

# 10

## RIGHT TO FOOD

*In most places in Bangladesh, particularly in the rural areas, government owned resources such as land, water and forests are sources of food and sustenance for the extreme poor and the most vulnerable. Therefore, the various laws and structures that pertain to access to rights and resources are extremely relevant to the question of right to food. This chapter discuss the right to food situation of Bangladesh in 2008 including food security, food sovereignty.*

### Food Security

In 1975 the United Nations formed the Committee on World Food Security to address the issue of food security. In the early stage of 1980 this committee recognized food security based on availability, access and stability and established a set of six indicators, which were derived from observations of the global grain market. Their implementation has to be measured in the context of Bangladesh's agriculture and food systems, and on food imports.<sup>1</sup>

Deleted:

### Food Sovereignty

The concept of Food Sovereignty, established during the World Food Summit in 1996 concerns the right to food of peoples, communities and countries. Food production includes fishing rights as well as land use systems, which are environmentally, socially, economically and culturally appropriate. Food sovereignty recognizes both the right to food of people and freedom of production of the producer.

It involves compliance with the following key measures:<sup>2</sup>

- Freedom in priority of (giving priority to) local agricultural production to meet people's demands.
- Rights of farmers and their access to land, water, seeds and institutional credit.
- Liberty of consumers to choose their own food.
- Participation of the public in choice of agricultural policy.
- Recognition of women farmers' rights.

### Right to Food

The right to adequate food is both a freedom and an entitlement. Freedom denotes freedom from hunger and entitlement signifies entitlement to food that meets dietary needs, that is free from adverse substances, that is culturally acceptable, is available in large enough quantities, is physically and economically accessible and involves sustainable production for present and future generations.<sup>3</sup>

1 Adapted from Trade Reforms and food security: conceptualizing the linkages, FAO, Rome, 2003

2 [www.un-ngls.org/UNCTAD-What%20is%20food%20sovereignty.doc](http://www.un-ngls.org/UNCTAD-What%20is%20food%20sovereignty.doc)

3 Maria Socorro I. Diokno, The Right to Adequate Food in Philippine development Interventions

The concept of “food security” is a technical concept. The concept of “food sovereignty” is a political concept. The concept of “right to food” is a legal concept. The political concept of food sovereignty must be reinforced by the legal concept of right to food.

### **Review of National Obligations**

*The constitution of Bangladesh: PART II*

**Article 13: Principles of ownership**—The people shall own or control the instruments and means of production and distribution, and with this end in view ownership shall assume the following forms—

- a. State ownership, that is ownership by the state on behalf of the people through the creation of an efficient and dynamic nationalized public sector embracing the key sectors of the economy;
- b. Co-operative ownership, that is ownership by co-operatives on behalf of their members within such limits as may be prescribed by law; and
- c. Private ownership, that is ownership by individuals within such limits as may be prescribed by law.

**Article 14: Emancipation of peasants and workers**—It shall be a fundamental responsibility of the State to emancipate the toiling masses, the peasants and workers and backward sections of the people, from all forms and exploitation.

**Article 15: Provision of the basic necessities**—It shall be a fundamental responsibility of the State to attain, through planned economic growth, a constant increase of productive forces and a steady improvement in the material and cultural standard of living of the people, with a view to securing to its citizens—

- a. The provision of the basic necessities of life, including food, clothing, shelter, education, and medical care;
- b. The right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment at a reasonable wage having regard to the quantity and quality of work;
- c. The right to reasonable rest, recreation and leisure; and
- d. The right to social security, that is to say, to public assistance in cases of undeserved want arising from unemployment, illness or disablement or suffered by widows or orphans or in old age, or in other such cases.

**Article 16: Rural development and agricultural revolution**—The State shall adopt effective measures to bring about a radical transformation in the rural areas through the promotion of a agricultural revolution, the provision of rural electrification, the development of cottage and other industries, and the improvement of education, communications and public health in those areas so as to progressively remove the disparity in the standards of living between the urban and the rural areas.

