

## **State of Democracy in South Asia**

### **NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN SECURITY**

**Hyderabad**

**Dates: 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

**Venue: Prof. G. Ram Reddy Centre for Distance Education (PGRRCDE)**

**Osmania University campus, Hyderabad**

## INTRODUCTION

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The National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security was organized by Lokniti a programme on comparative democracy of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) at the Prof. G. Ram Reddy Centre for Distance Education (PGRRRCDE), Osmania University campus, Hyderabad on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2004. A total of 48 participants from 14 states attended the dialogue. A good number of participants were from the dalit and backward classes. Women and those from religious minorities were also present. Almost two-thirds of the participants were activists and around one-third were academicians.

## THE DIALOGUE

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**Day One, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

**Inaugural Session (9:45am to 10:45 am)**

*A brief note on democracy and human security was distributed to the participants by the coordinator of the National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security – Mr. Jasvir Singh (Refer to Appendix I). In the inaugural session Prof. Peter R. deSouza welcomed the participants and spoke about the Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security and also about the main project – The State of Democracy in South Asia of which this dialogue was a part. Prof. Peter R. deSouza in his introduction to the theme highlighted the three principles of democracy that are: popular control of power, political equality and protection against tyranny. After Prof. deSouza's introduction about the Dialogue and the topic, there was a round of self- introduction by the participants.*

**Session I (11:30am to 1:30pm)**

*The first session of the dialogue was chaired by the late Shri Kishen Pattnayak. In his opening remarks Kishenji observed that the concept of Democracy needed to be broadened as in its current form it will not liberate society, especially the bottom half of Indian society. He also stressed on the significance of democracy in becoming a tool for freedom from fear. Mr. Balwant Singh, Prof. Muzaffar Assadi, Mr. Lallan Singh Bhagel (LS Bhagel) Prof. Keshavrao Jadhav, Mr. Vijay Pratap, Prof. Rajaram, Mr. SS Chowdhury spoke in this session. Shri Kishen Pattnayak latter concluded the session with his remarks. The following is a brief account of what these participants had to say in the session:*

**Mr. Balwant Singh (Former IAS officer and a dalit activist from Uttar Pradesh):** He was of the view that democracy in India has been reduced to a mobocracy. He said, “Our society is characterised by extreme social inequality. To make it meaningful there is an urgent need for the right to work and respect for human dignity. He was of the opinion that without social equality democracy has no meaning in a caste ridden Indian society where a person’s place in society is determined by his birth in a particular family (upper caste or lower caste)”.

**Prof. Muzaffar Assadi (Department of Political Science, Mysore University and Human Rights activist):** “No dialogue is taking place between two of the most deprived sections of Indian society, the dalits and the Muslims, who seem to be suffering ghettoisation. Even the increasing participation of women on socio-political fronts is taking place on communal lines. In other words whatever ‘gender space’ is being created it is not on secular lines”.

**Mr. LS Baghel (Research Scholar and Human Right Activist from Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjab):** “There is a need to see as to why dalits are increasingly participating in communal riots and how and why hatred based politics is

appropriating spaces. We should try to understand these dynamics. Dalit, gender etc. are overlapping identities. How do we overcome these dilemmas?”

**Prof. Keshavrao Jadhav (President, Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), and also working with Raitu Sahay Samiti, Andhra Pradesh):** “During the last 50 years, democracy in India has been declining and fear and authoritarian tendencies have been increasing. Why is this so? The reasons are political, more than social. This is partly due to caste and the politicisation of caste. We are confronted by a peculiar political situation where backward class political leaders like Mulayam Singh and Kalyan Singh are demanding the removal of SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act from the statute book. This they are demanding knowing fully well the harsh reality of the practice of untouchability in India. Even in urban areas no dalit can get a flat on rent announcing his caste. Thus, there is a fear, not necessarily of survival but of ‘status’ and ‘respect’ being lost. There is growing intolerance of the ‘other’ blatantly practiced and promoted by those in authority. Perhaps, after Hitler, Rajiv Gandhi was the first person to justify the genocide of a minority community during the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, but no one has spoken out against Rajiv Gandhi for the massacre of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi. Hindus are not feeling ashamed of what happened in Gujarat. But this is not confined only to the majority community of Hindus. Wherever the ‘minorities’ have found themselves to be in majority they have also behaved in a similar fashion. In Mizoram, aggressive Christian converts drove away around 55,000 Buddhists. In Kashmir, around two lakh Hindus have become refugees and over 12,000 have been killed”.

“The Supreme Court is increasingly behaving like a political party indulging in ‘acceptance politics’. When thousands of Sikhs were massacred in broad day light in Delhi, where the Supreme Court is situated, there was no action by the Supreme Court. Hardly anyone has been punished for the massacre of thousands of Sikhs even after twenty years. India has become a ‘client state’ and all type of fanatics - Hindus, Muslims and Christians are dominating the politics of India. In Hyderabad around two lakh Hindus have left the ‘old city’ in the last three decades and the situation is worsening day by day. Neither the economic determinism of USA nor the religious determinism of West Asia

can be a model of economic development or resistance. Both are out of a sense of fear and insecurity and are two sides of the same coin”.

**Mr. Vijay Pratap (Socio-Political activist from Delhi):** Responding to Mr. Balwant Singh’s observations, Mr. Vijay Pratap felt that he (Balwant Singh) seemed to be undermining the achievements of Democracy. He said, “We are in the ‘golden era’ of democracy as nowhere in recorded history have dalits and other deprived sections been stirred and awakened as today, demanding their rights. It is not fair to reduce democracy to the absence of social equality. We should discuss about various fears but should go beyond and also seek solutions. We must have a conception of a larger whole to break out of the narrow boundaries of communities. We must transcend the discussion of identities of fundamentalism to aggregation of oppressed communities. We must also be wary of our own elitism which prevents us from allowing participation of other communities in the democratic process. When we talk of freedom from fear we must bear in mind the global context, the hegemonic design of globalisation, and our response should be on a similar level”. He cited the example of Medha Patkar, who although professing not to accept any foreign funds, however had very powerful lobbies of support in several countries across the globe.

**Prof. N. Rajaram (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, M.S. University, Baroda, Gujarat):** He observed that the social reforms taking place in Hinduism tended to de-emphasize the caste identities and emphasise the religious identity - an assertion as ‘Hindu’ is being promoted both among ‘upper’ as well as ‘lower’ castes. Dalits have attacked tribal as ‘Hindus’ and tribal have attacked Muslims as ‘Hindus’ at places. He said, “There is need for an alternate vision. The need for jobs, lack of unionisation etc. have led to growing insecurity and fear among different sections of our society”.

**Prof. S. Singha Chowdhury (Dalit activist from West Bengal):** Prof. Chowdhury said that the perceptions and behaviour of Muslims and dalits was distinctly different. “Muslims consider themselves superior. They feel Hinduism is inferior to Islam and that Islam has liberated them from Hinduism. Muslims do not dialogue as a community, with

dalits out of fear and misunderstanding”. He was of the opinion that upper caste people were trying to protect the caste system in India and the only way to abolish the caste system is to destroy Hinduism. He said, “The dalit Muslims even object to the term ‘dalit’ being applied to them”.

**Shri Kishen *Pattnayak* (Socialist leader and source of inspiration to many movement groups in India):** In his concluding remarks as the chairperson for the session, Shri Kishen Pattnayak felt, “During the discussion since morning the number one fear, the fear of the society, has come out prominently. But there was another fear, the fear of the state in the mind of the individual citizen. Earlier, it was felt that only in democracy, the state and individual/citizen were on friendly terms. But in the last 40–50 years, the idea of democracy has increasingly been reduced to electoral democracy. The fear of the state should not be there in a democracy but that is not the case of Indian democracy. The vote in India empowers a collective but not an individual. Democracy does not empower you as a human being. The common man in India cannot live without the *patwar* (Land records officer), the police constable and the revenue inspector. They are the state for him and his relationship with them is of ‘*jee hajoor*’ (yes my Lord) and ‘*mai-bap*’ (Mother-Father). He cannot stand in front of them without keeping his head lowered and hand folded and is always afraid of them”.

“The Judiciary which is perceived to be a ‘watch dog’ in the text books of democracy is in practice seen in collusion with the police. POTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) or no POTA, thousands of Indian citizens are being arrested every day from the poorer sections of the Indian society on trivial grounds by the police and routinely sent to jail by the Judiciary. For half of the population POTA is not necessary as they are eternally out of the system”.

