



UNIT IV
FOOD SECURITY

SOLUTIONS

EXERCISE

Q1. If food grains production has increased four times, why are many people still hungry?

Ans:- The food grains production has increased four times during the last fifty years from 50.8 million tonnes in 1950-51 to 20.8 million tonnes in 2005-06. In the meantime, population also increases at least three times from 361 million in 1951 to 1027 million in 2001. Without increasing purchasing power, the increased production cannot remove the hunger of the poor people. The PDS and TPDS do not function properly. This explains the co-existence of overflowing granaries of the FCI and widespread hunger of the poor.

Q2. What are the characteristics of the agricultural strategy which led to green revolution?

Ans:- The Green Revolution was a result of an agricultural strategy aimed at promoting agricultural production with the help of modern inputs like High Yielding Variety seed, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation and improved farm implements.

Q3. Does a bumper harvest mean food security?

Ans:- A bumper harvest does not necessarily mean food security. For food security, an increased purchasing power of the people is necessary besides abundance of food grains.

Q4. Does plenty of rice alone mean food security?

Ans:- Plenty of rice alone does not mean food security. Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.

Q5. When can food security be ensured?

Ans:- Food security can be ensured when good quality food is available, accessible and affordable to every person in the country.



মণিপুরৰ অৰ্থ ন্যায়ালয় (অৰ্থ)

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Q6. Why does seasonal hunger persist in rural areas?

Ans:- Seasonal hunger still prevails in rural areas, as people who are dependent on agriculture do not have jobs throughout the year.

Q7. Why do farmers need a minimum support price?

Ans:- Farmers need a minimum support price as an incentive for greater production. The price is fixed by taking into account the cost of production to encourage the farmers to increase crop production and is announced before the sowing season.

Q8. What is the role of FCI in ensuring food security?

Ans:- The Food Corporation of India (FCI) purchases wheat and rice from the farmers in those states where there is surplus production at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The food grains so purchased are stored in granaries for distribution in the deficit areas and sale to the poorer sections of society at a price lower than the market price, known as the Issue Price. Thus, the stock of food grains, known as buffer stock, is intended to solve the problem of shortage of food grains caused by irregular monsoon or natural calamities.

Q9. What is a ration card?

Ans:- A ration card is a coupon for buying one's household quota of essential commodities from the Fair Price Shops under the Public Distribution System. There are three types of ration cards: (i) AAY card, (ii) BPL card and (iii) APL card.

Q10. What is an issue price?

Ans:- An issue price is the price at which food grains from the FCI stores are made available by the government to the Fair Price Shops for sale to the householders at subsidized rates under the Public Distribution System. It is lower than the market price.

Q11. What does the coexistence of overflowing granaries of the FCI and widespread hunger indicate?

Ans:- Despite the overflowing granaries of the FCI, it is seen that widespread hunger is still prevalent in the country. The functioning of the PDS was not effective and hence the poor people have to depend on open markets rather than the ration shops for their



জাতিশিক্ষণ বিভাগ (মণিপুর)

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requirements. Without adequate purchasing power, the overflowing granaries cannot remove the hunger of the poor people because the stock of food grains in the FCI granaries are not available free of cost. The PDS dealers are often found to be resorting to malpractices. This explains the coexistence of overflowing granaries of the FCI and widespread hunger.

Q12. How has the rise in MSP affected the poor?

Ans:- The rise in MSP will have the tendency to raise the market price. In order to reduce the loss margin, the government may even raise the Issue Price. Moreover, the poor consumers get only a small percentage of these food requirements from the Ration Shops and most of them depend on the open market for their requirements.

Q13. Who benefits from MSP?

Ans:- Only the large farmers with surplus margins of food grains can enjoy the benefits from MSP.

Q14. Who benefits from AAY scheme?

Ans:- The 'poorest of the poor' who have been able to register themselves as such by making the AAY card can get the benefit from the AAY scheme.

