

POST CONFLICT FACE OF
POVERTY AND SOCIETY:
UNDERSTANDING A
GANDHIAN INITIATIVE
AGAINST PAUPERIZATION
AND VIOLENCE IN
MUSHAHARI
(MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR)

*Anand Kumar
Kanihar Kant*

Working Paper 42



Chronic Poverty
Research Centre



Indian Institute of
Public Administration

The CPRC-IIPA Working Paper Series disseminates the findings of work in progress to encourage exchange of ideas about poverty related issues. The findings are being placed in the public domain at the earliest with a view to generate wider debate.

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ISBN: 81-86641-54-8

For information about the working paper series, contact:

Professor Aasha Kapur Mehta

Professor of Economics

or

The Registrar/Deputy Registrar (Academic Support)

Indian Institute of Public Administration

Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road

New Delhi- 110002

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Anand Kumar
Kanihar Kant



Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi



Chronic Poverty Research Centre

2011

Anand Kumar is Professor of Sociology at Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Kanihar Kant is a Ph.D. Scholar in Sociology at Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

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Abstract

This is an analytical narrative about post-conflict dynamics of poverty in a block of villages in north Bihar known as 'the Mushahari Project'. It is related with the socio-economic and political consequences of violent class conflict initiated by an underground group of Maoists, also known as the Naxalites, in Mushahari Block of Muzaffarpur district which led to a 'face to face' engagement between the Gandhian social workers and the Maoists. The Naxal challenge to the Gandhian workers about the relevance of the Sarvodaya work around Land issues led to radical reorientation of the Gandhian model and resulted into the making of an inclusive approach for rural reconstruction and poverty eradication. It involved social mobilization of the rural communities across caste and class lines as well as a realignment between the rural communities, the state and market forces for an effective and integrative process of socio-economic changes. The Gandhian response as conceptualized by the Sarvodaya leader Jayaprakash Narayan insisted on a) creating space for coming together of the peasants, artisans, landless labourers, political workers and the bureaucrats for a developmental agenda, b) moving away from class violence, and c) desisting from politics of revenge by moving towards a multifaceted programme of infrastructure development, agricultural growth, and income generating activities. The paper also addresses the successes and failures of the Gandhian/ Sarvodaya engagement about rural poverty and social conflict.

Key words: *Poverty, conflict, social violence, Naxalism, Maoism, Gandhian approach, holistic approach, participatory development, community power, under-development, agro-based rural development.*

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) for valuable comments and suggestions on the first draft of this paper. We would like to thank Aasha Kapur Mehta and Andrew Shepherd for their kind cooperation in completing this work. We are also grateful to the participants of the 2005 CPRC-IIPA workshop in New Delhi for useful questions and comments. An earlier version of this paper was presented at a seminar of the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Fieldwork was carried out by Dr Haridwar, Shri Surendra Kumar and Shri Vishwanand. The final draft became possible with the help of Shri Manish Tiwari and Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena. We also received valuable help from Shri Bharat Kumar.

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Anand Kumar and Kanihar Kant

1. Introduction

Poverty or being poor is a state of social existence characterised by a lack of the resources and income needed to obtain the basic necessities. Life holds scarcities and deficiencies and entails stress and tensions: the poor are often forced to compromise their interests, rights and dignity to meet the challenges of survival. Sometimes, poverty generates protests and resistance, which can lead to conflict. This can have socioeconomic consequences in terms of power relations and authority systems.

This paper attempts to understand the post-conflict face of poverty and society by focusing on one of the first instances of poverty-related violent conflict in the 1970s in Mushahari block of villages of Muzaffarpur district, north Bihar. Mushahari is significant as it opened up the floodgates to the possibility of armed struggle in Bihar: it has been called the 'Srikakulam of the North' (Louis, 2002).¹ The conflict created a situation of face-to-face struggle between Maoists and Gandhians, which resulted in a new approach to poverty-related conflicts (Narayan, 1970a). The post-conflict Sarvodaya (Gandhian) reform process attracted the attention of the nation's policymakers, who used the experiences of Mushahari in the formulation of

¹ Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh was the site of a clash between Maoists and the Congress-led state apparatus.

nationwide programmes for poverty eradication in later years. The Mushahari Project was studied by experts of the Reserve Bank of India and the Planning Commission, resulting in the launch of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) to address the causes of poverty in rural India.

Poverty-related social conflicts take place within a framework of caste/class, market, state and community. As such, their resolution involves a number of initiatives for change. Conflict settings differ from situation to situation in terms of relative significance of the above factors, so it is important to have an understanding of the context-specific nature of each conflict site as well as the features of the post-conflict situation.

