Central Seed Committee (CSC) and the Central Seed Certification Board (CSCB) are apex agencies set up under the Act to supervise the quality control of seeds.

The New Seed Development Policy (1988 – 1989) was yet another significant milestone in the seed sector. This policy was instrumental in transforming the very character of the



seed industry by ensuring access to the best quality of seed and planting material available to Indian farmers. The policy opened up avenues for private investments in the seed industry. This saw the entry of Indian corporate and MNCs alike into the Indian seed sector with a strong R&D base for product development. Emphasis shifted to high value hybrids of cereals and vegetables and new age products such as Bt. Cotton. This helped ensure that the seed industry was farmer-centric and market driven.

The National Seeds Policy, 2002 concentrated essentially on variety development, variety protection, marketing infrastructure, export and import of seeds, promotion of domestic private seed industry and a strong monitoring system.

In 2004 the Seeds Bill was introduced in Parliament. The bill focused on registration of kinds and varieties of seeds, registration of seed producers and processing units, registration of seed dealers, regulation of sale of seed, seed certification – Seed dealers to be Registered

- Regulation of Sale of Seed and Seed Certification
- Seed Analysis and Seed Testing
- Export and Import of Seeds and Planting Material
- Offences and Punishment.

Certification:

Certification of seeds is an area that has received immense importance as is evident in the policies mentioned above. Seed certification is a measure taken to maintain a continuous supply of high quality seeds and also to ensure the physical identity and genetic purity of seeds. Seed certification is a legally sanctioned system for quality control of seed multiplication and production.

The National Seeds Corporation was established in 1963 and was the first to take up seed certification. A legal status was granted to seed certification with the enactment of the Indian Seed Act, 1966 and formulation of Seed Rules in 1968.

The Seed Act, 1966 called for the establishment of seed certification agencies in all the states. Maharashtra, followed by Karnataka was the first State to establish an official seed certification agency in 1970. Currently, 22 states have their own seed certification agencies.

Seed certification is a process that involves numerous processes.

An administrative check on the origin of the propagating material is conducted to verify if the seed is from an approved source and of designated class.

Field inspection is undertaken to evaluate the growing crop in the field for varietal purity.

A Sample of the variety is inspected by conducting lab tests

to assess their planting value.

A bulk Inspection is conducted with the purpose of checking homogeneity of the bulk seed produce and gauge its purity vis-a-vis the standard sample.

Samples are drawn from the source and final seed produced and are planted side by side along with the standard samples of the variety. By comparison it can be determined whether the varietal purity and health of the produced seed are equal to the results based on field inspection. This is known as the control plot test.

There is another test known as the grow out test. The samples are drawn from lots that are grown in the field along with the standard samples. Samples of growing plants alongside standard samples are observed for the varietal purity. This test is necessary for the elimination of the sub-standard seed lots.

Seeds Cooperatives:

There are numerous agricultural cooperative societies in the country that focus on providing agricultural inputs to their members. These collectives exist at the apex, state and district levels also.

KRIBHCO:

Kisan Bharati Cooperative limited was established under the Multi-State cooperative societies act 2002. It has the backing of the Government of India, Indian Farmers' Fertilizers Organization, National Cooperative Development Corporation and other agricultural cooperatives in India. It's main function is manufacturing fertilizers. At present, the government has a share of 50.5% in KRIBHCO and the rest belongs to agriculture cooperatives.

Seeds are also an important product of KRIBHCO. Wheat, paddy, gram, pea, arhar, urad, Moong, lentil, mustard, soyabean and castor seeds are manufactured and



marketed by KRIBHCO. It has ten seed processing plants in six states: Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

KRIBHCO markets its products through Primary Agriculture Cooperatives (PACs), district level marketing collectives, and their apex federations. KRIBHCO also has its own outlets known as Krishk Bharati Sewa Kendras (KBSKs). KRIBHCO's products are marketed through this network of organisations in 16 states in the country.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED):

NAFED was established on 2nd October, 1958 under the Multi-state Cooperatives Societies Act. It has a membership of 836 members. Its members are marketing collectives at the district, state and apex levels, tribal commodity federations, PACs, Government of India, NCCF and other national cooperative organizations.

NAFED's focal area is promotion and development of marketing, processing of agricultural, horticultural and forest produce. Its key products in seeds include oilseeds and pulses.

Dharmarajupalli Foundation Seed Cooperative:

was registered in 1999. It is located in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh. Its membership stands at 151 farmers and offers 12 seed varieties to its members. It distributes foundation seeds to its farmers. It has partnered with the Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University in AP to procure these seeds.

Dharmarajupalli Foundation Seed Cooperative is a success story that has marketed its produce in most districts of AP except Srikakulam and Rayalseema and also in Karnataka through a network of 70 dealers. The cooperative has helped its members to earn an average of Rs. 80 extra per quintal.

The seed sector in the country is diverse and given the ideal agro-climate across the country the scope for producing high quality seeds is vast and has been aptly tapped.

The future of the sector looks bright and the seed sector is likely to remain a crucial aspect of agriculture policy in the country for years to come. NSC, SFCI, States Seeds Corporations and other agencies are expanding their product range, volume and value of seed handled, level of seed distribution to the un-reached areas. The past four decades have been instrumental in the sector and have established competent seed producers and seed dealers in various parts of the country. They have also gained specialization in scientific methods of seed improvement which are commercially viable.

Over the years, quality of seeds has been rigorously upgraded to match up to international standards. India has engaged the top agriculture research centres in the country to sustain and enhance the quality of seeds. ❖

Expansion Threatens Pochampally Handlooms

The Pochampally handlooms (or Ikkat, or tie and dye handloom), in Nalgonda district, Andhra Pradesh, is under threat. An expanding Hyderabad urban agglomeration is likely to swamp into villages that weave and eke out living out of hand-made textiles. Draft Hyderabad Master Plan 2031 announced recently, and is currently on the public domain for comments and suggestions, proposes to include most of the villages that are wholly or partially dependent on hand-woven textiles. These textiles are world famous for their designs and the kind of weaving. This expansion is likely to impact at least 10,000 families of handloom weavers, in about 15 villages.

Nalgonda district is on the eastern side of Hyderabad. This is part of a Deccan plateau dry land region, where ecological resources are low. Because of proximity to Hyderabad, urban influence on many aspects of life is significant. However, people do not have adequate resources to improve their standards of living.

This district has the problem of flourosis, as they depend on groundwater for their needs. Nalgonda district is known for tie and dye (Ikkat in Hindi and Chitiki in Telugu) variety weaving in both cotton and silk. This is a unique style of weaving. Traditionally, silk saris are woven. In recent years, over a one-half decade, weavers have changed to home furnishings as well, apart from dress material (women wear). Most of them belong to Padmashali caste. There are a very small percentage of other castes.

In S. Lingotam village, there are about 1400 families residing, of which 175 families are dependent on handloom livelihoods. About 115 families have migrated to other areas, or other professions.

An unrecognized positive feature of handloom sector is its self-sustaining mechanism. Continuation of skills, resources and capacities was ensured through inheritance. Handloom profession was also open for all types of communities.