“When discussing democracy we are essentially discussing two things: fear of society and the fear of the state, citizen’s rights and citizen’s fears. There is a need to provide the right to information to the ordinary citizen but that is not enough. The ordinary citizens cannot fight for their rights; he will have to hire an advocate, an NGO or a movement leader like me. There is no ‘*sunwai*’ (hearing) of the ordinary citizen in our so-called democratic country. For rights to have meaning there should be less inequality. We must

aspire for equality. Our concept of democracy must change. Though the functioning of democracy in our country is better than in Pakistan, we cannot bring about a process of change without changing the meaning of democracy. Regarding popular control, yes it is there, but in a sort of negative way. We are able to throw out a bad government but unable to usher in a good government or vote for a good government. Of late political equality has been declining and protection against tyranny is not there for half of the population”.

### **Session II (from 2.30 pm to 5.30pm)**

*The second session of the first day was chaired by Prof. N. Rajaram of MS University Baroda, Gujarat. This post lunch session continued with the morning session theme (freedom from fear). Prof. Ramesh Dixit, Mr. Sajjan Kumar, Mr. NP Samy, Mr. Laxman Hota, Mr. Rajeev Godara, Mr. Bojja Tarakam, Mr. Ram Saran Das, Prof. Raghunandan Sharma, Mr. Omar Khan, Dr. SS Bisht, Prof. G. Satyanarayana, Dr. Uma Shankari, Mr. VT Rajshekar, Mr. JM Rathod, Dr. Lakshamanan and Ms Hasnat Mansur spoke in this session. A brief account of what they spoke in this session is given below:*

**Dr. Ramesh Dixit (Department of Political Science, Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh):** “There seems to be different types of political democracy, all dictators also speak of their rule being some kind of democracy. I am scared of the word democracy. Military rulers of Pakistan, rulers of Nepal and of Singapore all had their versions of dictatorship, but termed their rule as ‘democratic’. The state needs to be strong and yet transparent and participatory in the era of globalisation. There is need to understand and explain the new mind of brahminism, the new brahmins of globalisation and its culture. After coming to power there is a rapid degeneration in all the political parties. There is a need to protect democracy and promote democratic culture. In their public meetings and press briefings, Mayawati and Kanshi Ram sit on chairs and the rest have to sit on the floor. Is this democracy? They give tickets to the highest bidders including OBCs and dalits. The rate depending upon the percentage of dalit votes in the constituency. We also

need to recognize the problem of the creamy layer among dalits. How and to what extent we consider a person earning around Rs. One lakh per month still a dalit, just because he/she has been born one?”

**Mr. Sajjan Kumar (Associated with Nature-Human Centric Peoples Movement, Rajasthan):** Spoke mainly about the unequal: global control of resources, consumption patterns, poverty and wealth. How 20 percent of the world’s population was consuming over 80 percent of the world’s resources, about the sharp and increasing differences between the developed and the underdeveloped countries and the way in which the air and water is being polluted beyond tolerable levels. He said, “All these developments are threatening the very survival of human society. All political leaders and people seem to be obsessed with the agenda of power and money. There is a need for a pro-nature, pro-people orientation to the exercise of democracy. This is possible when we convert the present day’s party led democracy to the people led democracy”.

**Mr. N.P. Samy (Secretary, Co-ordination, National Centre for Labour, an organisation of the unprotected workers in India who constitute more than three fourths of India's wage/salary workers. He is also involved in organising the slum dwellers in Karnataka):** Stressed the need for social and political empowerment of the oppressed and the depressed, of the need to recognize the issues of dalits and women as national problems. He also spoke about the problems faced by the workers of the unprotected sector (or the unorganised sector) and the growing unemployment and emphasized that the problems of unprotected workers, dalits and the women must be recognized as the national problems.

**Mr. Laxman Hota (Lecturer, Department of History, Bolangir, Orissa):** He observed how democracy has been reduced to 15 days of elections. Several thousands of dalits and tribals from Bolangir, the district to which he belong, were working in the brick-kilns of Hyderabad and Bangalore in semi-slavery conditions. Many had been driven to the red light areas for survival. He also spoke about the feudal nature of the relationship still prevailing in the Bolangir district of Orissa where the votes are cast as per the wishes of

the local henchmen/power brokers as otherwise the poor tribals and dalits have to face their vendetta, attack or reprisal. He said, “For those who behave according to the wishes of the powerful they were given Rs. 100 per vote as a reward. Even in the District Collector’s office, except the collector the rest has to either stand or sit on the floor when the feudal lord of Bolangir visit the office of the collector. People see no difference between kingship and democracy in our area”.

**Mr. Rajeev Godara (Secretary, All India Lawyers Union, Chandigarh and activist of Sampooran Kranti Manch):** Spoke about the culture of fear prevailing among dalits in Haryana and gave the example of the recent killing of dalits in the state. He said, “Those who speak out against the powerful are killed. A journalist who was writing fearlessly against the misdeeds of the powerful was shot dead in Sirsa district of Haryana. One advocate who was speaking fearlessly against the wrongdoers was beaten up mercilessly. We are talking about dalit consciousness but dalits in Haryana are not being treated as human beings. In the so-called Panchayati Raj system the elected representative are always afraid of police, BDO (Block Development Officer) and other bureaucrats and are unable to speak their mind in front of them. If farmers go for protest they are booked under the charge of sedition”.

**Mr. Bojja Tarakam (Advocate and dalit activist. Associated with Dalit Mahasabha, Andhra Pradesh):** Mr. Tarakam said that democracy has three dimensions: political, social and economic. “The political dimension is defined by one man one vote, one vote one value but the political democracy has been reduced to equating democracy with votes and elections only. As long as the caste system is there we cannot have true democracy. The system of graded inequality must go if the downtrodden and dalits are to enjoy freedom. Dalits have been deprived of access to all sources of mental labour. Only manual labour has been their prerogative. Dalits should have free access to natural resources and control over them. Regarding dalit participation in Gujarat riots, they were hired by the RSS (*Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sang*) and their participation was different compared to the upper caste. Dalit organizations apologized to Muslims after the riots”.

**Mr. RCL Das (Associated with the Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Bihar):** He felt that the key to dalit liberation lies in their getting out of Hinduism. “Conversion to Buddhism is a good solution but this should be accompanied by economic liberation by providing land to the tiller and teaching/acquiring technical skills by dalits. In the administration 21 out of 31 districts Collectors or SPs (Superintendents of Police) were dalits in Bihar but yet atrocities on dalits are continuing unabated. 300 rapes had taken place in one year in Bihar and there were five cases of women being paraded naked... what does this mean? Even the Supreme Court is becoming a party to curtailment of democratic rights by denying workers the right to strike. In the case of political corruption, one can go on appealing from court to court”.

**Prof. Raghunandan Sharma (Department of Sociology, Patna College, Patna University, Bihar):** Felt that there was a tendency among dalit leaders to assert their identity aggressively anti ‘other’. “There is a need to grow out of this. In Bihar Yadavas are reasserting their identity with the coming to power of Laloo Yadav. There is what we call the ‘mantra syndrome’; People feel every party / leader is the same... There is a strong sense of alienation. Criminalisation of politics is on the rise. For instance, a person seeking the ticket from the Congress party to contest elections in Bihar came to the party office with five armed bodyguards and five lakh rupees. Politicians have become a law unto themselves and are above law”.

**Mr. M. Omar Khan (Social activist from Rajasthan):** Mr. Khan pointed out that democracy meant representative rule and yet with the population of each constituency increasing to mammoth numbers (around 15 lakhs) this implied that only those people with money bags or big party machinery can participate in the elections. “This will end up as ‘corporate democracy’ run by the wealthy people. The past 200 years of history of democracy shows that the future lies in our ability to rationally harness human and natural resources for a sustainable life style”.

**Dr. Shamsher Singh Bisht (President, Uttarakhand Lok Vahini, Uttranchal):** Mr. Bisht said that he was afraid of the word democracy. He cited the example of N.D.

Tiwari, the former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, who said at one time that Uttaranchal would be formed 'over my dead body' and was today the chief minister of Uttaranchal without any qualms! "We are living in an age of 'broker's raj'. Leaders of struggle movements are getting co-opted into the ruling party. No lawyer in Uttaranchal comes to PUCL because they are afraid that their practice will go down".