**Article 18: Public health and morality**—

1. The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties, and in particular shall adopt effective measures to prevent the consumption, except for medical purposes or for such other purposes as may be prescribed by law, of alcoholic and other intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health.

**Article 19: Equality of opportunity**—

1. The state shall Endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens.
2. The state shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality between man and man to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens and of opportunities in order to attain a uniform level of economic development throughout the republic.

**Article 20: Work as a right and duty**—

1. Work is a right, a duty and a matter of honour for every citizen who is capable of working and everyone shall be paid for his work on the basis of the principle "from each according to his abilities to each according to his work".

2. The State shall endeavour to create conditions in which, as a general principle, persons shall not be able to enjoy unearned incomes, and in which human labour in every form, intellectual and physical, shall become a fuller expression of creative endeavour and of the human personality.

*The constitution of Bangladesh: PART III*

**Article 32: Protection of right to life and personal liberty**– *No person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty saves in accordance with law.* Rights to food, shelter, education and medical support are recognised as basic rights of the citizen. The state is accountable to ensure basic rights of the people. On the other side, citizens have the right to demand for these fundamental rights which are recognised as democratic rights in the constitution. Economic rights, provoked in the constitution ownership and control over production as well as distribution, which are very important for ensuring right to food, are protected in the constitution.

**National Food Policy 2006**

The goal and objectives of the policy are to:

1. Ensure adequate and stable supply of safe and nutritious food;
2. Enhance purchasing power of the people for increased accessibility;
3. Ensure adequate nutrition for all (*particularly for women and children*).<sup>4</sup>

**International Commitments and Obligations**

The right to food and measures included in various treaties, agreements and United Nations Documents are as follows:

1. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Article 25*<sup>5</sup>
2. *International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),- Articles 6 paragraph 1<sup>6</sup>; Articles 6 paragraph 2<sup>7</sup>; Articles 6 paragraph 3<sup>8</sup>; Articles 6 paragraph 4<sup>9</sup>*
3. *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Articles 1*<sup>10</sup>
4. *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)- Articles 12, paragraph 2<sup>11</sup>; Articles 14, G*<sup>12</sup>
5. *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Articles 24, paragraph 2, point C*<sup>13</sup>; (Article 27, paragraph 3)<sup>14</sup>
6. *Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 8: In-situ Conservation*<sup>15</sup>; *Article 10: Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity*<sup>16</sup>

<sup>4</sup> National Food Policy, Section B Ministry of Food and Disaster Management 14 August 2006.

<sup>5</sup> "Everyone has the right to a standard of living, adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care.

<sup>6</sup> The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

<sup>7</sup> The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger.

<sup>8</sup> To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food.

<sup>9</sup> Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

<sup>10</sup> Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

<sup>11</sup> States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

<sup>12</sup> To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes.

<sup>13</sup> States Parties recognize the right of the child and to combat disease and malnutrition, including primary health care through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water.

<sup>14</sup> States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

<sup>15</sup> Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices.

## 7. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security<sup>17</sup>

### Right to food under the state of emergency 2008 has made peoples'

It is the duty of the Government to ensure availability of food to its citizens, through purchase and storage of food grains, maintaining stability in the market, controlling price of essentials and ensuring food supply in response to any crisis. Negligence on part of the Government in carrying out this duty hampers peoples' right to food. In 2008, the state failed to perform this duty.