Poverty and related social issues and processes are dealt with in the study of social stratification and inequalities. Sociology of poverty is associated with analysing poverty within societies and among them. However, research focuses mostly on the characteristics of the poor, rather than the relationship between poverty and the processes of capital formation, accumulation of wealth and immiserisation and pauperisation (Amin, 2006; Field, 1982; Myrdal, 1968; Osberg, 1991).

Poverty is also a focus in development sociology, which is concerned with a set of economic, technological and socio-cultural considerations. A given society is divided into two or more groups by measuring their incomes and understanding their orientations using a set of questions. The most frequently asked questions in the context of economy and society are: How much do people earn? How much do they produce? How much do they save? How fast does production increase compared with population increases? How can modern industrial techniques be best applied to raise productivity? Who are the people who are going to initiate this change? Why and how do these changes in peoples' attitude come about? How do these people get the will to economise? Why did they not have it before? What happens when these changes start? (Feinstein, 1964).

Such a developmental approach requires convergence with a 'conflict perspective' to make sense of poverty-related conflicts and post-conflict situations. In general, the conflict perspective assumes that social life is shaped by groups and individuals who struggle or compete with one another over various resources and rewards, resulting in particular distributions of wealth, power and prestige.

These interactions develop not only the patterns of everyday life and interaction but also larger patterns, such as those of class, gender, ethnic, caste and racial inequalities, and those surrounding relations among regions within a nation and between nations of the modern world system. Social conflict holds many factors, including gender, class, caste, ethnicity and religion (Bottomore, 1975; Collins, 1975; Coser, 1964). Poverty-related conflicts in rural communities are often associated in different proportions with: 1) social injustices, including caste discriminations, sexual violence, etc.; 2) cultural marginality (low caste status, illiteracy, customary deprivations, etc.); and 3) chronic poverty.

Thus, an enquiry into the Mushahari case of poverty-related violence and the post-conflict face of society must be organised in four parts to be able to arrive at a meaningful understanding:

- Contextualising the Mushahari experience;
- Explaining the Sarvodaya response, known as the Mushahari Project, to the challenges of poverty and violence;
- Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the post-conflict Gandhian intervention as conceptualised and implemented under the leadership of Jaya Prakash Narayan; and
- A glance at Mushahari now after more than three decades.

2. Contextualising the Mushahari experience

2.1 Background to Mushahari block

Bihar lies in the Gangetic basin and has a tropical climate. Minimum and maximum temperatures are 11°C and 39°C, with an average rainfall of 1100 mm per year. The Ganga, Kosi, Gandak and Son are the major rivers. Almost 22 districts, covering 5477 villages in 183 blocks, are affected by flooding every year: around 84 percent of districts have been vulnerable to flood disasters for decades. At the same time, 33 percent of the area of the state receives less than 750 mm of rain. Around 30 percent of the population are victims of drought. This has put Bihar into the category of drought-prone states of India. Only five districts are safe from floods and droughts. The worst famine occurred in 1965 to 1967 and contributed towards the political unrest in the villages of Bihar. (See Annex 1 for a full profile of the districts of Bihar).

Fig.1: Map of Bihar state

According to the Human Development Institute (2006), the state has suffered a high level of poverty compared with the country as a whole since the early decades of independence. The poor are much more concentrated in north Bihar than elsewhere, and poverty is much higher among agricultural labourers and other labouring classes. Poverty is also high among the self-employed in non-agricultural occupations, which see low productivity and a low skills base. Poverty is lowest among cultivators. This indicates the importance of land and agricultural wages among the rural poor in Bihar. Out-migration involves approximately 10 percent of all adult workers and has been an important process among the rural poor, resulting in inflows of remittances.

There are wide variations in poverty level across the social groups. The poverty ratio is highest among the scheduled castes, followed by other backward castes, most backward castes, Muslims and the forward castes. But a sizeable proportion among all groups was found to be vulnerable to poverty. This implies that even minor changes in the price index, rainfall, wages, health expenses or any other economic factor can alter the whole poverty scenario in the village communities.

The scheduled castes, making up more than one-sixth of the total number of households in the villages, present a radically different case of poverty and marginalisation, as they also suffer disproportionately from deprivations, discrimination and destitution arising out of the caste system. It is also important to keep in mind that there is significant diversity within the scheduled castes: different caste groups have different levels of pauperization and vulnerability. For example, the Musahars (also known as Bhuiyans) are among the most acute victims of poverty, also suffering landlessness, lack of assets and homelessness. They are engaged mostly in menial domestic and agricultural work. Similarly, the Doms face a situation of poverty, as they are largely involved in the profession of scavenging (see Human Development Institute, 2006).