**Prof. G. Satyanarayana (Department of Sociology, Osmania University):** Mr. Satyanarayana said that freedom from fear is a guiding dimension of democracy. "Democracy has often been equated with modernity and western culture. The one distinctly positive feature of this western concept of democracy is its stress on human dignity, which gives respect to human beings as human beings. But in India all human beings are not treated equally as their status in society is decided by the caste in which they are born. With growing democratisation the upper castes are increasingly feeling threatened but their stranglehold on Indian society still continues".

**Dr. Uma Shankari (Active in Rashtriya Raitu Seva Samiti, Andhra Pradesh):** "Dr. Shankari said that rulers are also in fear of losing power and money etc because they have to face democratic elections frequently. Those outside the corridors of power must play upon that fear and bring popular pressure upon the rulers to solve peoples' problems".

**Mr. Sajjan Kumar (Associated with Nature-Human Centric Peoples Movement, Rajasthan):** Mr. Kumar mentioned that in two villages of Rajasthan, dalits who were elected as Sarpanch were not allowed to function and were made to resign by the local big wigs. This showed the limit of democracy in India.

**Mr. VT Rajshekhhar (Editor, Dalit Voice):** He said, "The concept of democracy must change, as it is a concept borrowed from the west. Democracy can succeed in a country, which is a nation. France is a nation; United Kingdom is not (as there is Ireland and Scotland which is a part of it). Western people want to impose their concept of democracy on the rest of the world to maintain their hegemony. The result of this democracy has been very painful, as for example, in Africa where a generation is

threatened to be wiped out by AIDS. No Muslim country has accepted the western model of democracy nor has China. In India democracy has meant an open licence for upper caste people to exploit the lower castes. Even in West Bengal the Bhadrak (Brahmins and Kayasthas etc.) continue to rule despite change from Congress to Communist Party rule. The problem of dalits is a nationality question. As it has not been recognized as such, it is giving rise to caste and regional movements. Only dalit and backward chief ministers like Mayawati and Laloo Yadav are termed castiests, but Nehru's cabinet was full of Brahmins and yet he was considered secular and progressive”.

**Mr. JM Rathod (President, Gujarat Kisan Khet Majdoor Sabha):** Mr. Rathod pointed out, “In Gujarat the ‘Hindutva’ forces started ‘*Vanvasi Kalayan Yojana*’. They are trying to promote the concept of ‘*Vanvasi*’ as opposed to ‘*Adivasi*’ in their attempt at Hinduisation of the tribal people. The question of nationalities needs to be appreciated in proper perspective. We have seen the heroic struggle of the people of Manipur against the atrocities committed by our own military but there was no protest in other parts of the country against these atrocities. Two positive things have happened after independence; reservation for dalit and OBC's and education of women, which has given some meaning to Indian democracy”.

**Dr. C. Lakshamanan (Dalit activist and Faculty member, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) Chennai, Tamil Nadu):** “Democracy implies certain values like secularism and equality of opportunity. Reservation for dalits is not addressing the needs of 95 percent of dalits; it is helping only 5 percent dalits who have got higher education. 95 percent of dalits are steeped in poverty and illiteracy”.

**Mr. N.P. Samy (Secretary, Co-ordination, National Centre for Labour, an organisation of the unprotected workers in India who constitute more than three fourths of India's wage/salary workers. He is also involved in organising the slum dwellers in Karnataka):** Mr. Samy spoke about the way in which the dalits and poor are neglected by the government for the past many decades since independence. These poor

and neglected sections of society which needed special attention and more resources to improve their quality of life were not being given their due share in the budget.

**Ms. Hasnat *Mansur* (Associated with FEMWOB, a Muslim women's organisation in Karnataka):** Ms Mansur said that although as an intellectual and belonging to the middle class she feels secure in Indian democracy but as a Muslim woman she feels very insecure. She also warned against stereotyping of the Muslim community. Regarding the wearing of 'burqha' by Muslim women she felt that the choice should be left to the Muslim women.

## **Day Two, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

### **Morning Session (10 am to 1.30 pm)**

*The theme of the day for the dialogue was freedom from want in democracy. Prof. Peter R. deSouza chaired the session.*

**Mr. Jasvir Singh (Coordinator, Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security):** He spoke about the theme for a few minutes. He said, “Although around 402 million Indians out of a total population of 1007 million were working, still hundreds of millions of Indian citizens were unable to purchase the basic requirements of a dignified human existence for themselves and their dependent family members. There is a need to see why even the working population could not provide the basic requirements of a dignified human existence to themselves and their dependent family members? And why they are forced to live a sub-human existence below the so-called poverty line in Indian democracy? Why the mainstream political parties are not taking the cause of that part of the working population, which is the most exploited? (The unorganized or unprotected workers)”

*Those who spoke in this session were: Mr. S. Ranganathan, Mr. Het Ram, Mr. Balwant Singh, Prof. B. Shiva Reddy, Mr. VT Rajshekar, Mr. LS Baghel, Prof. Raja Ram, Dr. Lakshamanan, Prof. Mujaffar Assadi, Dr. SS Bisht, Prof. Ramesh Dixit, Baba Maya Ram, Mr. Samuel A. Raj, Mr. MC Rajan, Mr. Rajeev Godara, Dr. V. Saravaran, and Mr. Shanni Ratti. Dr. S. Janakrajan, Prof. G. Satyanarayana, Prof. Hassan Mansur, Mr. Sajjan Kumar, Dr. TN Prakash, Mr. RCL Das, Dr. Raghunandan Sharma, Prof. SS Chowdhury, Mr. Omar Khan, Prof. Peter R de Souza. The following is the brief note about what they spoke in this session:*

**Mr. S. Ranganathan (President Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, Tamil Nadu):** Mainly spoke about his experiences about the condition of the farmers, agricultural workers and the tenant cultivators in Thanjavore district of Tamil Nadu. He

said “The landless labourers have a 15 percent share in the produce and the need of the labour is very well protected in this district. Although the land is owned by the land owner, the cultivating tenant is protected by law and he can even raise a loan on the land. The wages of the men and women agricultural workers are almost equal. This district can be a model for the entire country to emulate and shows the way as how to achieve freedom from wants in a democratic system”.

**Mr. Het Ram (Ex. MP and dalit activist from Haryana):** Mr. Het Ram spoke about the problems faced by the farmers and the agriculture labour. He said that the so-called subsidies to farmers like subsidy on tractor, fertilizer and other inputs are actually subsidies to the industry producing this product. The industry producing inputs for agriculture create artificial scarcity in the market and hike the prices of their products. On the other hand farmers are not getting adequate prices for their produce. It is only the industry and the traders who are benefiting from the Indian agriculture”. He also said that political power in Haryana and Punjab was in the hands of land owning classes and the problems of the agriculture workers are not being taken care off. He said, “Food as a ‘weapon’ is used not only by the United States against poor nations but also by the well-off people in the villages to subjugate the poor and hungry and to force them to become bonded labourers”.

**Mr. Balwant Singh (Former IAS officer and a dalit activist from Uttar Pradesh):** Mr. Singh spoke about the problems of the landless agricultural labourers and said that the policy of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation (LPG), pursued by the Indian government since 1991 was harming the livelihood of the poor and common people of India. “Cottage industry is also suffering because of the LPG. Because of these policies the economic power and resources are concentrating in fewer and fewer hands. To save our people from hunger and deprivation we have to fight against LPG. If our democracy is unable to provide food, water and other basic requirements of life to our people what is the use of this democracy? There is also a need to control/nationalise the land and we must also think about how to reduce our population. The bureaucracy in India is

responsible for the present state of affairs of our country. It is not doing its duty and is actively working against the poor and the deprived”.

**Prof. B. Shiva Reddy (Department of Economics, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh):** “At the macro level food security is there in India as large quantities of food grains are kept in the government godowns. But we are not able to achieve food security at the micro level as millions of Indians are starving and are not getting adequate food. When we are talking about food security, we should not only think about the food needs of the present generation but also the food needs of the future generations”. He lamented the way in which the children are treated in our democracy and said, “Nearly one-third of our children are not going to school. The resources required for fulfilling wants are generated by producing goods or services and in this process the role of the state becomes important in a country like India where millions of people are deprived of the basic requirements of life”.

**Mr. VT Rajshekhar (Editor, Dalit Voice):** Mr. Rajshekhar said, “From Mr. Ranganathan’s presentation it looked like landless labourers are happy and landlords are not happy in the Cauvery part of Tamil Nadu. But this is not the reality. The agricultural workers in this area are either dalits or from the backward caste and the landlords are generally from the upper castes. The communist party in Tamil Nadu is also dominated by the upper castes. The farmers are vocal in this area because of their upper caste.