The seriousness of the situation relating to food security can be understood from Government statistics. Between January 2006 - January 2007, before the state of emergency was proclaimed; the quantity of food purchased and stored by the Government was 6.86 and 7.15 lakh metric tons respectively. After enforcement of emergency this quantity was reduced significantly (between July 2007 - January 2008) to 2.68 and 6.69 lakh metric tons respectively.<sup>18</sup> Most people struggled to manage their daily minimum food requirement for survival. Despite the availability of food in markets, majority of the population lacked purchasing capacity, the real income of the people having decreased alarmingly. According to a study by Dr. Abul Barkat, the price of daily essentials during last one and a half years increased at a faster pace ranging from 30 to 300 per cent, depending on categories of goods. Average inflation with regard to the price of daily essentials rose from 40 to 50 per cent (although the Government claimed it had risen to 12 per cent only). The decrease in real income, ever increasing price of essentials reached such an alarming state that approximately 70 million of people of the country were considered to be suffering from a food crisis at some point of time during the year, while 30-40 million people lived with uncertainty in managing the next meal.<sup>19</sup> The special reports of FAO and WFP published in August 2008 also highlighted the severity of the situation, as follows:

The country's food insecure population is categorized as "Absolute Poor", the Hard-Core Poor and Ultra Poor. That is failing to acquire the minimum level of food energy to maintain normal health, defined as 2122 Kcal per person per day. 56 million people are classified as Food Poor, who do not get regular food. On the other hand, larger households (5 persons or more) are more vulnerable to food insecurity. Households headed by a female are more vulnerable to food insecurity. A substantial proportion of rural households continue to experience chronic as well as transitory food insecurity. A variety of factors contribute to household food insecurity, including: lack of access to land for cultivation; lack of employment opportunity; loan repayment obligations; exclusion from social safety nets programs; and vulnerability to natural disasters. The insecure population is now estimated to be 65.3 million people; and the number has risen by 7.5 million largely because of higher food prices. Similarly, the size of the severely food insecure population has grown by an estimated 6.9 million; up from 27.9 million to a present level of 34.7 million. As a result, nearly half (45 per cent) of the country's 145 million population is now food insecure (the consumption being <2122 kcals/person/day), and nearly one-quarter (23.9 percent) of the population is considered to be severely food insecure (consuming less than 1 805 kcals/person/day).<sup>20</sup>

---

16 Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.

17 This declaration reaffirmed the right to adequate food and fundamental right to be free from hunger and recognised the role of other human rights and democracy in creating the environment in which this could be achieved.

18 Bangladesh Economic Survey 2007 (Ministry of Finance): Bangladesh Bank Monthly update March 2008 cited Democracy Constitution Crisis: Country Which Direction, 23 April 2008.

19 'Democracy Constitution Crisis: Country to Which Direction', the keynote paper presented by Dr. Abul Barkat on April 2008 Dhaka at the Roundtable organized by the Coordination Council of Professionals.

20 Special report: FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment mission to Bangladesh August 2008.

### Eviction, unemployment and hunger People could not protest

Employment opportunities and sources of livelihood for the poor were affected negatively in the name of 'development' and 'discipline'.

- Due to state of emergency and policy of the Government about 50,000 factories and industries (medium and large) were closed down during last one year while another 50,000 have been squeezed, resulting in unemployment of at least 10 million workers.
- At least 2 million became unemployed due to eviction of vendors and small business outlets in different areas of the country including from village based small markets, Dhaka and other cities.
- At least 7/8 million lost jobs due to a decline in the construction industry.
- In the poultry sector 5 million became unemployed due to the outbreak of bird flu.
- Another 5 million lost their source of survival due to devastation caused by floods and cyclone Sidr.
- Investment initiatives decreased due to 'fear factor' created through the state of emergency. It is estimated that the real income of 140 million people decreased while at least 40 million people became unemployed as a consequence of the prevailing situation.<sup>21</sup>

### Food Demand and Production Bangladesh perspective 2007-2008

Bangladesh's farmers have been the main source for meeting the country's food needs. The statistics available so far regarding the national demand and production (in million metric tons) of the three key food items can help in understanding the actual food situation in the country.

**Table X.1: Demand and production of main food crops<sup>22</sup>**

Description	Demand Million metric tons	Production Million metric tons
Rice	27 – 27.5	28
Wheat	2.4 – 2.5	1
Potato	5 – 6	8.5

The statistics show that only the production of wheat falls short against the national demand while the rice and potato production stands higher than the demand. This proves that Bangladesh is self-sufficient in terms of food production. It also means that the majority of the farmers are supposed to have a minimum stock of required food.