This is the most eco-friendly production method. There is no demand for electricity and thus there are no energy impacts. The instrument of handloom is an independent, simple and autonomous technology. This sector should be the obvious choice for policy makers interested in reduction of negative impacts on environment and ecology and concept of sustainable development.

Indian handloom sector has been brought to its knees in the last 15 years by apathetic and discriminatory policies, declining government budget allocations, market distortions, declining access to production inputs and raw material (including finance, yarn and colours), rising cost of living and unfair market practices by competitors.

In this external scenario, wracked by constant changes, handloom weaver families are finding it difficult to continue their livelihoods. In the last one year, rising costs of living and negative growth in wages have further pushed them into debts. Rising raw material costs have increased the cost of production. With price competition in textile markets, rising of cost of production led to real time decrease in wages. Thus, the incomes of handloom weaver families have not increased. The basket of government schemes for handloom sector remained the same in allocations and implementation. Access to working capital is still a major problem for handloom weaver. Cooperatives and other institutions established for the growth and welfare of handloom livelihoods are still in the red.

Despite such a dismal situation, a positive factor is the continuation of the market demand for handloom products. For various reasons, costs of food grains and other food have increased. Inflation levels have also increased, increasing stress on the income and expenditure of handloom weaver families. In addition, prices of yarn and colours have also increased which depressed the income further. Prices of cotton yarn and silk yarn have jumped to more than 30 percent in the last six months. In many places, investment on production has dried up with costs of production increasing and no commensurate rise in market prices of handloom products.

In some places, suicides by handloom weavers in debts have sharply increased. With rising costs of production, there is now dearth of work for handloom weavers. Migration to other places and other professions has become imminent for many families.

However, the latest threat is the inclusion of many of these villages, including Bhoodan Pochampally, the epicenter for this kind of production, in urban Hyderabad, would increase the cost of living. Most of the weavers do not have other assets, except probably the house in which they live. Handloom livelihood is likely to get subsumed in the fast-changing social-scope of urban Hyderabad.

It is time people, who love hand-woven textiles, ikkat handlooms and the only world-famous Telangana brand of hand textiles, woke up to this threat. This expansion needs to be stopped. A campaign needs to be launched to "Save Pochampally Handlooms", from this urban threat. People and the villagers have not been consulted. Many of them do not even know about this 'colonization'. These simple communities, who go about their livelihood, oblivious to the changes around them, are threatened by urban agglomeration of Hyderabad. ❖

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Two Tribal Villages

Forests & lakes surrounded by hills, an increasing number of tree plantations, and many small streams that have washed the land to reveal its true rocky nature in Konda Dora tribe villages at Anantgiri forests near Vizag. Chillapakala. In the village, the traditional houses are imitations of hills and rise like lumps from the ground. There are 32 families, ananganwadi, a primary school and a MACs center. Chillapakala is 18 Kms from the district mandal Devarapalli and is connected to it with a rickety old road. Traveling one-way on a shared jeep takes about Rs.30/- . The jeep pulls into the road, after getting packed and loaded – both with people. A man sits on the bonnet, right in front of the driver (utter disbelief).

The other village Billakanda is about 6 Kms from Chillapakala located on a small hilltop and lacks proper road connectivity for the last half a km of the climb. There are about 17 families and no cement houses. The village has 2-3 small children. I saw one of them and the kid was had malnutrition (with tummy expanded/bulging out). The teacher does not come to the Anganwadi and the parents do not know about the children's nutritional needs.

The main occupations of the inhabitants are NTFP, agriculture and NREGS work (daily labor). Kovel foundation works with the inhabitants to improve their indigenous techniques. They develop or procure the techniques and provide trainings to villages to adopt them. A complete list of their activities is given below:-

1. Providing trainings for scientific/sustainable ways NTFP collection
2. Organizing meetings and working with MACs etc for better administration
3. Providing suggestions to MACs on marketing of products
4. MaToda (*plantations Composting*) (a NABARD project) -

Plantation Program: Implementation of tree plantations programs by the govt.: Distribution of plants/saplings, funds, etc

2. Cooking: Most people in the villages don't have efficient stoves. They have mud stoves (mostly constructed outside the house, but also is sometimes are built inside). They usually cook rice without cooker and use firewood as fuel. The collection of firewood is done from nearby forests. If men go to pick firewood, they take about an hour and if women go, they take half or an hour more. "It's partly because, men find the biggest chunk to bring back and women find smaller chunks based on how well they might burn", the collection of firewood is more problematic during rains, but then everything else also is.

3. Housing: The old style houses have mud walls and

flooring and roofs built from dried toddy leaves. These houses are low cost and have been self constructed by the families.

They require

continuous maintenance, such as polishing the walls and floor with cow dung. The mud walls might need repair if water seeps through the roof in case of a heavy downpour. That is one of the reasons why people started using tiles on the roofs. Even tile roofs let in the water, if it is stormy and get disarranged by the winds. The older style houses are dome/cone shaped, and seem less spacious around the corners. For all these reasons people actually prefer cement houses, which cost more and need one to employ an contractor. They are first required to construct a foundation, and then can apply for support from government housing schemes for poor. The govt. provides them with an amount of Rs.35,000/- and 16 bags of cement for building their houses. One of the locals complained that local authorities shy off from giving them cement bags. These houses are more spacious both inside and outside (strong roof). They can be built over, seem better lit and have a social status associated with them.

4. Sanitation: Sanitation is least of the concerns for villagers. But seeing their lifestyle, it seems that, a toilet that they can at least use during nights would improve their lives slightly. They took large amounts of carbohydrates in their diet (as in semi-polished rice or millets) and have to go outside the village at night times. . This was a personal observation and not a part of any interview.

5. Water (& related health issues): There is no safe water supply in the village, but they seem to have plenty of streams around the



village that acts as a source. Women bring water from them, in traditional pots stacked in a stream. The main problem with water is that it is not clean and having unboiled water can lead to many diseases. Proper water testing needs to be done at several locations and appropriate filter technology needs to be introduced. Due to the unsafe water people are suffering with Fever, Malaria, Typhoid, Diarrhea, etc.

6. Electricity & Lighting: Electricity is available in the lesser remote in villages. It comes for 2 hours in the evening and 1 or 2 hours in the morning. There are many voltage fluctuations. Many people have incandescent light bulbs, which are sure to fuse out now and then, with the amount of fluctuations in the supply. There are no street lights. But I personally failed to see what advantages street lights bring to the village. Most of the people have torches, but hardly anyone has torches that have rechargeable batteries. Such emergency light might also be useful for people. In terms of infrastructure, the electric lines are laid out through the jungle. In case of breaking of a wire, it takes long time for the repair work to happen.

7. Solid waste management: The solid waste can be thrown anywhere there is an open spot. There is no fixed place to throw the garbage. There is also a small amount of plastic waste and as the same starts getting strewn everywhere, it would become a mounting problem sooner or later. Composting with waste is not done, as most farmers have their own cattle and use dung from preparing manure.