**Mr. LS Baghel (Research Scholar and Human Right Activist from Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjab):** Mr. Baghel said, “The farmers who have been committing suicides in Punjab are not poor farmers. They are either cotton growers or those farmers who were in a better position. The international market and the local trader are also responsible for their plight”.

**Prof. N. Rajaram (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, M.S. University, Baroda, Gujarat):** Prof. Rajaram said that cotton cooperatives are very successful in Gujarat and the farmers are in a better position. “The rich farmers collaborate with

medium and small farmers and there is no suicide by the Gujarat farmers. Cotton need to be ginned and there are private and cooperative gins in Gujarat. Labour in these gins are getting market wages which are around one third of the legal wages. In Kerala they pay the legal wages and the cooperatives are not successful. The Gujarat cooperatives are successful because they don't pay legal wages".

**Dr. C. Lakshamanan (Dalit activist and Faculty member, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) Chennai, Tamil Nadu):** "For farmers there are subsidies, cooperative support, credit cards and other facilities from the government. Cooperatives are doing well in Tamil Nadu also, but are not paying the minimum wages to the workers. When they are not paying the minimum wages to the workers why should the state give them subsidies. The Parliament is dominated by the land owning interests; they want all the facilities from the government but don't want to pay income tax to government and legal wages to the workers. Only upper caste people are dominating the cooperatives in Tamil Nadu".

**Prof. Muzaffar Assadi (Department of Political Science, Mysore University, Karnataka and Human Rights activist):** "Capitalism in India has come from above through the efforts of the state and never destroyed other social formations; rather it compromised with other social formations. Capitalism has created food insecurity and insecurity to individuals in India. Nagarhole in Karnataka has been declared a national park and global capital is entering into Nagarhole, but the tribals of Nagarhole are undernourished, selling their children and becoming bonded labourers. Even coffee planters whose economic condition was much better than the other farmers of Karnataka are committing suicides. We must address the basic issue because of which all these problems are there in India and that is the issue of the path of development we have initiated since independence". He also referred to the Land Reform Amendment Act of Karnataka which gave freedom to the big corporate sector to acquire thousands of acres of land. "This is nothing but promoting corporate landlordism where the farmers will have to work according to the wishes of these corporations".

**Dr. Shamsheer Singh Bisht (President, Uttarakhand Lok Vahini, Uttranchal):**

“Around 60 percent of the land in Uttranchal is forest land or government land. The people living in forests are being termed as encroachers of the forest. Every one is talking about saving the forests. Where will the people living in the forests go. Earlier in Uttranchal people were growing traditional food crops like rice and wheat but now they are shifting to cash crops. The government is also promoting cash crops which are not in the interests of the people and their food security”.

**Dr. Ramesh Dixit (Department of Political Science, Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh):**

“In Uttar Pradesh (UP) only small holding are there and there are no big farmers. The farmers are unable to pay minimum wages. Our state is exporting labour to other states. In the era of globalisation the problems of the farmers have increased. The prices of agriculture inputs are increasing but farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce. Even if the production is more the prices of agriculture products crashes, which again creates problems for the farmers. The shift from traditional food crops to cash crops is also responsible for the present plight of the farmers”.

**Baba Maya Ram (Lokniti-CSDS, Delhi):**

“Growing cash crops is not a viable alternative for the farmers in India. In Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Chhattisgarh the experience of growing cash crops is not good. The condition of those farmers who were growing Soybean in MP is not good today. The government of Chhattisgarh is also promoting cash crops. The former chief-minister of Chhattisgarh Mr. Ajit Jogi once said that the main reason of poverty in Chhattisgarh is that farmers are growing rice. Farmers are being forced to change the cropping pattern from food crops to cash crops. They are being told that only those farmers who grow cash crops will get electricity”.

**Mr. Samuel A Raj (Dalit activist and teaches at MS University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu):**

Mr. Raj said that the people living around the forests are not allowed to enter the forests to collect minor produce from the forests. “The public distribution shops (PDS) which provide ration to the poor are two to four kms. away from the forest village and are generally located in the main village bordering forest. The ration items rice and kerosene

comes only twice in a month and the people living in the forest village (hamlet) don't know when the ration items will come in the shop. There is no fixed date when the ration is available in the shop. Some times they don't have money when ration is available and when they have money, the ration is not available. All these things are creating more food insecurity among these people”.

**Mr. Rajeev Godara (Secretary, All India Lawyers Union, Chandigarh and activist of Sampooran Kranti Manch):** Mr. Godara said, “In spite of the land reforms big landlords still exist in Haryana and there is no food security. People do not even know that cooperative societies are not part of the government. Farmers in Punjab are committing suicides because these farmers are unable to bear the burden of debt. Consumerism, the use of more inputs in agriculture and dowry has increased among these farmers which is partly responsible for their debt and related crisis”.

**Dr. V. Saravaran (Fellow, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. Works on tribal and dalit issues):** Dr. Saravaran spoke about the plight of tribals in India and the role of the state in aggravating their crisis. He said, “The state is encroaching upon the forest land which is the main source of livelihood for the tribals, where they have lived for thousands of years. All the so-called development projects started in the tribal areas provide benefits to non-tribal areas and the tribals are displaced from one area to another. Whether in the colonial or postcolonial era tribals are always on the receiving end are constantly facing threats to their life and livelihood”.

**Mr. Shanni Ratti (Dalit activist from Haryana):** “Agriculture workers in Punjab and Haryana are drugged to get more and harder work from them. The entire family of the agricultural worker has to work for the landowner. Even their children are not spared. Their women are also exploited sexually. These agricultural workers are also committing suicides because they don't get work regularly and have to take loans for consumption and survival. The incidence of bonded labour is also prevalent in these areas”.

**Dr. S. Janakrajan (Faculty member of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) Chennai. Also engaged in bringing together the farmers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the problem of Cauvery water issue):** “We are still working and fighting for democracy. Democracy is being negotiated between upper and lower castes, between agriculture and other sector; between urban and rural areas, between rich and poor states and between big and small political parties. Lack of basic needs for a majority of our population even after more than five decades of democratic rule in India is a matter of shame for all of us. Around 60 percent of our population is denied even safe drinking water. Lack of safe drinking water and sanitation are creating major health problems and results in a vicious circle of poverty, ill health, high death rates etc”.

“It is strange that Orissa where the average rainfall is around 1300 mm declares a drought when rainfall is less than 1100 mm and Rajasthan where the average rainfall is around 460 mm, declares a drought when the rainfall is less than 350 mm. What is drought in India? Is it less than 350 mm rainfall or less than 1150 mm rainfall? Is it not a man made or political drought? Why should the people in Orissa die of hunger or suffer starvation deaths when there is plenty of water there? Now economically better off states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are demanding water from the Mahanadi, which is in Orissa. Why are the comparatively richer states demanding water from a poor state like Orissa? Why cannot Orissa divert the water of the Mahanadi to its other areas where there is a scarcity of water?”

“Most of our rivers are polluted by the industries. Even drinking water is polluted very badly in some areas and the people have to migrate to other areas because of this reason. Now there is a talk of privatisation of drinking water. In a poor country like India, where a large proportion of the population is unable even to purchase food requirements how can they pay for water?”

**Mr. Samuel A Raj (Dalit activist and teaches at MS University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu):** “Indian society can be divided into four groups. (1) Those who believe in hierarchy like landlord, government machinery or bureaucrats. All these believe in acquiring more and more power. (2) Those who believe in the market; their main aim is the maximization of profit and their own welfare even at the cost of others. (3) Those

who believe in egalitarianism. (4) Those that are the sufferers or the shock absorbers of the society. Our society is running because we have a large number of sufferers who are suffering for the sins committed by the first two categories. As soon as they revolt against the unjust behaviour of the believers of hierarchy and market, the vehicle of our society will stop. Our society is running because of these sufferers or the shock absorbers of the society. It is the duty of the egalitarians to organize the sufferers and revolt against the unjust system”.

**Prof. G. Satyanarayana (Department of Sociology, Osmania University):** “The bureaucracy in India is very insensitive towards the problems of the poor and have-nots and are playing to the tune of their political masters. Democracy in India has become a tool in the hands of a privileged few to exploit and harass the masses. The ruling class in India has not changed since independence and has become a threat to the society. There is a need to convert this minority oriented democracy to a people oriented democracy”.