A farmer is unable to store rice at home after paying the agreed quantity to all the different users including land owners and other middlemen. The question then arises as to where do these food grains go? If the price of food has sky rocketed why did the farmers not receive their fair price? What was the role of the state in fulfilling its obligation of protecting the right to food for these farmers, the food producers? Violation of peoples' rights, deprivation and disparity, and economic mismanagement over a certain period of time has resulted in the present extreme situation of food insecurity.

The nature of the violation of people's right to food in 2008 is different from previous years, y for two reasons. First, due to the state of emergency there was no opportunity for people to express their demands. Secondly, people's inability to assert their right to access food had reached a scale, thus leading to a sense of

21 'Crisis of Democracy and Constitution: Which Direction the Country is Heading Towards', the keynote paper presented by Dr. Abul Barkat on April 2008 Dhaka at the Roundtable organized by the Coordination Council of Professionals.

22 BBS, 2008.

frustration and inaction. As such, it became necessary to review governance mechanisms whilst analysing the cause and effect and relevance of the situation.

### **Transformation of agriculture**

The multidimensional and what had been accepted as traditional agriculture systems in Bangladesh ensured peoples' food security. It meant that most people had the minimum food that they required. But gradual increase in the number of landless people along with commercial use of agricultural lands destroyed the traditional food sovereignty of the country. The lack of an effective land use policy in Bangladesh favouring the peasantry, encouraging the illegal encroachment of land and water bodies by powerful vested quarters, resulting in the indiscriminate eviction of marginalized and small farmers is a common practice leading to a loss in overall production of subsistence food crops.

Further, due to decrease in revenue allocation in the agricultural sector, special support and subsidies were reduced over the years from 31 per cent in 1971–72 to 1.2 per cent in the fiscal years 2005–2006.<sup>23</sup> This was part of the prescription of the World Bank through the Structural Adjustment Policy even though the subsidies were met from the Government's revenue budget. At the same time, the import duty for agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, irrigation and others was reduced to 25 per cent (from 300% in 1992–1993)<sup>24</sup>. To supply agricultural inputs to farmers at a lower price, the government was forced to privatize BADC. As a result 90% of the producers now depend wholly on the market which is controlled by non producers and businessmen. This obviously had an impact on the high price of food for the consumer as well as low price paid to the producer, contributing to the cause of food insecurity

### **Eviction from land and water bodies**

All common property in Bangladesh i.e. *khas* land, *khas* water bodies and forests are recognised as important sources and contributory factors towards ensuring food and social security for the poor. As stated earlier, the lack of pro-poor policies on part of the government, extreme rich-poor disparities, commercialisation of agriculture, and government's partisan role in securing interests of the rich accelerated the pace of encroachment of most of the country's common properties by these powerful vested quarters. At present 88% of the total *khas* lands and 95% of *khas* water bodies are under illegal possession of the powerful elites and other vested interest groups.<sup>25</sup>

The government has failed to secure the interests of the poor, even with the few programmes and policies in favour of the poor, thousands of landless families were evicted last year from *khas* lands, *khas* water bodies, forests and other common properties. This means that the poor people lost their access to these common properties, their major food sources.

Incidents published in print and electronic media during the year 2007 – 2008 involving many government representatives and officials protecting land, water and forest grabbers prove the government's failure in protecting common properties of the country and ensuring peoples' access to them. All these contributed in widening the rich-poor disparity and imbalance of power that aggravated the suffering of the poor.

### **Commercial use of agricultural land**

Commercial use of agricultural lands is taking away from marginalized, small farmers and sharecroppers their right to grow their own food. Agriculture labour lost employment opportunities as a result of which their livelihoods were at risk, losing their right to food.