8. Education: The schools are very basic. Students are sitting neatly in an Anganwadi school, but saddened to know that the Anganwadi (pre-school) teacher visits the village only once in a week. One or two people in the village have satellite TV. But with electricity coming only for two hours in a day, I was not sure if they could see a lot of programs on it. It made me feel that a community center, with a solar installation, a TV and a few other amenities, would actually make lives of people happier in the village. One can play programs for little children there; it can be used as an Anganwadi in the morning and for other purposes during different times of the day. There "might" be a scope for community cooking and other ideas, as villages are sufficiently small. But I could not get much deeper into the thought or collect feedback from people, as I didn't have something concrete to share with them.

9. Eco-tourism: The place definitely has many eco-tourism possibilities. It's beautiful, safe and people are hospitable. There are many small streams on which one could venture up and down to explore rapids and waterfalls. There are small hills to trek and open areas for camping next to the streams. There is possibility of tourists observing or learning about the culture of tribes in Ananthgiri hills of Vizag. A Saturday shandy would also make a nice itinerary



on such a tour.

10. Improving indigenous technologies: This is one of the most important areas and has direct impact on promoting sustainability at the village level. Kovel foundation has worked on improving many indigenous technologies used by the native tribals for their NTFP collection. It was very interesting. Below are list of some of the indigenous technologies they have improved and added more value at village level.

1. Gum extraction from Gum Karya plant
2. Procuring tamarind and processing and packaging them
3. Honey extraction techniques and using wax byproduct for making candles, etc
4. Amla processing, pulp extraction and packaging
5. Making plates from leaves
6. Making better brooms from Kond Chepuru grass
7. Cultivation of medicinal plants

Finally, to solve any many of these problems, especially that require adoption or up-gradation of technology, community involvement and community initiative is most important. It all comes down to an individual investing the surplus income for future benefits. Most of the Tribals are engaged in NTFP, NREGS and work related to agriculture. They earn about Rs.3000/- per month. A large part of it goes into food and remaining goes into cloths and few other necessities. They save Rs.30/- in SHGs (self help group). Whatever is left, which is about 30-40% of their income, they spend on liquor. Certainly, there is a surplus in income which people can utilize to improve their lives and I believe that people have an ability to understand what is good for them. The need is to reach out to them, give demonstrations to share knowledge and implement solutions along with the communities. ❖

Naval Saini

Covenant Centre for Development

The Covenant Centre for Development (CCD), Madurai, is an institution that has continuously responded to the changing needs of times and in the process created models of development that are novel, viable and replicable.

It was formally started in 1993, to work with school dropouts, youth and women from villages near Madurai. To combat the problem of migration, it started by providing young dropouts with vocational training and mobilizing women groups to improve their economic and social conditions.

The Vision of the CCD is 'Life in understanding and harmony with the Panchabhutas to the path of Karma yoga' Panchabhutas – The five elements of nature defined by traditional Indian Society -Earth, Water, Wind, Fire and Ether.

The CCD states its mission to be 'Building Community based institutions around traditional wisdom to face new challenges'.

farming and coir communities, community based organizations (CBOs) like SHG Federations and coastal resource-based activity groups, and organizational partners from across the country, and well-wishers from around the globe.

Over the years, it has created and managed dynamic social and economic interventions and facilitating creation of community based institutions in these sectors, CCD has evolved a successful rural intervention model and consequent development process that can be adapted and replicated to suit needs and priorities of local (rural) communities

The strategy of the CCD in Organizing Local Resources and Traditional Skills through Enterprise for Community Well-being. CCD believes in development initiatives being rooted in the local environment and utilizing the resources available there; traditional skills and knowledge of the community are the methods and their application and enhancement are an integral part of every initiative of CCD.

CCD's interventions are based on the identification of local and traditional skills and knowledge amidst a community, mobilizing the community as groups and organizing the



Starting with a few vocational training institutions and tuition centers in Pulvakkurai, Virudhunagar district, and villages nearby, today CCD is a large institution that includes a team of over 140 workers, 4 Women Self Help Group (SHG) Federations with over 16,000 women members from more than 300 villages in the districts of Madurai, Sivagangai, Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram, Dindugal and more recently Nagappattinam, Kanyakumari, Theni, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu, networks of artisans, medicinal plant cultivators and collectors, fishing,

community and its local resources towards livelihood improvement.

CCD has primarily worked with the following sections of rural society for the livelihood intervention initiatives:

1. Rural women,
2. Traditional Health Practitioners,
3. Medicinal Plants Based Communities (collectors and cultivators)
4. Agricultural communities,
5. Coastal Communities.

1. Rural Women: In the initial days in Pulvakkurai, CCD found that for ordinary as well as special expenses and circumstances, the women in the villages were forced to

approach money lenders for lack of other credit options, and fell prey to the consequent vicious cycle of high interest rates and more loans. With these women, CCD has succeeded in building an organization around their traditional strength of saving for contingencies and emergencies known in Tamil as Siruvaadu. The organization of the women into savings and microcredit groups saw the immediate result of revival of this traditional habit of saving. A much needed and anticipated outcome was also that the women gradually left the clutches of money lenders, gaining control over their financial conditions and livelihood resources with the help of their own alternate banking system – the kalasam.

2. Traditional Health Practitioners: A disturbing trend that was noted during the studies by CCD in the area of Naattu Vaidhyam (Traditional health practice) was the decline in the population of Naattu Vaidhyars in the region. The study of local health traditions showed that 30% of savings was used for primary health care needs. An informal study conducted in CCD's operational area showed that the majority of the population here preferred construction labour because of the quick ready returns that it brings, and there were not any who seriously considered traditional health practice for an occupation. The occupation of Medicine and health practitioners is also closely linked to the medicinal plants sector and issues related to medicinal plants, their trade and conservation. In order to combat this and revive the Naattu Vaidhya tradition, CCD set about mobilizing, validating and revitalizing health practitioners and their knowledge by way of documentation, consultations and other programs, paving the way for a revival of traditional health practice as a livelihood option.

3. Medicinal Plants Based Communities: CCD's increasingly significant work in the Medicinal Plants sector, both in research with traditional health practitioners and relevant studies, as well as community activity like the training for and promotion of kitchen herbal gardens, led the organization to look at communities that are directly impacted in the medicinal plants sector - the cultivators and collectors of medicinal plants (MP). CCD's commitment to sustainable livelihood motivated the organization to explore new ways of making MP cultivation and collection a sustained revenue-generating community enterprise. MP Farmers and gatherers in the resource rich Natham area were organized into groups. The Gram Mooligai Company Limited (GMCL), an innovative business model, a public limited company where the majority of shares are held by MP gatherer and cultivator groups was floated in 2000. Another MP-allied community enterprise that was started was the Semi-Processing Unit (SPU) for producing value-added medicinal plant products.

4. Agricultural Communities: CCD's interventions are primarily focused in the predominantly dry land tracts of

Tamilnadu, where agriculture is still largely practiced using traditional methods. This includes by default organic agriculture in small and medium land holdings, and utilizing traditional technical practices as well as crop varieties. CCD has found that the returns for the agriculture produce have decreased over the years, thereby forcing the farmers to give up agriculture and migrate to nearby towns in search of employment. The intervention of CCD has been to ensure that farmers get better returns, introduce sustainable agricultural practices, and enhance their market negotiation powers through federating and networking the farmers and setting up of a rural supply chain to give them a captive market in their own neighborhood.