**Prof. Hassan Mansur (President, PUCL Karnataka State):** Prof. Mansur mainly spoke about the plight of slum dwellers. He said, “Around one third of the population of metropolitan cities is living in slums and they are denied the freedom from want and all other basic needs and rights of a human being. The majority of these slum dwellers belong to dalit, and minority communities and are living in constant threat of demolition of their huts. They are being denied even the most basic needs like water, sanitation and schooling facilities for their children. They neither have freedom from fear nor freedom from want. The democratic state, which was supposed to help them to achieve this freedom, is actively working in the direction to deny them these freedoms”.

**Prof. TN Prakash (Associate Professor, Department of Agriculture Economics, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. Also engaged in bringing together the farmers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the problem of the Cauvery river water):** Dr. Prakash spoke about the serious crisis being faced by the agriculture sector and said, “Farmer’s suicides are reported not only from all most all the districts of Karnataka, but also from all classes and castes of farmers. A large number of farmers

who committed suicides in Karnataka are from Mandya district which boast's of having the largest area under irrigation. This indicates the deepening crisis in the agricultural sector and there is a need to see beyond class and caste dimensions to know the real impact of the present agrarian crisis on Indian society”.

**Mr. RCL Das (Associated with the Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Bihar):** “Every year Bihar, Assam and West Bengal faces the furry of floods. But Bihar has to face the tragedy of drought after the floods havoc. Those villages where there was 20 feet of water two months ago are facing drought conditions. Bihar is one of the poorest states in India. There is no industry in Bihar. The Land Reform Act was passed in Bihar in 1950. All surplus land in Bihar should have been distributed to the dalits and tribals but there still are ‘benami’ holdings of thousands of acres, in spite of the fact that there is a government, which claims to be committed to the cause of social justice. There was a news item that a woman sold her child because of hunger and starvation. Bihar is also exporting the largest number of workers to different parts of the country and a large proportion of able-bodied people are migrating from the villages of Bihar. Although millions of people in Bihar are living below the poverty line, there is no effective public distribution system to provide food items to the poor. Small and marginal farmers are unable even to grow for their own consumption. The cost of production in agriculture is increasing. Bihar is facing an all round crisis but still there is no hope of any movement for change”.

**Dr. Shamsheer Singh Bisht (President, Uttarakhand Lok Vahini, Uttranchal):** “There was thinking among the people of Uttranchal that the land allotted to the dalits and tribals should not be taken over by others, but no party was in favour of it. Now the rich and powerful dalit police officers and bureaucrats have taken over the lands of poor dalits and tribals. Some bureaucrats have married the local women (second marriage) just to grab land in Uttranchal”. He also reminded the participants of the contribution of Mr. VP Singh in bringing the backward class leaders like Mulayam Singh, Laloo Yadav and Mayawati in becoming Chief Ministers. He was also of the view that in South Africa Nelson Mandela could succeed in his campaign against apartheid with the help of whites.

**Mr. M. Omar Khan (Social activist from Rajasthan):** “Out of about 14 crore acres of land in India 60 percent is affected by land erosion or other forms of environmental degradation. Out of 10.5 lakh people who commit suicide due to starvation or hunger related reasons 30 percent are Indians. The United Nations has failed to eradicate poverty even in a single nation from among the 120 developing countries of the world. A large number of state and central laws in India have failed to help the poor and downtrodden and are being used by the corrupt and by criminals to further their interests. We are talking about food security but a majority of Indians are being denied even safe drinking water. We must think about the present situation very seriously keeping in view the environmental and human development crisis”.

**Dr. C. Lakshamanan (Dalit activist and Faculty member, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) Chennai, Tamil Nadu):** Dr. Lakshamanan said that our representatives in Parliament are not doing their duty. “There are 120 dalit Members of Parliament (MPs) in India and they have not brought any effective legislation for the upliftment of dalits. This can be seen from the living and working conditions of the majority of dalits. The representatives of the other interests groups are very effective in promoting the interests of their groups”. He gave the example of textile lobby and cable TV lobby because of whose efforts the tax levied in the present budget CENTAX and cable TV tax had been taken back. “What dalit MP’s are doing for the ordinary dalits in the parliament? What is the need of having these dalit MP’s when they are unable to promote the interests of the majority of dalits?”

**Mr. Shanni Ratti (Dalit activist from Haryana):** “Dalits are being exploited by our rulers and are being kept poor and illiterate. Sweepers in Haryana are fighting for the past two months that their salaries are given from the government treasury. They are not getting their salary/wages regularly and have to go to moneylenders for consumption loans. Their children are dropping out from school because of poverty and non-availability of money for day-to-day survival. No one is worried about their problems”.

**Prof. Peter R. deSouza (Professor and Senior Visiting Fellow, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi):** In his concluding note for the pre-lunch session said, “In this session we have voiced the issue of land, social relations, environment, livelihood and the drivers of change. There is a serious crisis in agriculture in India and it is getting worsened day by day. The democratic system is unable to solve the crisis or even take serious note of it. If we can change the agenda of public discourse in India in favour of the deprived and dalits, it can be a positive contribution”.

**Post-Lunch Session (3:00 pm to 4:00 pm)**

*The post-lunch session of the second day was chaired by Prof. Hassan Mansur. The Necessity of this session was felt (although the second days scheduled programme was only up to lunch) because some participants could not speak in the pre-lunch session. This was the last session of the national dialogue on democracy and human security. Dr. Janakrajan, Mr. Vijay Pratap, Mr. Samuel Asir Raj, Mr. Ranganathan, Dr.T.N. Prakash, Dr. Muzaffar Assadi, Mr. Omar Khan, Prof. Rajaram, Mr. VT Rajshekar, Mr. LS Baghel, Mr. Balwant Singh, and Ms. Hasnat Mansur spoke in this session.*

**Dr. S. Janakrajan (Faculty member of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) Chennai. Also engaged in bringing together the farmers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the problem of Cauvery water issue):** “Many speakers in the morning session have spoken about the centrality of land in rural areas and also that land is the main productive resource. But I want to bring to the notice of the participants that water is also as important a productive resource as land. In the past few decades, increase in the irrigated area under cultivation (both canal and well irrigation) has increased the gap between the well-owning farmers and the non-well owning farmers. Access to a well is becoming an important issue as the well-owning farmers are selling water to non-well owning farmers”. He was also of the opinion that the concerns of the leftists and those of the environmentalists should not be seen as opposed to each other as both were working for the deprived sections of the society. “We cannot separate the issues of environment and dignified livelihood”. He was also of the view that although the state has failed in

India to provide basic requirements of life to a large number of Indian citizens, but still without the active involvement of the state nothing substantial can be done in this respect.

**Mr. Vijay Pratap (Socio-Political activist from Delhi):** Mr. Vijay Pratap raised a question, “Who is ‘left’ in India. The leftists are those who are working for the deprived sections of Indian society and it includes the Gandhians, environmentalists, Ambedkarites, socialists etc. If we are considering only the Stalinist parties or those according to whom steel and power generation is the measure of development, as leftists then we are misusing the term ‘left’”.

**Mr. Samuel A Raj (Dalit activist and teaches at MS University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu):** Mr. Raj was of the view that land and cattle are two important sources of livelihood in the rural areas. He said, “We have discussed in the previous session more about the land and its centrality to the rural people. But cattle are also an important source of livelihood for some communities and they are losing this source of livelihood today because of modernization, globalisation and liberalization. Earlier there was common grazing land where these cattle owning communities could take their cattle for grazing but now these lands are being privatised and are being taken over by the big corporations and MNCs in the Western Ghats. These cattle dependent communities, because of no availability of the common grazing lands, are selling their cattle and are unable to find other sources of livelihood. We should think about these communities”.

**Mr. S. Ranganathan (President Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, Tamil Nadu):** “Out of around 12 to 15 lakh acres of land in the Cauvery delta in Tamil Nadu about one third belonged to the temples, trusts and Wakaf Boards. This means around 5 lakh acres of land are owned by various temple and Wakaf Boards and it is being kept under the cultivating tenant act. If this land is purchased by the government and is given to dalits at nominal rates for a 20-year lease it will not only create livelihood opportunities for lakhs of dalits but will also increase the productivity of the land. At present this land is not helping the temples and trusts but is creating problems for them”.

**Prof. TN Prakash (Associate Professor, Department of Agriculture Economics, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. Also engaged in bringing together the farmers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the problem of the Cauvery river water):** Mr. Prakash was of the view that Indian democracy was under stress from the onslaught of multilateral and other foreign agencies. He said, “We should be very cautious about the way in which these agencies are forcing their views on the elected governments of different states in India. In this context he gave the example of the Karnataka government, which has computerized the land records of around 20 million farmers. Now the government of Karnataka wants to commercialise this information (land and other agrarian records) so that every one who needs the information of the land records can easily get it. This will help the big corporations and the MNCs to take the land records and other agrarian records of a particular area and to utilize them for their narrow business interests”.