---

23 IFI Watch Bulletin.

24 *Ibid.*

25 "Land, Agrarian and Aquarian Reform in Bangladesh: The Most Unresolved Politico-Economic Issue in the Criminalized Structure" by Dr. Abul Barkat in the Bangladesh Journal of Political Economy-2005 published by Bangladesh Economic Association, Dhaka.

Compared to 2000 - 2001 the land use in rice production decreased by 565,000 acres in 2006 – 2007 while in case of wheat and pulse cultivation, decrease was 921,000 acres and 401,000 acres respectively. On the other hand, use of land for tobacco production increased by 2,000 acres, while land used for producing maize and commercial shrimp increased by 236,000 acres and 191,788 acres respectively.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to this, 82,000 hectares of agricultural land (about 1% of the total) are converted for construction of buildings and infrastructure every year, according to the agriculture census of 1996. That means, every day about 225 hectares of agricultural land is being lost. Though this did not happen in 2008, the trend is gradually increasing.<sup>27</sup> As a result of this food security of at least 1.2 to 1.5 million peoples is under threat every year.

### **Transformation of Agriculture Lands to Shrimp**

Whether people are able to manage their meals or not – does not appear to be a matter of concern for the powerful land grabbers, shrimp farmers or even the government. A new policy promoting the Shrimp Industry, ignoring the issue of food security of the majority of those living in coastlands; the fishers, farmers and traditional users of the Sundarbans, is being developed despite protests from local people. Despite sustained and growing demands against the expansion and production of shrimps, our government is encouraging the production and export of this luxury and exotic food item, by depriving thousands of people from their legitimate right to food. As a result of conversion of fertile agricultural lands to commercial shrimp cultivation, agriculture, environment and natural resources are under severe threat. Vulnerability from cyclonic storms increase as shrimp farming affects Mangrove forests. The recent cyclone Sidr proved this point. Food security of large numbers of people is being brought under question, peoples' demand for food sovereignty is being ignored.

About 20 million people live in the coastal region of Bangladesh which is a fertile deltaic shoal. The stark reality today is that, a large number of local people do not have land, subsequently no work and food; hunger is thus unavoidable. This has been confirmed by Dr. Manoranjan Mandal, from the International Rice Research Institute who conducted a twenty year long research on creating and devising means to produce crops in saline water. He states, "the way the aquaculture of *Bagda* shrimp in saline water is increasing in the south-western part of the country, it is not unlikely that within the next four to five years neither shrimp nor crops can be produced in those lands due to rise of salinity level in the soil". The argument that foreign currency is being earned every year from shrimp export is countered by the local people's claim that at least three seasonal crops worth Taka thirty thousand crore can be produced every year<sup>28</sup> from the same lands which can be the basis of achieving food sovereignty. Many protests took place during 2008 and in a number of areas people were able to reverse saline shrimp culture and grow three food crops.

### **Short and long term effects on people's lives**

The question of the effect on people's lives in terms of the ultimate result, i.e. decrease in the price of essentials along with an increase in the real income of people and the fulfillment of peoples' right to food needs to be considered. The answer to these questions is extremely uncertain. The following data supports this support this.

It is noticed from a BIDS research report that during the period from January to December 2007 the real income of people has decreased as per following rates: 3.95% at national level, 4.6% for farmers, 2.37% for workers in the processing industries and 4.40% for workers in the construction industries.<sup>29</sup>

Due to the price increase, both urban and rural households were forced to reduce consumption (consumption of rice by 22.2 per cent, edible oil by 41 per cent and pulses by 42 per cent). Moreover, 87 per cent of the rural children

<sup>26</sup> Bangladesh Statistical Pocket Book 2007.

<sup>27</sup> Abdul Bayes and Mahub Hossain, *Rural People Rural Economy: Review of Changes in Life and Livelihoods*, 2008.