5. Coastal Communities: Since February 2004, CCD has been involved in promoting conservation efforts in the coastal region. Towards this, CCD has been working with several communities in the coastal region, in trying to establish enterprises enabling their traditional and local resources thereby strengthening their livelihood. These include farmers; communities involved in producing coir based products, fisher folk, vendors, artisanal women as well as support service providers. Currently CCD works with coastal communities in four districts involved in 22 different enterprises. CCD is also involved in networking with similar institutions across the country.

Community enterprises: Once the community organizes itself, livelihood support options are jointly explored. During this phase the local Community Enterprises (CE) are built and strengthened through various innovations and support schemes. This gradually leads to a situation where the community gains confidence in itself and works towards regaining control of its livelihood. The local enterprises are also linked with other Community Enterprises and mainstream institutions towards gaining wider understanding, exposure and growth.

I. Mahakalasang Women's Federation: The Mahakalasang Federation, as it is known today, began in a modest way by organizing a small women's group in Pulvakkara village (Narikudi Block, Virudhunagar District), in 1992-3. The Kalasang was formed for the purpose of collective savings, to be forwarded as credit to the members of the group, in times of need. Through word-of-mouth and the social circle of friends and acquaintances, the Kalasang groups expanded steadily. By 1993-94, there were over 68 Kalangsams in 36 hamlets. After 2 years of expansion and consolidation, the first Mahakalasang Federation from Pulvakkara near Madurai, consisting of 68 Kalasang groups, were registered as a Trust in 1996. The second was registered in 1999 from the coastal Suranam area. Natham Mahakalasang Federation from the hilly Natham region was registered in 2000. The Madura Mahakalasang Federation was registered by 2006.

Mahakalasang is organized in a three-tier structure with individuals and groups at each layer having defined roles, responsibilities and activities: - The Kalasang group (inner-most circle, consisting of individual members), the Cluster level consultative committee (middle circle, consisting of groups of kalasams), the Mahakalasang Federation.

The groups and clusters are organized on the basis of their involvement with CCD's long term programmes, i.e., 1) marketing agents of GMCL products, 2) women working in the area of Medicinal plants (MP) conservation and enterprise, 3) Procuring, Processing and Marketing of traditional crop produces, 4) Rural energy products & services 5) Education & Health.

Beyond micro-credit, the Kalasams members have identified 5 categories of enterprise support that they can offer in the village:

I. Individual centered micro enterprise - access to credit and loan, Family based hereditary activities - technological intervention, Group IGP - Income Generation Programme - support in terms of raw material, market, and other resources, Regional resource-based enterprise (the lean seasonal activity) - wherein raw materials and skills are available; finance, technology and infrastructure support is provided, Medicinal Plants (MP) – Medicinal plants based activity like collection, supply as well as semi-processed MP products, promoted as Community Enterprise activities.

II Community Enterprise Model - Gram Mooligai Company Limited: GMCL is the first cooperative, medicinal plants and products public limited company in the country, which is owned by the rural community of MP collectors and cultivators. The majority of shares are held by collectors & cultivators of MPs besides others contributing to MPs conservation & sustainable utilization.

III Aaharam: Aaharam utilizes the GMCL model of a producer-promoted, owned and managed company to procure process and market agricultural products grown or processed locally. Networks of producer groups in different locations manage the local sourcing and processing. The women's' SHGs (Kalasang) also participate in the order mobilizing, issue of indent, collection and repackaging of material and its eventual distribution to the rural consumers.

IV MSMSSK - Federation of Medicinal Plant Gatherers and Cultivators: MSMSSK is an enterprise initiative of CCD, following the Mahakalasang model of functioning. Medicinal plants cultivators and gatherers groups have been organized and these groups form the next working level, clusters, which in turn make the Federation.

V Adharam: Satisfying the low cost and high volume energy requirements of the rural Indian household, which runs largely on firewood based fuel, has been a long-felt need. Towards tackling this need, CCD has initiated Adharam, a Community Enterprise in collaboration with

British Petroleum (BP), in 2006.

Towards achieving self-reliance, sustainable values have been ingrained into the enterprise. These include conservation of local resources that are raw material for the enterprise, adopting conservation practices, continuously interacting with the markets and initiating efforts to meet new demands, innovating in product presentation and marketing, identifying emerging problems and addressing them before hand to stay ahead in the market and continuously creating awareness regarding the uniqueness of its produce and process to its market.

CCD was founded by **Shri. Muthu Velayutham** with whom **Mr. Nadarajan VC, Co-Founder** and CEO, was in association since 1990. Sri Muthu has an indomitable energy and urge to do constructive work with rural communities.

Mr. Nadarajan VC, holds a PGDM from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad (IIMA) - 1987 and M.Sc (Agri) in Agricultural Economics from Tamilnadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore - 1981. He worked with hands on experience and advised as consultant to create community enterprise under different legal frameworks. Establishing financial arrangements / management systems, building up rural supply chain and network of grass root level entrepreneurs have been major activities. In the process, Mr. Nadarajan had in depth interaction with financial institutions, private foundations, venture capitalists, consumers of products and services of community groups and other stakeholders in order to make the enterprises viable. Briefly, the institutions promoted include GMCL (A Public Limited Company), ADHARAM Energy (P) Ltd, AHARAM Traditional Crop Producers' Company Ltd and several Trusts. His past /present and major focus involves facilitation of learning / contribution of aspirants in the above functional areas. Currently this happens through the platform and austere facility created by CCD in Kanyakumari called Sree Bhagavathi Learning Space. ❖



A Great Opportunity, a Serious Danger

A Statement Issued by some individuals and friends in social movements

The Anna Hazare situation invites two common reactions: many dismiss it as a middle class driven “urban picnic”; and others, notably the mainstream media, describe it as just short of a revolutionary movement to establish “people’s power.” The same divide exists among progressives and those concerned with social change. Strategies differ on the basis of where one stands on this divide. The problem, however, is that neither of these reactions fully reflects the reality of what is happening.

We note that our position below is focused on what can be done in this situation, and is not meant to excuse or defend the government. We condemn the brutal, corrupt and anti-democratic actions of the UPA; we also, it must be noted, condemn the actions of the BJP and its State governments in trying to portray themselves as crusaders against corruption. The dangerous Lokpal Bill that has been presented must be withdrawn, and, as said below, a process initiated for effective institutions of people’s control that can be used to defeat corruption. We issue this statement precisely to caution against erroneous tactics that are strengthening the very state that we must fight against.

The Opportunity:

It is true that the protests so far have been dominated by middle classes, and that they have been exaggerated by the media. But this does not mean that this process becomes meaningless. **Precisely because there is no strong organized movement among the working class at the national level, no alternative media, and no consciously projected alternative to the existing system, a hyped up middle class movement can easily grow into something much larger.** We can already see that happening, as protests are spreading and diversifying in terms of their mass base. People’s anger at this system and at the corrupt nature of the Indian state is hardly a middle class phenomenon alone.