**Prof. Muzaffar Assadi (Department of Political Science, Mysore University, Karnataka and Human Rights activist):** Spoke about the fear of losing the land in the rural areas, as it was the most important factor in rural economy. He said, “The identity of rural people is with the land (the land owner and the land less) whereas in urban areas people have multiple identities and if they lose one, they have the other. The suicides in villages are because of the fear of losing the land. The government is taking a very narrow view of food security. The people working under the food for work programme are given only food (Rice or wheat) as if they have no other need to look after, like clothes and other needs for a dignified human existence”.

**Mr. M. Omar Khan (Social activist from Rajasthan):** Mr. Khan was of the view that water was not an issue of governance but a life and death issue for a large number of India’s population. “It should not be treated as a local issue between two or more states but as a national issue. The Congress in the past many decades and the NDA in the past six year failed to resolve the problem of water in our country. Today all modes of governments are becoming irrelevant to solve this crisis. This crisis can be solved only if the view of the entire population is taken into consideration through a referendum,

keeping our long-term and short-term requirements of sustainable development into account”.

**Prof. N. Rajaram (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, M.S. University, Baroda, Gujarat):** “In the tribal areas of Gujarat and some other areas people have been given wheat under the food for work programme which is not their staple diet. Their staple diet is corn or millet, so they have to sell the wheat, which they get under the food for work programme to purchase corn and millet. They have to sell this wheat or rice at very low rates to purchase their staple diet”.

**Mr. VT Rajshekhar (Editor, Dalit Voice):** Mr. Rajshekhar said that many people have spoken about the role of the leftists and the environmentalists in the struggle for freedom from want, but he considered them only upper caste people who were out to hoodwink the people of this country under the garb of being ‘left’ and environmentalists. He was also of the opinion that India was not a nation but a conglomeration of castes and as the political and social power was in the hands of upper castes, they always used it to further their own interests.

**Prof. Hassan Mansur (President, PUCL Karnataka State):** “India is a nation of castes. Even in West Bengal there is no leftist or rightist. In all parties important posts are grabbed by the upper caste people. The same is the case with the West Bengal government; it is dominated by the upper caste people”. He was of the view that the central government should have the power to keep the state under control if they behaved like the Punjab government (not following the Supreme Court’s order to provide water to Haryana and Rajasthan).

**Ms. Hasnat Mansur (Associated with FEMWOB, a Muslim women’s organisation in Karnataka):** Ms. Mansur observed that there are very few women present in the dialogue. She said, “There should have been at least one third women in this dialogue. The problems regarding minorities have not been discussed properly even in this dialogue. The Muslim community in India is facing many socio-economic and political

problems but only lip service has been paid in the past more than five decades since independence. Even ‘progressive’ friends think that the ‘backward looking’ and ‘obscurantist way of living’ of Muslims is responsible for their socio-economic problems”. She also said, “The Muslim clergy is not the mind or body of the Muslim community and it is mainly interested to keep its hold on the community for its own benefits. Muslim women don’t know from which forum they should speak about their problems. Even progressive friends don’t take interest in the problems of Muslim women; they think that these should be solved by the Muslim community itself”.

**----- END OF DIALOGUE -----**

**List of dialogue participants arranged alphabetically by family name**

<b>Hyderabad Dialogue</b>				
<b>Sr.no</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Nature of Interest/Institution</b>	<b>Phone No. Email Id.</b>
1	<b>Amarjeet (Mr.)</b>	Ward No. 16 Valmiki Chowk Fatehabad, Haryana	Dalit Activist Swamparna Kranti Manch, Haryana	01667-225225
2.	<b>Assadi Muzaffar (Prof.)</b>	908 III <sup>rd</sup> Main New Kanta Raj Urs Road Mysore-9 Karnataka	Dept. of Political Science, Mysore University Human Right Activist	09448186295 mhassadi@yahoo.com
3.	<b>Baghel L.S. (Mr.)</b>	Patel House, Block no. 4, Room no.58 Punjab University, Chandigarh	PhD. Scholar Human Rights	9815338223 lallanbaghel@yahoo.co.in
4.	<b>Baidya Debashish (Prof.)</b>	2/2 Gopal Lal Choudhary Lane Howrah-711103 West Bengal	Hoogly Mahasin College, Burdwan University Dept. of Commerce	033-26880205
5.	<b>Bisht Ajaymitra Singh (Mr.)</b>	Gandhi Marg, Almora, Uttaranchal	Uttarakhand Lok Vahani,	230342 232815 samshersinghisht@yahoo.com
6.	<b>Bisht Samsher Singh (Dr.)</b>	Gandhi Marg, Almora, Uttaranchal	President, Uttarakhand Lok Vahani, Environmentalist	230342 232815 samshersinghisht@yahoo.com
7.	<b>Chowdhury S. Singha (Prof.)</b>	Retd. B.E. College	Ram Krishna Palli Post D.S. Lane Howrah-711109	26580637
8.	<b>Das Malti (Ms.)</b>	287 Nehru Nagar Patna-800013 Bihar	Works for Slum Dwellers Upliftment, Jhuggi Jhopries Kalyan Samiti	0612-2261682
9.	<b>Das R.C.L. (Mr.)</b>	287 Nehru Nagar Patna-800013 Bihar	PUCL, Bihar Child rights and Women Atrocities	0612-2261682
10.	<b>Dixit Ramesh (Dr.)</b>	8/2 Dalibagh Colony, Lucknow-1 Uttar Pradesh	Department of Political Science, Lucknow University	0522-2207800
11.	<b>Godara Rajeev (Mr.)</b>	H.no. 283 Sector-40A Chandigarh	Lawyer, Secretary, All India Lawyer Union, Chandigarh Unit Secretary, Swamparna Kranti Manch	2692008 0941750798 rajeevdivya_godara@yahoo.co.in
12.	<b>Hota Laxman (Mr.)</b>	Daily Market Road Bolangir ORISSA	Lecturer, Department of History, Bolangir.	09437150685

National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security (Hyderabad) 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2004

13.	<b>Jadhav Keshavrao (Prof.)</b>	501 Surabhi Heaven Apartment Durgabhai Deshmukh Colony, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	President PUCL, Andhra Pradesh, Raitu Sahay Samiti	040-27425795
14.	<b>Janakrajan S. (Prof.)</b>	79 II Main Road Gandhi Nagar-20 Chennai-20 Tamil Nadu	MIDS, Water, Environmental and Civil Society Dialogue in Conflict Resolution	044-24412589 09444026533 janak@mids.ac.in
15.	<b>Josey P.J. (Mr.)</b>	10/56, Fort Cochin PIN-682001 Kerala	Indian Solidarity Committee for Democracy, Freedom and Human Rights	0484-2217659 josey@yahoo.co.in
16.	<b>Khan M. Omar (Mr.)</b>	New Sohan Kothi Qtrs. Bikaner-334001 Rajasthan	Social Activist, Nature Human Centric People's Movement	0151-2526904 sajjan_nhcpm@rediffmail.com
17.	<b>Kumar Sajjan (Mr.)</b>	C/o Bipin Chandra, Choutina Well, Bikaner , Rajasthan	Social Activist, Nature Human Centric People's Movement	0512521869 sajjan_nhcpm@rediffmail.com
18.	<b>Lakshman C. (Dr.)</b>	79, 2 <sup>ND</sup> Main Road Gandhi Nagar, Chennai-20 Tamil Nadu	MIDS, Chennai Working on Democracy and Dialectics	09840234898 laxman@mids.ac.n
19.	<b>Mansur Hasnath (Ms.)</b>	46, Wellington Street, Richman Town Bangalore-25 Karnataka	FEMWOB Women Issues	22211109 mansur_humanrights@yahoo.com
20.	<b>Mansur Hassan (Mr.)</b>	46, Wellington Street, Richman Town Bangalore-25 Karnataka	President, PUCL Karnataka unit Works on Human Right issues	22211109 mansur_humanrights@yahoo.com
21.	<b>Narendra Nath G. (Mr.)</b>	Venkataram Puram Vallivedu, Post Damalacheruvu Chittor District- 517152 Andhra Pradesh	Human Rights Forum	08585249338
22.	<b>Patnaik Arun (Dr.)</b>	Dept. of Political Science, University of Hyderabad, HYDERABAD- 500046 AP	Dept. of Political Science, University of Hyderabad, Political Theory	040-23834405 akpss@uohyd.ernet.in
23.	<b>Pattnayak Kishen (Mr.)</b>	VIM-467 S.S. Vihar Bhubaneshwar- 751021, Orissa	Politics of Socialism	0674-2742186
24.	<b>Pradhan Radhanath (Mr.)</b>	Dewansahibpara, Bhavanipatna, Orissa PIN-766001	Farmers Organisation	