Q15. Who are affected acutely by calories deficiency?

Ans:- Those who are substantially below the poverty line and cannot afford to buy their daily requirement of food supply are affected acutely by calories deficiency.

Q16. What is the purpose of mid-day meal programme?

Ans:- The purpose of mid-day meal programme is to provide nutritious food to the school going children of poor households.

Q17. How can flowering of bamboo lead to shortage of food grains?

Ans:- The rats like bamboo flowers very much. After eating these, the rats increased their population considerably. The increased population of rats causes large scale destruction of standing crops and food grains kept in the granaries. Thus the flowering of bamboos leads to shortage of food grains.



মণিপুরৰ শিক্ষা বিভাগ (সংসদ)

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EXTRA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1. Name the two most important food crops of India?

Ans:- The two most important food crops of India are rice and wheat.

Q2. What is the Green Revolution?

Ans:- The Green Revolution is the agricultural revolution that took place in India in the mid 1960's as a result of using High Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, improved irrigation and agricultural implements.

Q3. Mention the regions where the Green Revolution was successful?

Ans:- The Green revolution was successful largely in those regions which possessed regular irrigation facilities and only those farmers who could afford to purchase fertilizers, pesticides and improved farm implements. It was successful in the regions of Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh.

Q4. State how the Green Revolution helped India in achieving food security?

Ans:- The Green Revolution has enabled the Indian economy to build up large stock of food grains, especially those of rice and wheat, and achieve self-sufficiency in food grains.

Q5. What is food security? Why does the problem of food security continue to be a major challenge in India?

Ans:- Food security is a situation which exists when good quality food is available, accessible and affordable to every person in the country. According to the World Food Summit 1996, food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. It is based on three pillars: (i) food availability, (ii) food accessibility and (iii) food appropriateness.

In recent years, there has been considerable decline in the poverty ratio of the India population. But there are still millions of poor people in India who cannot buy enough food for themselves. The PDS and TPDS schemes taken up by the government of India have many loopholes. Therefore, the problem of food security still continues to be a major challenge in India.



জগদীশচন্দ্র দেবে নক্সালাল (আম)

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Q6. State the situation when even the people who are not poor are food insecure?

Ans:- This situation takes place at the time of natural calamities like earthquakes, draughts, floods, tsunami etc.

Q7. What is the main cause of famines?

Ans:- Famines are largely due to crop failure. Crop failure leads to shortage of food grains leading to price rise. If the situation continues for a long time, it may lead to starvation causing a famine.

Q8. Name some states where there is acute poverty with a large number of food-insecure people?

Ans:- Some states where there is acute poverty with a large number of food-insecure people are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.

Q9. What is a buffer stock? State its advantages?

Ans:- A buffer stock is the stock of food grains collected by the government from the surplus producers or farmers. Food grains from such a buffer stock are released in the markets at the time of shortage to maintain steady supplies and also to control the prices. It is intended to solve the problem of shortage of food grains caused by irregular monsoon or natural calamities.



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Q10. How many ration shops are there in India at present?

Ans:- There are about 4.6 lakh ration shops all over the country.

Q11. What is the minimum buffer stock norm of the FCI?

Ans:- The minimum buffer stock norm of the FCI is 24.3 million tonnes in 2006.

Q13. Discuss the position of Manipur in respected of food security.

Ans:- Earlier, Manipur was marginally surplus in the production of food grains and could export some of it to neighbouring states. But now, the state is marginally deficit in food grains production and deficit in oilseeds and pulses. The problem of lack of food security exists in the state as the PDS and TPDS schemes do not function properly. More than 17% of the population is still below the poverty line without enough purchasing power to buy food and other requirements. Moreover, due to leakages, only a fraction of the PDS items reached the beneficiaries. Thus, despite a vast network of PDS outlets, the poor people are compelled to buy most of their requirements of PDS items from the open market.



মণিপুরৰ শিক্ষা বিভাগ (সি)
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