For that reason, we cannot and should not dismiss this situation. The more people are willing to see this system for what it is, and to express their anger and disgust with it, the more there is an opportunity to expose it and fight for something new. A crisis is an opportunity for those who are fighting for change.

Therefore we cannot agree with those who look at these protests and hunger strikes and see in them a “blackmailing” of Parliament. Parliamentary democracy in this country has never been more than a very limited space. Even this space has been rendered meaningless

in recent decades, by precisely the forces who today are shouting about its virtues.

For instance, the SEZ Act was passed after barely a day’s debate in Parliament. Economic reforms were introduced through stealth, FDI in retail is on the verge of being approved, and the UID project is going ahead – all without a whisper of Parliamentary approval. It is correct to be cynical of neoliberal pro-corporate leaders when they suddenly discover that Parliament is a sacrosanct institution. **When people feel that the system is rotten to the core, we should not attempt to dilute that reality by saying that Parliament will deal with the problem.**

The danger is not to Parliament; it lies elsewhere.

The Danger

The fact that people are angry is an opportunity. But it is also a risk, because that anger can be channeled in ways that actually strengthen the existing power structure. In this case, consider:

- The message being conveyed about these protests – the tactics of the leadership notwithstanding – is that of support to Anna Hazare and his “Team Anna.” Beyond the concept of “transparency”, the public campaign does not engage at all with the idea of a democratic organization of the people (as opposed to one “supported” by the people). As such, this raises the question of whether those participating are being asked to fight to build people’s power, or whether they are fighting to increase the power of the “good leader.”
- The demand of the campaign too is not about, even in a minimal sense, democratizing the Indian state or society. The Jan Lokpal being sought may address some types of corruption, or it may not do so; but it is not intended to give people any greater control over the state. It is projected as effective not because it will be democratic, but because it will be powerful, because it will stand “above” democracy and politics itself. Just as Anna is a good person who deserves support, so the Jan Lokpal will consist of good people who deserve power, and who will use it to “cleanse” the state.

Most of those joining these protests are doing so on the basis of media coverage. In practically all areas (with one or two exceptions) the mobilization lacks any core organization. At most there are ad hoc groups of urban elites; but in large measure, the place of the organization has been filled by the mainstream media itself. All the ideas sought to be communicated are therefore seen through the lenses that the media applies to them. **As a result, even where elements in the leadership try to talk of popular**

struggle and democratic principles, they are overridden by an overwhelming focus on attacking the current power holders and replacing them with an even more powerful, more “clean” institution.

The net result of all this is that “corruption” becomes defined very narrowly, as the taking of benefit in violation of the law. **The ultimate message of this movement is: trust the rules, trust the state, trust the Lokpal; what matters is finding the right leaders and having faith in them. This is the message that is sent by the mobilizing instrument, the media, regardless of what the leaders may actually say.**

This is not only not a democratic message, it is an anti-democratic one. At this moment, in India, it is also dangerous. **Brutality, injustice and oppression in this country is not a result of violation of the law alone. Indeed, much of it happens because of the law in the first place. We have a state machinery which has brazenly shown itself to be the servant of predatory private capital.** This is the biggest reason for the current boom in corruption: the enormous money generated through super profits that is then used to purchase the state and generate more super profits. Sometimes this is exposed as violating some law and gets called a “scam”; but at other times, as in most economic reforms, it simply changes the law. The SEZ Act is again a good example. It triggered a wave of land grabbing across the country, which was only slowed by the global economic crisis; but there was nothing “corrupt” in the Lokpal sense about most SEZ-related actions. Our people are being crushed by a cycle of intensifying capitalist exploitation and repression. Can this be stopped by good leaders with the right powers?

Many would answer “Obviously not; a Jan Lokpal cannot address everything.” This may be true, but that is not the message actually being sent out. Rather the message is that Lokpal-style solutions and Anna Hazare-style “good leaders” are the answers to people’s anger at injustice. When the leadership, Ramdev-style, starts adding on a laundry list of additional issues to its demands – as land acquisition has recently been added – it reinforces this dangerous message. **Thus this movement not only does not weaken the state; implicitly, through the message it sends, it builds people’s support for making the state and its leadership more powerful.** This of course the reason that it attracts support from everyone from Jindal Aluminium to the RSS.

What Can Be Done

The mere fact that people are protesting against the government does not mean that they are fighting the state. The Indian state certainly has little to fear – as a state – from a mobilization whose prime message is that change happens through good leaders. The current power holders are resisting the threat to their position, but the system itself is not under threat. Indeed, the danger is not to the state or its institutions, but to efforts at deeper social change in this society. **The dilemma of the current situation cannot be answered by simply joining wholeheartedly, or by**

withdrawing in silence.

Some have declared support for the current movement, while seeking to push it to take up other issues. The sympathies of some in the leadership for left and progressive positions are often cited. But the main engines of these protests – the media and urban elite circles – are actively opposed to any such positions. **One has simply to imagine what will happen if this mobilization does begin to turn towards a more radical stance: the media will instantly change its position from “Anna is India” to “Anna is a power crazed megalomaniac”, confusion, slanders and disinformation will start, and the movement will collapse.** Given this reality, simply joining at this stage will be counterproductive. People will no longer be able to distinguish between forces who fight for social transformation and those who are upholding the current system; and when the latter fail, they will take down the former with them.

But to remain silent is to be irrelevant at an important time. It is also important not to fall into the trap of those who, in their criticism of the anti-democratic tendencies of this movement, start defending the existing state. In our view parliamentary supremacy is not and cannot be the slogan of those who seek social change.

What is required therefore is an approach built on two realities. The first is that the current explosion of scams is a direct result of neoliberal policies that have converted the state into the arm of a particularly predatory, criminal form of big capital. Today the real face of the state is more apparent than ever before, and corruption is one glaring sign of it. **Therefore, to try to fight corruption without fighting for true people’s power over the economy and society is impossible.** Therefore, our demands must at present focus on building such people’s power over the institutions of the state.

The second reality is that the current atmosphere of anger and suspicion of the state offers a chance to raise precisely these issues and to make the link between corruption and the system under which we live. **The more political forces, mass organizations and people’s struggles do this, while keeping their identity separate from ‘India Against Corruption’, the more it will be possible to use this opportunity to build and expand radical struggles.** If people can see the system is rotten, that can be developed that into awareness that this rottenness goes far deeper than mere corruption and dishonest leaders. That is the challenge of this moment. ❖

(Above statement is given by Abhay Shukla, Pune, Arvind Ghosh, Nagpur, Asit Das, POSCO Pratirodh Solidarity, Delhi, Bijay-bhai, Adivasi Mukti Sanghatan, Biju Mathew, Mining Zone People’s Solidarity Group, C.R. Bijoy, Coimbatore, Kiran Shaheen, Journalist, Pothik Ghosh, Radical Notes, Pratyush Chandra, Radical Notes, Ravi Kumar, Dept of Sociology, South Asian University, Shankar Gopalakrishnan, Campaign for Survival and Dignity and Shiraz Bulsara, Kasthakari Sanghatna)

Perspectives on Poverty in India

The Report by World Bank 2011 is to develop the evidence base for policymaking in relation to poverty reduction. It produces a diagnosis of the broad nature of the poverty problem and its trends in India, focusing on both consumption poverty and human development outcomes. It also includes attention in greater depth to three pathways important to inclusive growth and poverty reduction—harnessing the potential of urban growth to stimulate rural-based poverty reduction, rural diversification away from agriculture and tackling social exclusion.