Bihar was made part of the Bengal Presidency in the 19th century under colonial rule. It was subjected to economic exploitation and underdevelopment through the permanent settlement system of the East India Company. Unlike other comparatively enlightened administrations, the rajahs in Bihar seem to have paid little attention to education. The strong nationalist movement against colonialism was nurtured to a large extent in Bihar. Two particular personalities were key to the evolution of political consciousness in Bihar and deepening the roots of mass mobilisation – Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. Gandhi led a peasant movement against the indigo planters in 1917 to 1918, famous as the Champaran satyagraha (non-violent resistance). This integrated Bihar into the nationalist political framework around the Indian National Congress. The first President of the Republic of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad, came into national politics as an organiser of the Gandhian satyagraha in Champaran. A decade later, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati led the political workers of Bihar to organise peasants of Bihar under the banner of Kisan Sabha (the All India Peasants Union). If Gandhi sensitised Bihar and the nation about the agonies of indigo cultivators in 1917, Swami Sahajanand mobilised the peasants of Bihar against the evils of the zamindari system in the 1930s. The foundation conferences of the Congress Socialist Party and the Kisan Sabha took place in Patna in 1934 and 1936, respectively. These two organisations played a historical role in the anti-colonial struggles and peasant movements of India.

Bihar was applauded as the best-governed state in India in the

1950s. It was the first state to pass legislation for the abolition of zamindari, yet land reforms and agricultural wages remained two of the most fundamental challenges from the colonial past for governance and development in the state at the end of the 1960s.

Politically, the period between 1964 and 1970 was a phase of mobilisation of the masses for political change. There were years of famine (1965 to 1966), land struggles (1964 to 1970) and a general election (1967). It was a phase of political turmoil at state level: for the first time since independence a non-Congress coalition came into power. Thus, this was a period of deep deprivations, growing unrest, high expectations and significant changes in the political setting, in which the politics against poverty found more support than before. This accelerated the pace of mass mobilisation as well as of poverty-related conflicts. Rising expectations led to an eruption of violent conflicts in Naxalbari (West Bengal), Srikakulam (Andhra Pradesh) and Mushahari (Bihar). Naxalbari saw an encounter between different groups of Marxists. Srikakulam was the site of a clash between the Maoists and the Congress-led state apparatus. Mushahari became the site of a face-to-face conflict between Maoists and Gandhians.

Muzaffarpur district was carved out of Tirhut district in 1875. The district is named after Muzaffar Khan, a revenue farmer who founded the principal town of the district. It has an area of 3175.91sq km and a rich historical background. A part of the famous kingdom of Vaishali, Muzaffarpur has also been a centre of many important events in modern Indian history, including the famous bombing case of 1908 involving the great martyrs Khudi Ram Bose and Prafulla Chandra Chaki. It was a centre of active support for the Champaran Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi in 1917 under the guidance of Acharya JB Kripalani, then a teacher of political science at LS College.

The district has two subdivisions, 16 blocks, 387 panchayats and 1,808 villages. With a population of 37.44 lakh, Muzaffarpur is the third most-populated district of Bihar as per the 2001 Census. The district has a subtropical climate characterised by hot summers, wet monsoons and dry winters. The rural population is dependent almost entirely on agriculture and allied activities. The main trade is in wholesale cloth and food grains.

Fig.2: Map of Muzaffarpur district

The predominance of the agriculture sector and the continued rise in population (about three percent per annum since 1951) (Avar, 1971) without any appreciable expansion in industrial activities had brought down the land to person ratio in Muzaffarpur district to a level as low as 2.28 acres per rural household. According to the 2001 Census, nearly 65 percent of total cultivating households in the district operated an area below 2.5 acres, as against 48 percent in Bihar. The situation in Mushahari was even worse, as nearly 70 percent of the cultivating households of this block operated a holding below 2.5 acres. Almost all holdings in the villages of the block, small or big, were fragmented. The proportion of scheduled castes in the population of Muzaffarpur was above 15 percent and most of them engaged in agricultural activities as landless labourers. There was a negligible presence of scheduled tribes – less than 0.03 percent.

Mushahari is the most populated block of Muzaffarpur, located in the rich alluvial plains of north Bihar. Its neighbouring districts are Patna (north), Darbhanga (east) and Champaran and Saran (west). Budhi Gandak River is to the north, causing frequent floods in the villages of Mushahari block. The block consists of 119 villages, organised into 27 panchayats.