National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security (Hyderabad) 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2004

25.	<b>Prakash T.N. (Mr.)</b>	416, 14 B Cross New Town Yelahanka Bangalore-560004 Karnataka	Associate Professor Dept. of Agriculture Economics University of Agricultural Sciences Bangalore	prakashtnk@yahoo.com
26.	<b>Raj Samuel A. (Mr.)</b>	29/53 EB Colony Maharaja Nagar Tirunelveli-627001 Tamil Nadu	M.S. University, Tirunelveli Management Science Dalit Issues	0462 2531674 samuelasiraj@rediffmail.com
27.	<b>Rajan M.C. (Mr.)</b>	A 12 TN HB LDC Road Madurai-2 Tamil Nadu	Journalist (UNI) Dalit and Student Issues	2534370 mcrajan@yahoo.com
28.	<b>Rajaram N. (Mr.)</b>	Dept. of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Maharaja Sajajirao University of Baroda	Dept. of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Maharaja Sajajirao University of Baroda	265-2795340 265-2794339 msurajam@yahoo.com
29.	<b>Rajashekhar V.J. (Mr.)</b>	109, 7 <sup>th</sup> Cross Palace Lower Orchards Bangalore-560003 Karnataka	Editor, Dalit Voice, Bangalore	080-3366771 09845056945 vtr@ndf.vsnl.net.in
30.	<b>Ram Het (Mr.)</b>	40/963 ADC Colony Barnala Road Sirsa Haryana	Ex M.P., Sirsa Dalit Samaj, Agriculture	223486
31.	<b>Ramaswamy B. (Mr.)</b>	12-2-826/A/10/4 Sarojini Prakash Residency LIC Colony Hyderabad-28 Andhra Pradesh	Bahujan Samaj Party, Hyderabad District Coordinator	® 040-23520866 (O) 040-55155042
32.	<b>Ranganathan S. (Mr.)</b>	126, 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Mannargudi PIN- 614001 Tamil Nadu	Cauvery Delta Farmers welfare Association TANJAVORE	04367252170
	<b>Rathod J.M. (Mr.)</b>	13A/147 Krishna Nagar Saijpur Bogha, Ahmedabad Gujarat	President, Gujarat Kisan Khet Majdoor Sabha	22811399
33.	<b>Ratti Shanni (Mr.)</b>	Ward No. 16 Valmiki Chowk Fatehabad, Haryana	Dalit Activist Swamparna Kranti Manch, Haryana	01667-225225
34.	<b>Reddy B. Shiva (Prof.)</b>	31, Amrutha Colony, Swaroop Nagar UPPAL Hyderabad-500039 Andhra Pradesh	Department of Economics Osmania University Hyderabad	040-27208120 09849383699

National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security (Hyderabad) 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2004

35.	<b>Reddy Kanji (Dr.)</b>	Flat no. 91 A ASHB, Hyderabad- 500027 Andhra Pradesh	Dept. of school Education District Educational Of. Hyd. A.P.	040 27552486
36.	<b>Samy N.P. (Mr.)</b>	8/10, Naina Shetty Palya Main Road Bannerghatta Road Cross, Bangalore-560076 Karnataka	National Centre for Labour	080-6681244 080-2238739
37.	<b>Saravaran V. (Dr.)</b>	Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Nizamiah Observatory Campus, Begumpet, Hyderabad-500016 Andhra Pradesh	Fellow Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Tribal and Dalit Issues	(o) 040-23402789 ® 040-23830539 saro@cess.ac.in saro63@rediffmail.com
38.	<b>Satyanarayana G. (Prof.)</b>	Dept. of Sociology, Osmania University, Hyderabad-7 Andhra Pradesh	Dept. of Sociology, Osmania University, Agrarian Relations, Women Studies	(o) 040-7682281 ® 040- 27003228 gattusatyanarayan@yahoo.co.in
39.	<b>Shankari Uma (Dr. Ms.)</b>	12-5-188-4-6 Vijayapuri, Tarnaka, Secunderabad- 500017 Andhra Pradesh	Rashtriya Raitu Seva Samiti	55458493 umanarendranath@yahoo.co.in
40.	<b>Sharma Raghunandan (Prof.)</b>	Dept. of Sociology, Patna College Patna-800005 Bihar	Dept. of Sociology, Patna College Patna University	2622216
41.	<b>Singh Balwant (Mr.)</b>	A 215, Purana Avas Vikas, Saharanpur-247001 Uttar Pradesh	Ex. IAS Ambedkar Mission Saharanpur	
42.	<b>Sundaram R. Shanmuga (Mr.)</b>	61 A AERIKODI Uthangarai Krishnagari(DT) Tamil Nadu PIN-635207	Indian Solidarity Committee for Democracy, Freedom and Human Rights	04341 222945 r_shaanmugaas@yahoo.co.in
43.	<b>Tarakam Bojja (Mr.)</b>	Plot no.1 Bal Reddy Nagar Tolly Chowki, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	Dalit Mahasabha	040-23562525

## Appendix I

### Concept note on Democracy and Human Security

**What is Human Security?** The concept of Human Security is much larger and broader than the concept of national security. It includes not only the security of the nation but also the security of the people who live in the nation. The concept of national security on the other hand is more or mainly related to the security of the land area (territory) of a nation from external aggression or from internal disturbances. National security in this case has more to do with arms, armies and the police based security to the people of a nation. Human security on the other hand is about the total well being of the people: their physical safety, their economic and social well being, respect for their dignity and worth as human beings and protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. There can be many reasons for the threat to human security such as the threat from hunger, disease, inadequate shelter, unemployment, social conflicts, crime and environmental hazards and also from the threat of external aggression. Military threat from outside the nation is only one and in many cases may not be the most significant threat to the human security. This means that the threat to human security exist even when there is no threat of external aggression. In some cases it may be possible that there is a tension between the security of the individual and that of the nation or regime. In this way it can be said that human security is concerned with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities and whether they live in conflict or in peace. So, when we talk about human security, we not only talk about the threat of external aggression to a nation but also the threat to the right to live with human dignity of the people. The feeling of insecurity among people of a country may also arise from the worries of their daily life, for example; will they and their families have enough to eat? Will they lose their jobs? Will their streets and neighbourhood be safe from crime? Will they be harassed, humiliated or persecuted by the state or its institutions because of their religion, region, caste, gender, class, ethnic origin, language, political belief or opinion? The preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted more than five decades ago by the General Assembly of the United Nations has proclaimed that freedom from fear and freedom from want are the highest aspiration of the common people. The Human Development Report (HDR) published every year by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also speaks about two major components of human security: (1) freedom from fear and (2) freedom from want.

**(1) Freedom from Fear:** Freedom from fear is an important component of human security but not the only component. The threat to freedom from fear comes when people fear of violation of their human rights or civil rights. Or the fear that they may be discriminated or persecuted due to their religion, caste, gender, language, region or political belief, either by the state or its institutions or by the dominant groups or people. The fear may also be of aggression by other country or social conflict. It can also be the fear of becoming a victim of crime.

**(2) Freedom from want:** The other equally important component of human security is freedom from want. The threat to freedom from want arises when people fear that the basic requirements of a dignified human existence would not be available to them because of one or the other reason. One of the major reasons for threat to the freedom of want is the threat to their livelihood system. The best way in which the people can be assured of the freedom from want is that they get a regular and adequate income by doing some productive work. This not only provides the people a decent standard of life but also contribute to the development of their country.

According to the United Nation Human Development Programme (UNDP), both these components of human security, freedom from fear and freedom from want, are of equal importance and human security cannot be achieved at the cost of the other.

