

## Chapter 4 Food Security in India

### Question-1

How is food security ensured in India?

#### Solution:

Food security is ensured in India on the basis of the two components, i.e., Buffer Stock and Public Distribution System (PDS).

1. **Buffer Stock.** It is the stock of food grains like wheat and rice procured by the government through Food Corporation of India (FCI).
2. **Public Distribution System.** The food procured by the FCI is distributed through government regulated ration shops called Fair Price Shops (FPS) among the poorer sections of the society.

### Question-2

Which are the people more prone to food insecurity?

#### Solution:

Although a large section of people suffers from food and nutrition insecurity in India, the worst affected groups are landless or land-poor households in rural areas and people employed in ill-paid occupations and casual labourers engaged in seasonal activities in the urban areas.

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### Question-3

Which states are more food insecure in India?

#### Solution:

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

### Question-4

Do you believe that the green revolution has made India self-sufficient in food grains? How?

#### Solution:

After independence, India adopted a new strategy in agriculture, which resulted in the 'Green Revolution' especially in the production of wheat and rice. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, officially recorded the impressive strides of the Green revolution in agriculture by releasing a special stamp entitled 'Wheat Revolution' in July 1968. The success of wheat was later replicated in rice. The increase in food grains was, however, disproportionate. The highest rate of growth was achieved in Punjab and Haryana, where food grain production jumped from 7.23

million tonnes in 1964-65 to reach an all-time high of 30.33 million tonnes in 1995-96.

### Question-5

A section of people in India is still without food. Explain?

#### Solution:

Despite achieving self-sufficiency in food grains, as a result of the Green Revolution, a section of people in India are still without food because of poverty. Thus, the landless labourers, casual urban workers, SCs, and STs who are below the poverty line find it impossible to get two square meals a day.

The Public Distribution System is not functioning properly because the ration shop owners are diverting the grains to the open market. Low-quality grains are available at ration shops which often remain unsold.

Corruption in the Public Distribution System and extreme poverty are the two basic reasons of why some people are still without food in India.

### Question-6

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

#### Solution:

The poorest section of the society might be food insecure most of the times while persons above the poverty line might also be food insecure when the country faces a national disaster/calamity like earthquake, drought, flood, tsunami, widespread failure of crops causing famine, etc.

### Question-7

Differentiate between seasonal hunger and chronic hunger?

#### Solution:

Seasonal hunger is related to cycles of food growing and harvesting whereas chronic hunger is a consequence of diets persistently inadequate in terms of quantity or quality.

People suffer from seasonal hunger in rural areas because of the seasonal nature of agricultural activities and because of casual labour in the urban areas whereas poor people suffer from chronic hunger because of very low income and thereby inability to buy food even for bare survival.

### Question-8

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

#### Solution:

In order to help the poor, and provide food security to them, two special schemes were launched in 2000. They were, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and the Annapurna Scheme (APS) with special target groups of 'poorest of the poor' and 'indigent senior

citizens', respectively. The functioning of these two schemes was linked with the existing network.

### Question-9

Why is a buffer stock created by the government?

#### Solution:

To ensure availability of food to all sections of the society the Indian government carefully designed a food security system, which is composed of two components: (a) buffer stock and (b) public distribution system. This is done to distribute foodgrains in the deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society at a price lower than the market price.

### Question-10

Write notes on Minimum Support Price, Buffer Stock, Issue Price and Fair Price Shops.

#### Solution:

#### a. Minimum Support Price

The farmers are paid a pre-announced price for their crops. This price is called Minimum Support Price. The MSP is declared by the government every year before the sowing season to provide incentives to the farmers for raising the production of these crops.

#### b. Buffer Stock

Buffer Stock is the stock of food grains, namely wheat and rice procured by the government through Food Corporation of India (FCI).

#### c. Issue Price

Buffer stock is created to distribute food grains in the deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society at a price lower than the market price also known as Issue Price. This also helps resolve the problem of shortage of food during adverse weather conditions or during periods of calamity.

#### d. Fair Price Shops

The food procured by the FCI is distributed through government-regulated ration shops among the poorer section of the society. This is called the public distribution system (PDS). Ration shops are now present in most localities, villages, towns and cities. There are about 4.6 lakh ration shops all over the country. Ration shops also known as Fair Price Shops keep stock of food grains, sugar, kerosene oil for cooking. These items are sold to people at a price lower.

### Question-11

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

#### Solution:

The cooperative societies set up shops to sell low priced goods to poor people, such

as Mother Dairy in Delhi is rapidly growing in providing milk and vegetables to the consumers at controlled prices, announced by the government of Delhi.

Another success story of cooperatives lies in Amul, a cooperative, dealing with milk and milk products from Gujarat. It has brought about the 'White Revolution' in the country.

These cooperatives are functioning in various parts of the country to ensure food security to various sections of the society.