Using the Government of India's official poverty lines, in 2004–05, 28 percent of people in rural areas and 26 percent of people in urban areas lived below the poverty line down from 47 percent and 42 percent, respectively, in 1983. Improvements in the last two decades represent a continuation of a long-term secular decline of both urban and rural poverty under way in India since the 1970s. At this pace, acceleration of progress against poverty since economic reforms began in earnest in the early 1990s is suggested, but it is too early to say that that is a (statistically) robust new trend.

Poverty has declined and growth has tended to reduce poverty, including in the post reform period. However, the data present no robust case for saying that the responsiveness of poverty to growth has either increased or decreased since the early 1990s. The main source of data uncertainty is the large and growing gap in mean consumption per person found by the household surveys and by the national accounts. With the available evidence, it seems likely that the surveys are missing the growth in top-end incomes and, therefore, do a better

job of measuring poverty than inequality or aggregate growth. High premium should be placed on better understanding and resolving the sources of discrepancy between India's national surveys and the national accounts.

Historical evidence in India from the 1970s to the early 1990s has shown agricultural growth to be a major factor in reducing poverty. Indeed, for decades, poverty reduction in India has been synonymous with rural and, in particular, agricultural growth. But since the 1990s agriculture has lagged other sectors, shrinking in its contribution to less than half of rural GDP. That poverty reduction has continued apace despite a slowdown

in agriculture points to the emergence of new drivers of poverty reduction. This report draws on survey evidence to identify two—urban growth and non farm growth.

Between 1993–94 and 2004–05, rural non farm employment has grown about four times as fast as farm employment, and more rural jobs have been created off-farm than on. The fact that even the lowest-paid non farm jobs—casual wage employment—on average, pay considerably more than those in agriculture (the wage premium is about 45 percent) suggests that the growth of the non farm sector is likely to have been poverty reducing. Non farm employment also reduces rural poverty indirectly

by driving up agricultural wages. Agricultural wage growth in the 1990s slowed; the analysis shows that in the absence of labour market tightening due to the non farm sector, agricultural wage growth would have been slower still.

Consumption inequality has fallen over the longer term in India but is now on the increase. Rural growth switched from being pro-poor (largely benefiting the poorer) between 1983 and 1993–94, to benefiting income groups equally between 1993–94 and 2004–05. In urban areas, over the same period, growth went from being distributed equally, to favouring the rich—that is, the gap between the rich and the poor widened. And the gap between rural and urban areas also widened. The resulting moderate increase in inequality revealed in the survey data likely understates the increase in inequality as a result of underreporting of consumption at the top end.

Structural inequalities take different shapes in different parts of India. Overall, however, although multiple welfare indicators for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are improving, the gap between them and the general population is large and persistent. Scheduled tribes today (2004–05) experience levels of poverty seen in the general population 20 years earlier (1983), while scheduled castes lag 10 years behind the general population. Female disadvantage in India continues, despite high rates of growth, and women die both in infancy and in motherhood, with poorer outcomes for women from scheduled castes and tribes. Economic and social outcomes for women are underpinned by low levels of security within and outside their home. Caste remains a potent indicator of labor market outcomes and social status, but positive signs of dynamism are also appearing

within the caste hierarchy. Indicators that India's educational expansion is leaving scheduled tribes behind, especially at the secondary school and higher levels, are worrying. Scheduled tribes show the least improvement in intergenerational mobility in education and also display the worst indicators of child nutrition and mortality.

Scheduled tribes appear to be at risk of becoming locked out of sharing in India's growth and prosperity.

It is central to improving their income earning opportunities and welfare. Given the recent record, it is simply

not the case that continued rapid economic growth will automatically translate to commensurate improvements on human development outcomes. Our analysis of structural inequalities would, for instance, suggest a redoubling of efforts to retain scheduled tribe children in school past the primary level. At the same time,

Some problems, such as under nutrition and poor learning outcomes, are endemic and alarming and are not confined to the poor. That suggests that improving human development outcomes is not merely, or even primarily, an issue of better targeting of existing programs and services to the poor. Larger, and systemic, challenges of service delivery remain. ❖

The Bridge Between Dreams and Reality

Devaraj, 32, belongs to Khairdatwa village, Adilabad district. He is illiterate and works as an agriculture wage labor. He belongs to the Gond community. He live with his wife and grandmother. He holds a white card which signifies.

Name: Devaraj
Community: ST
Occupation: Wage labour

His native place is a village called Kannapuram near Utnoor. He migrated to Kairdatwa, which happens to be his wife's village after he got married. He had five acres land in his native village which he sold as agriculture wasn't giving him a stable income. At

present he owns no land.

Devaraj had a simple wish to own a **home and two acres of land in Khairdatwa**. He believes that he cannot afford

those with his present income. His wife is a member of a Self Help Group (SHG) but hasn't borrowed a loan. The couple saves money every day.

Recently, he bought two oxen thinking that if he offers their service along with this labour he will earn more. Turns out he was right and farmers were now paying him Rs. 300 per day. Now, their income had risen to Rs. 370/day.

Devaraj works for 20 days a month as on the other days there may not be work or stalled due to rains. He faces competition from neighboring workers because they also have oxen.

Occasionally, he goes to another village for work. He also worked in NREGA works. He has membership in *podhupu sangam* (saving group). He saves Rs 100/- per month in the group. He plans to borrow a loan in the podupu sangam to buy the agriculture land. Slowly, but surely Devaraj is inching closer to realizing his dream of owning land and a house. ❖

Inconsistency Makes Life Miserable

Thikkaiah, 25, belongs to Paipad village, Waddepally Mandal, Mahabubnagar District. He studied up to 7th Class. He has two acres land. Helives with his wife and mother. Since 2005, he has been living in Habsiguda in Hyderabad.

He joined as a car driver for a businessman in Habsiguda. His mother also came with him and she worked as a maid in the city. Their income is monthly was around ten Rs.10000/- per month. He purchased a bike for Rs 60,000/ installments basis.

After five years he got married and his wife also worked in his owner's business for six months. One day his wife suffered with sever stomach pain and had to be admitted in hospital. For her treatment, he borrowed Rs 10,000/- at 36% interest rate for his wife heath from his friends.

After a few days he went to his native place to celebrate the Veerabramndera swamy festival. They stayed there for two months in the village. In his village his friends are working as auto drivers. He wanted to buy his own auto and so the same. He bought a seven-seater auto which cost Rs two lakh. He had to pay installments for the auto in

addition to his two wheeler's which he has not paid fully yet. He decided to sell his auto which he had bought only 10 days ago to a friend at a loss of Rs. 20,000.

He then registered his mother's land on his name which cost him Rs. 20,000. For this amount he took a loan from friends. He leased out the land for Rs. 10,000 a year.