<sup>28</sup> "Shrimp Aquaculture vs Tri-crops Cultivation", *Prothom Alo*, 7 January 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Stated in Bangladesh News.com.bd (Labor market in Bangladesh changes, inequities and Challenges by-BIDS 2007).

were facing health related problems due to lack of nutrition or quality food (total sample size for this data was 250).<sup>30</sup>

Within individual households meal consumption was not found to be equal. 63% of the household surveyed<sup>31</sup> reported that meals consumed by the members were not equal, with female-heads of household taking meals less frequently than male-head. Women consumed less compared to men and children in the rural and the urban households, which disproportionately affected the pregnant women and new mothers.<sup>32</sup>

### **Extended social security**

Sometimes the government undertakes new initiatives to overcome critical situations. In the year 2008–2009, the government has increased the size of social security programs in its budget to a greater extent. These steps make lets us to understand that people are being compelled to live in serious crisis, hunger and deprivation. In the budget 8.2% has been allocated for social security sector which is much higher than that of any other regime.

From such an increase in this sector, it has become clear that the livelihood of people has become uncertain. It has thus become crucial to provide succour to the people who are already deprived of right to food, with new safety net programmes. Otherwise, the inconvenient truth of being deprived of right to food may be exposed before the people.

#### **The rate increased for the following**

- Freedom Fighter Allowance
- Old Age Allowance
- Maternity Allowance
- Insolvent Disabled Allowance

### **100 days employment generation program**

#### **Type of employment**

For the implementation of 100 days employment generation program an additional amount of Taka 5,260 million has been allocated in the National Budget. Apparently, this is the strategy of proposed employment generation program of the government. It is predicted that this program would create employment opportunity for 2 million unemployed people locally. The initial contradiction is that this initiative did not appear as a recognition of 'right to employment' rather a safety net measure. Secondly, there is no specific direction as to exactly how these 2 million unemployed people will be identified. As a result uncertainty looms on how many employment opportunities would be created based on which the hunger of people would be eradicated and right to food be established. Though as with most local government programmes handled at Union level, the only level that the Government thinks some amount of accountability could be ensured, though very selectively, all information was meant to be made public this was not the case.. From the beginning of this employment generation project, 'Nijera Kori' collected primary data concerning implementation of this 100 days program at field level. The working areas from where the data have been collected, include total 85 unions in 35 upazilas of 15 districts under Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions. From the analysis of the collected data, it has been revealed that in only 11 unions out of 85, the schedule of 100 days employment generation program has been displayed, in 18 unions the information have been circulated among the people and in only 8 unions 'beneficiaries' have been selected through the participation of common people.

Besides, the important aspect is that in 3 unions local people complained about illegal transaction of money in enlisting their names. Records of irregularities, lack of transparency, public participation and accountability in implementing the program generates an uncertainty and doubt as to what degree, in real terms, would the poor benefit from this program. It is necessary to establish a strong participatory monitoring system for ensuring its benefit to the poor.

30 UNNAYAN SAMUNNAY, Bangladesh Economic Outlook Vol-2, No. 1, September 2008.

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Ibid.*

**Peoples' right to food, systemic reformation and peoples' empowerment**

The concept of 'right to food' security is vast and its realisation is linked to fundamental policy structure reforms. Current government policies in practice contradict recognition of the right to food as stated in our Constitution. From the context of both theory and practice the 'right to food' and 'open market policy' are contradictory. Product market or labour market are controlled according to the so called demand and supply policy of the market. Here the main driving force is purchasing capacity of the people. So the market has nothing to do in case of decrease in the purchasing capacity of people or increase of price of food commodities. The presence of democratic process is linked with the notion of ensuring human rights. When peoples' fundamental right and personal freedom are violated, the crisis of life and livelihoods also becomes acute.

The price hike of food commodities during 2007–2008 in the global market and its impact on Bangladesh and even more so on the poor has again reminded us about this unpleasant reality. It is necessary to bring fundamental reform in the perceptions of the government to ensure materialisation of issues like peoples' right to food, food sovereignty or food security. Leaving the issue of human security to market controls is highly risky. In light of the stated issues the following recommendations may be considered.