**Three set of threats to human security:** Based on the above two components of human security, the threats to human security can be explained in the following three sets:

1. First set of threats to human security may come in the form of (a) threat of aggression by other country (b) internal disturbances, social conflicts, law and order problems and crime etc. Until a few decades ago these were considered to be the main threats to the security of a country and the people. True these are the threat to the security of a country and the people but these threats are also the results of the attitudes, thinking and policies pursued by the home government. These threats to human security can be prevented to a great extent by treating all other countries whether small or big, powerful or weak, rich or poor with respect and on the basis of equality, justice and non-interference. Similarly the threat from social conflicts, internal disturbances, law and order problems and crimes can also be prevented to a great extent by treating all citizens, communities, region and religion with due respect and on the basis of equality and justice. If the policies of the government towards other nations and 'other' citizens within the nation are just, humane, non-exploitative, and non-discriminatory, there are less chances of threat from them. These types of threat to human security cannot be ward off completely or permanently with the help of arms, armies and police. Rather if we try to depend more on the arms, armies and police for security, we may be inviting more insecurity than security. This is because the security through arms, armies and police is very costly and still not effective. To meet the prohibitive cost of security through arms, armies and police, countries have to cut spending on social sector such as education, poverty alleviation programme, health and social security etc, due to limited resources available to the nations. The expenditure on arms, armies and police at the cost of social sector expenditure creates conditions for further insecurity among people.

2. Second set of threats to human security may come from the action and inaction of the governments such as: (a) violation of human and civil rights (b) discrimination on the basis of caste, gender, class, religion, region, colour and political belief etc. and the threat of environmental hazards. All these create conditions of insecurity among the people. Solutions to these threats to human security are the rule of law, sanctity or respecting the human and civil rights of all people and treating all citizens equally and without discrimination and by pursuing sustainable development path.

3. Third set of threats to human security may come when people are denied or are unable to procure the basic requirements of dignified human existence. The main reason for this type of threat to human security is that people are unable to get decent work with adequate regular income with which they can provide themselves and their families all the basic requirements of dignified human existence. Solution to these threats to human security also depends on the policies of the government. Whether the policies of the government are promoting the right of the citizens to an adequate means of livelihood or whether the policies of the government are resulting in the concentration of wealth and means of production in few hands? Whether the policies of the government are increasing or decreasing the inequalities in income, status and facilities among individuals? Whether the ownership and control of the material resources of the nation are serving the interests of all people or only a fraction of the people.

Human security means absence of threat to national security and people's security. But the nations are known to exaggerate the perceived threat to national security and to minimise the real threat to people's security. A large number of governments in the world are spending huge amount of available national resources to protect their citizens against the perceived threat of aggression by another country and on the maintenance of internal security machinery, in spite of the fact that poverty, illiteracy, disease and lack of minimum social services continue to afflict hundreds of millions of people in these countries. This type of solution to the perceived threat to national security instead of reducing the threat to human security will create conditions, which would increase the threat to human security in the name of its solution. This is so because when the huge amounts of limited national resources are spent on the so-called threat to national security and resources left to deal with the actual threat to people's security from disease, poverty, hunger and unsafe drinking water etc are not sufficient.

### **Link Between Democracy and Human Security?**

Is there any link between human security and democracy, when human security is defined in terms of freedom from fear and freedom from want? Democracy is defined as a political system of governance where more than one political party take part in regularly held free and fair election on the basis of adult suffrage and compete for political power to run the state of affair of a nation. This process of democracy, it is being said, makes politicians more likely to respond to people's needs and aspirations. It is also argued that democracy is the best system of governance because there is every reason to expect that a state built upon universal suffrage will be responsible for wider concessions to the multitudes than will be granted under any other form of governance. 'Democracy' it is being said, 'is the only political regime that guarantees political and civil freedom and the right to participate in policy decision and debates'. Political freedom, it is argued, also empower people to press for policies that expand social and economic opportunities. According to the HDR - 2002, 'democratic institutions and processes can also contribute to human development. Because of all these features of democracy it is claimed that democracy is more suitable to provide human security to its citizens than any other form of government. Does all this mean that there is a link between democracy and human

security? Does democratic countries provide best human security to their citizens when compared with the non-democratic countries? It may be true that democratic system is more conducive to promoting human security but there is no automatic link between democracy and human security. Take for example the case of South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific:

### **Democracy and human security**

#### **South Asia East Asia and The Pacific**

Total population (2001) mn.	1455 mn.	1900
Percentage of population living under democracy	85%	22%
Percentage of population living below poverty line	36.6%	15.6%
Infant Mortality Rate ( per 1000 live births)	69	33
Maternal Mortality Ratio ( per 1,00,000 live births)	427	144
Life expectancy at birth ( in years)	62.8 yrs.	69.5 yrs.
Under 5 year mortality rate ( per 1000 live births)	95	42

(Source: Human Development Report 2002 & 2003)

From the above table we can see that although 85% of South Asia's population was living under democracy and only around 22 % in East Asia and the Pacific but still only a smaller percentage of population in South Asia was having freedom from want, when compared with East Asia and the Pacific. More percentage of people in South Asia were living below the poverty line, a larger proportion of infants and women during pregnancy were dying every year in South Asia, people in South Asia are expected to live less number of years and the mortality rate among children below 5 years was much higher in South Asia when compared the same with East Asia and the Pacific. In other words East Asia and the Pacific where only 22 percent of people were living under democracy were enjoying more freedom from want when compared with the people of South Asia where 85 percent people were living under democracy. Similarly, majority of the 12 countries having widest inequality in income in the world (income inequality measure above 20 when the gap between top 20% and bottom 20% people of the country is taken

in to consideration) were democratic countries. Also, majority of the 12 countries with highest poverty ratio in the world (40% or more people living below the poverty line in a country when poverty line is \$ one per person per day) were democratic countries. This shows that in case of freedom from want there was no inherent advantage for the people who were living under democracy as compared to the people living under non-democracy. Rather the people of East Asia and the Pacific were in a better position in terms of freedom from wants than the people of South Asia. We have already noted earlier that freedom from fear and freedom from want are two equally important component of human security and one cannot be promoted at the cost of the other. Now even if democracy provide more freedom from fear than the non-democracy (which is not yet clear) still political system of governance (democracy or non-democracy) cannot be said to have an inherent advantage in providing human security to its citizens.

Take another example of India and China, one is world's largest democracy and the other is world's largest non-democracy. If in China there is no freedom from fear to the people because of their different political belief (those who are considered threat to the non-democratic system of China) are persecuted and are kept under arrested, same is true in India where there is no freedom from fear to those Indians who are of the opinion that the so called democratic system of India which has kept almost half of India's population in subhuman conditions below the poverty line, and where criminals and murderers are not only winning elections but are also becoming union ministers and are opposed to this so called democratic system ( those considered threat to the democratic system of India) are also being arrested and killed routinely by the security forces in J&K, North east states, Andhra, Bihar and many other areas. The number of people killed in democratic India by its own security forces in the past 25 years may be many times more than the number of people killed in China by its security forces during the same period. Similarly the religious minorities especially the Sikhs and the Muslims have already seen how fragile their freedom from fear is. The Sikhs saw this when around five thousands Sikhs were massacred in Delhi in 1984 with the connivance of the then Prime Minister of India Mr. Rajiv Gandhi who was heading the 'secular democratic' government. He defended the massacre of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi by saying that 'when a big tree falls there is bound to be a tremor' (meaning the killing of Mrs Indira Gandhi was bound to result in a backlash against Sikhs). The Muslims saw it when in 2002; around one thousand Muslims were killed in Gujarat with the connivance of Gujarat Chief Minister Mr. Narendra Modi. The fear of dalits, women and poor can be seen from the fact that they even fear to go to the police station to lodge a complaint of crime committed against them by the upper caste and the rich and powerful because they know that the police is always with the rich, powerful and upper caste people who commit crime against the weak, powerless and dalits. The poor, powerless and dalits know that if they go to the police station they are not safe from the police. Ordinary people do not feel safe even from the police of democratic India which is suppose to be the protector of ordinary people. On the basis of these realities it can be said that neither democracy nor non-democracy is a factor in determining the human security. The experience of more than fifty years of Indian democracy shows that democracy in itself is no guarantee to human security. .

The purpose of this dialogue, **Democracy and the State of Human Security in India**, is to understand from the experiences of activists / academics and those belonging to the socially and economically deprived sections of Indian society, whether more than five decades of democracy in India has contributed positively towards improving human security in India? In other words, whether the democracy in India could provide freedom from fear and freedom from want to the people of India especially those belonging to religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities and women and dalits? To see the contribution of democracy, if any, in providing human security in India, there is also the need to see the state of human security in our neighbouring countries having different political system (non-democracy) and compare it with the state of human security in India.