Name: Tikkaiah
Community: BC
Occupation: Driver

Once again Tikkaiah left his village and came Hyderabad. He

rejoined as a car driver at with his previous employer. His employer told him to work in the company apart from driving. The employer refused to pay for this work. He discontinued the job and has no income now but has installments to pay every month. He is currently looking for a new job as a driver in Hyderabad. ❖

Not Profitable But Satisfactory

Rathode Prahalad, who is working as Ration shop dealer in Khairdathwa village, Livelihood interviews about his works in Ration shop.

Q: What is your name? Where is your native place?

A: My name is Rathode Prahalad. My native place is Mahajan village, Narnoor mandal in Adilabad District.

Q: What is your educational qualification and how old are you?

A: I am 42 years old. I completed my MA Sociology from Kakatiya University in Warangal.

Q: How many members are living in your family? What are they doing?

A: My family consists of six members. My mother, wife, two daughters and one son live with me. My mother and my wife are engaged in agriculture; my elder daughter is studying Diploma in civil. Second daughter is studying 7th class and my son is in 3rd standard.

Q: What do you do?

A: I am working as a ration shop dealer in Khairdathwa Village, Narnoor mandal, Adilabad District. Khairdathwa is 5 km from my Village. I also do agriculture.

Q: What are your responsibilities as a Ration shop dealer?

A: I distribute ration to villagers who hold ration card. I also give relevant information to all ration card holders.

Q: How many have ration cards in the village? And what type of ration cards are there in the village?

A: There are 380 Ration cards in the village and three types of cards in the village. They are 1).Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards 2). Above Poverty Line (APL) cards 3).AAY-Antyodya Yojana 4).Annapurna Yojana. I have 339 BPL cards, 39 AAY cards and 2 AY cards in my Ration shop.

Q: What is the benefit of Annapurna Yojana cards?

A: Two Annapurna Yojana cards are there in the village. Government gives 10kg rice free per person to AAY card holders.

Q: How long have you been working as a ration shop dealer?

A: I have been working in the ration shop for the past 8 years. I have so much experience. I am satisfied with my work.

Q: What are the items you supply to card holders in the village?

A: I supply rice, sugar and kerosene to the ration card holders.

Q: How do you procure the stock, tell us the process?

A: I submit a letter to the MRO (Mandal Revenue officer) in the last week of every month requesting for fresh stock. The MRO checks my letter and forwards it to the Civil Supply Office. Ration items belong to Civil Supply Department. I deposit money in the bank with a Demand Draft (DD). After five days the stock is sent to my shop. Within two weeks I distribute all items to the ration card holders. I open the shop for the first 15 days in every month from 8am to 11 am.

Q: Do you distribute all items in a month?

A: Yes, I distribute all items completely. Some families come after 15 days for their ration, but still I distribute to them.

Q: Do you get any honorarium from PDS?

A: I get 25% commission. I get monthly income of Rs3000/-. This amount is not sufficient but I am satisfied with this job because it is helping the people.

Q: Did you work in different places as Dealer?

A: No, I have been working in the village for eight years. The people are supporting me.

Q: Did you attend any Training programs?

A: Yes, I attended training for cultivation, organic methods, crops planning in Agriculture and foundation seed methods. I have also attended meetings about ration shop management as a dealer.

Q: Are you facing any problem in this scheme?

A: Every occupation has its own problems. I too am facing problems in my job. Sometimes I get damaged items for which I have to pay. The Civil supply office does not send items in time and the items lack quality. Some card holders come to ration shop without Ration card.

Q: Before joining this job what did you do?

A: I worked in the 'Centre for Collective Development' (CCD) for five years. I was paid Rs.6000/- per month. I worked in their watershed project. I was in the team that started the project in this village. I formed two types of groups.1.) Red gram group 2).Soya bean group. CCD organization gives marketing facilities. This system is useful to villagers.

Q: What is your plan for the future?

A: I will give good education to my children since, I am not in a good position so I would like to see my children in good position in their Life. I will utilize my experience in the development sector for tribal people. ❖

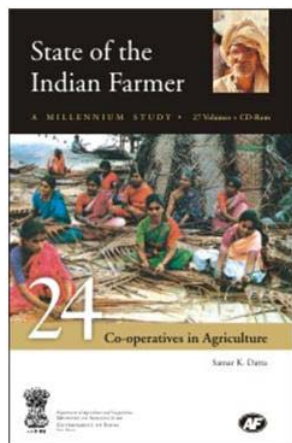
Books

Book Summary

Name of the Book: Co-operatives in Agriculture

Name of the Author: Samar K. Datta

Publisher: Hard Bound Book



The book "Cooperatives in Agriculture" is divided into 10 chapters touching the philosophy, emergence and management of cooperatives and also their relevance to farmers.

While farmers' co-operatives can be useful tools to handle the forces of liberalization and globalization, cooperatives in India are often reluctant to re-engineer, reform, and reposition their co-operatives

in order to do so.

Nevertheless, the strong appeal of the underlying ideology, principles as well as the potential advantages of co-operation has led to a huge proliferation of agricultural co-operatives in terms of both size and coverage.

However, excessive government intervention and poor management have led to progressive accumulation of a large number of poor-functioning co-operatives. A huge gap created between expectations and performance has resulted in poor image of, and general lack of trust in co-operatives.

The Professor Samar K. Datta (Ph.D., Economics, and University of Rochester, New York) is presently, Chairman and Professor, Centre for Management in Agriculture at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad. Earlier, he had been teaching at Calcutta University, University of Rochester (New York), University of Southern California (Los Angeles) and since 1990 at the IIM Ahmedabad. He and his team have prepared against this background, a balance sheet of the Indian farmers' gains and losses from a hundred years of experience in co-operation, and enlisted the lessons thereof.

For assessing the inherent strengths, weaknesses and constraints of co-operatives, this book has critically examined the philosophical and theoretical foundations of co-operatives, and their evolution and growth in India. It has also attempted to analyze Indian co-operatives' experiences in application of professional management tools in fulfilling the goals and aspirations of the Indian farmer. ❖

New Book



Name of the Book: The Co-operative challenge

Name of the Author: Bertram B Fowler

Publisher: Little, Brown

Resources

1.CIFTI-FICCI

Confederation of Indian Food Trade and Industry (CIFTI), the only industry association of its kind in the country, was established by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 1985 to cater specifically to the need of Food Industry and Trade. CIFTI not only provides institutional support at the national level but also plays a pivotal role in partnering the Government and the private sector in promoting the development of food processing on the global platform.

Confederation of Indian Food Trade & Industry (Food Wing of FICCI)

Email: cifti@ficci.com , www.cifti.org

2. CUTS International (Consumer Unity & Trust Society) began its journey in 1983 in Rajasthan, from a rural development communication initiative, a wall newspaper Gram Gadar (Village Revolution). This monthly is published regularly and has been instrumental in providing a forum for the oppressed classes to get justice. On seeing Gram Gadar, Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD (1995-2004) observed: "It confirmed my view that often the simple lack of awareness lies at the root of so much misery".

Email: cuts@cuts.org

Web: <http://cuts-international.org/>

Peace of Mind

Once Buddha was walking from one town to another town with a few of his followers. While they were travelling, they happened to pass a lake. They stopped there and Buddha told one of his disciples, "I am thirsty. Do get me some water from that lake there."

The disciple walked up to the lake. When he reached it, he noticed that some people were washing clothes in the water and, right at that moment, a bullock cart started crossing through the lake. As a result, the water became very muddy, very turbid. The disciple thought, "How can I give this muddy water to Buddha to drink!" So he came back and told



Buddha, "The water in there is very muddy. I don't think it is fit to drink."

After about half an hour, again Buddha asked the same disciple to go back to the lake and get him some water to drink. The disciple obediently went back to the lake. This time he found that the lake had absolutely clear water in it. The mud had settled down and the water above it looked fit to be had. So he collected some water in a pot and brought it to Buddha.

Buddha looked at the water, and then he looked up at the disciple and said, "See what you did to make the water clean. You let it be ... and the mud settled down on its own – and you got clear water... Your mind is also like that. When it is disturbed, just let it be. Give it a little time. It will settle down on its own. You don't have to put in any effort to calm it down. It will happen. It is effortless."

What did Buddha emphasize here? He said, "It is effortless." Having 'peace of mind' is not a strenuous job; it is an effortless process. When there is peace inside you, that peace permeates to the outside. It spreads around you and in the environment, such that people around start feeling that peace and grace. ❖

Poverty Situation of Scheduled Tribes

In Terms of Poverty, Scheduled Tribes Are 20 Years Behind the General Population					
Category	Social group	% population below the poverty line			% change between 1983 and 2005
		1983	1993–94	2004–05	
Rural	ST	63.9	50.2	44.7	30
	SC	59	48.2	37.1	37
	Others	40.8	31.2	22.7	44
	All	46.5	36.8	28.1	40
Urban	ST	55.3	43	34.3	38
	SC	55.8	50.9	40.9	27
	Others	39.9	29.4	22.7	43
	All	42.3	32.8	25.8	39
Total	ST	63.3	49.6	43.8	31
	SC	58.4	48.7	37.9	35
	Others	40.5	30.7	22.7	44
	All	45.6	35.8	27.5	40

Source: Authors' estimates based on Schedule 1.0 of respective NSS rounds and

Exhibited poverty rates that were higher than in the nation as a whole in 2004–05 (with the exception of Assam; see table 6.4). The highest poverty rates recorded for tribal groups were in Orissa. There the tribal population registered a poverty rate of 75 percent in 2004–05—an increase of about 6 percent from 1993–94 levels. Tribals in rural areas in Orissa were particularly worse off, with poverty levels declining by only 13 percent, compared to a decline of 44 percent for other groups (non-SCs and non-STs) during 1983–2005. Tribals in rural areas in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh also recorded far lower declines in poverty than did other groups. ❖

Embroidery

Shining Livelihoods



Bamboo Basket Making

Declining Livelihoods



‘Yoga’kshemam

Vande Krishnam Jagadgurum!

Happy Ramzan! Happy Ganesh!

Happy Teachers' Day!

Lok Sabha passes a 'sense of House' resolution conceding 3 demands: Lokayukthas in all states; lower bureaucracy under Lokpal; and Citizen Charters after 13-day fast by Anna Hazare.

As usual, other International Days passed – World Humanitarian Day (19 August) and International Literacy Day (8 September). We are awaiting a long list of international/world days in the coming month or so - International Day of Democracy (15 September), International Day of Peace (21 September), World Tourism Day (27 September), Right to Know Day (28 September), International Day of Older Persons (1 October), World Vegetarian Day (1 October), International Day of Non-Violence (2 October), World Habitat Day (3 October – First Monday of October), World Smile Day (3 October), World Animal Day (4 October), World Teachers' Day (5 October), World Humanitarian Action Day (8 October), International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (12 October – Second Wednesday of October), International Day of Rural Women (15 October), World Food Day (16 October), and International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October).

Of course, Durga Puja, Dusserah, and Deepavali are also awaited.

I think we continue to pursue ad infinitum the institutions of the poor and vulnerable, knowledge assimilation and dissemination with reduced knowledge intermediaries! Working Group on National Rural Livelihoods Mission is looking at the finer details of its report! Empowering women and women leaders without increasing their burden continues to engage us.

Amidst all this, the entire month has been spent on consultations, reflections and articulation for way forward. Yet we continue to be down. Manoharan is diagnosed stage 4, liver cancer and going through chemotherapy at CMC Vellore.

A bomb blast, an earthquake, 10 cm rain in a day and all in quick succession make you realize that Universe has her/his way, once again! So much for our ability in pursuing our 'freedom' and 'independence'.

All this has taken me to Santi Mantra repeatedly –

AUM sarveshaam svastir bhavatu, sarveshaam saantir bhavatu

sarveshaam poornam bhavatu, sarveshaam mangalam bhavatu

sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu niraamayaah

sarve bhadraani pashyantu, maa kashchidh dukh bhaag-bhavet

Let all have health, peace, completeness, wellbeing, happiness, beautiful vision, prosperity and no misery. Let there be peace.

This happiness comes from some silence, smiling, standing, walking and moving, sleeping, dreaming, staying in touch, spending time with old and children, lots of water and fibre, no gossip, forgetting and forgiving, being in the present, giving love and getting rid of all things that are not useful, beautiful and joyful within and around you.

Many of us in development work end up in spinal problems because we lead bad life style and have bad postures and long hours. Be careful. Exercise. Avoid stressful life. Maintain correct back posture. Have support to back as far as possible. Travel on road in small stretches of 1-2 hours in one go. Sleep on hard surface. Avoid sleeping on spring mattresses. Do not go for a thick pillow. Carry no weight or light weight. Avoid alcohol and smoking. Smile and Laugh. Show love and care and be in physical contact with the loved and the beloved.

I have heard about seven habits of highly ineffective managers –

1. Continually break the word;
2. Chastise employees publicly
3. Dig into private lives of employees and talk about them
4. Withhold positive feedback
5. Pretend all-knowing
6. Speak before listening
7. Be afraid of discipline and disciplining

We need to kick out these habits in us. Let us keep trying and kick them out. We also need to get self-discipline into us. Success is tons of discipline. "Do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like doing it or not." It is the only key to take charge of our life.

Then the self-disciplined living of the soul merged in the soul of the universe takes you ahead towards the intent of 'life' to living usefully. In the dreams, in the thoughts, in the words, in the actions and in the journey! It is the flight. It is the flow. It is the resonance of merged flow of usefulness. It offers direction and you respond. This is life. This is pure amritam. This is endless joy.

In the confluence of the souls, we are in 'pravahamadhuram' seeking and relishing [madhuraamritayogam](#).

Can we be there? **Yes, if we pursue Atma Yoga.** Relentless dedicated focus on being useful! In waking hours! In sleeping hours! Krishna confirms – viswaatma manifests in the soul and directs it in being useful in thought, knowledge and action.

Join us in the world of yoga – for the joyous crescendo of co-existence the innermost and viswaatma - towards suddhamadhuraamritayogasiddhi. You will not regret it. ❖

G Muralidhar