2.2 *The conflict in Mushahari*

Let us begin with a well-known observation of Jaya Prakash Narayan (1970a) about the outstanding features of the villages of Mushahari:

My first experience on coming face to face with the reality of Mushahari was to realize how remote and unreal were the brave pronouncements of Delhi or Patna from the actuality at the ground level. Ultimately what meets the eye are utter poverty, misery, backwardness, frustration and loss of hope.

This depressing statement about the situation in Mushahari in 1970 can be read together with the 2006 remarks of the Bihar People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) about the overall trends regarding conflict in rural Bihar:

The cause of rural conflicts has often been the poor implementation of the provisions of the Land Ceiling Act and the Minimum Wages Act. At times when the conflict turns into bloody clashes the policy of the government has been to let the people fight it out between themselves.

Mushahari attracted the attention of Sarvodaya workers of the whole country because the Naxalites issued a death threat in May 1970 to two eminent Gandhians, Shri Badri Babu and Shri Gopal Mishra, leaders of Gram Swaraj Samiti (self-reliant village system administration). Acharya Vinoba Bhave rushed his close associate Nirmala Deshpande to an ailing Jaya Prakash Narayan to request urgent intervention. He took no time to reach Muzaffarpur to take stock of the situation, opting to stay in Mushahari Block for several months with his wife Prabhavati to open dialogue with all the concerned sections of the village communities, including the supporters of the Naxalite movement.

Mushahari Block witnessed the first eruption of violent conflict between 1968 and 1972 as a result of rural poverty and socioeconomic injustices. The first reported incident was the forcible harvesting of crops in April 1968 in Gangapur village, after the landlord and his hired men were driven away. This unprecedented action boosted the morale of the peasants in the nearby villages, who came mainly from the lower castes. There ensued a struggle between the panicked landlords and Kisan Sangram Samitis, during which six landowners

were killed, 16 were injured, property worth Rs. 20,000 was confiscated, documents were destroyed and ornaments mortgaged to landlords were seized and returned to the people. Police camps were set up in the villages to forestall trouble. The main issue in the initial phase of the Mushahari conflict, which had spread from Gangapur to other villages of Mushahari and Muzaffarpur, was occupancy rights over land. When the government machinery retaliated by attacking the leaders and the cadres and their property, many more peasants joined the struggle. In the ensuing struggle, a number of peasant leaders were killed (Louis, 2002).

Mushahari block had a relatively large agricultural labour population (Narayan, 1970a). The average for the whole district of Muzaffarpur was only 33.3 percent, whereas agricultural labourers with their dependents made up 39.2 percent of the total rural population of this block. If we add to this number the other landless labourers who sought a livelihood in the town, landless labourers and their dependents would not be less than 45 percent of the total rural population. Scheduled castes formed 25.2 percent of the population, almost all are landless labourers. The daily wage was 1-1.5 kg of paddy or coarse grain. On an average, the wage of 'attached' labourers was half of what was prescribed. Overall, the situation was characterised by a lack of land for many in the area; an uncommon dominance of the landowning families; exceptionally low wages, particularly for attached labourers; a high degree of unemployment; extreme poverty of agricultural labourers; and a general climate of discontent.

In his analysis of the situation, Jaya Prakash Narayan stressed that the responsibility for the eruption of violent conflict between the landowners and the rural poor in the villages of Mushahari could not be exclusively laid at the door of the Naxalites. He identified the following forces and factors of society in the crisis (1970a): big farmers (cheating the Land Ceiling Act); gentlemen (grabbing government land and village commons); landowners (denying the legal rights of the sharecroppers); clever men (taking away the land of weaker sections by fraud or force); upper-caste men (ill treating scheduled caste men and women); moneylenders (usurious interests and seizers of the land of the poor); politicians and administrators (aiding and abetting the above in these wrongs); courts of law (denying a fair deal to the weaker sections); system of education (ill-educated youth); system of planning (unemployment of youth); the party

system (reducing democracy to a farce).

3. Sarvodaya response to the Maoist violence: The Mushahari Plan

The Mushahari plan owes its origin to the unwavering resolve and dedication of Jaya Prakash Narayan to a modest programme of action in response to a lack of any serious effort to tackle the ugly and distressing problem of rural chronic poverty and related conflicts. The backdrop was the growing challenge of Naxal or Maoist violence in Mushahari, where a number of murders, dacoities and death threats took place between 1968 and 1970. The Mushahari Plan was proposed to achieve the goals of area development planning in a manner that would help in providing gainful employment to the dispersed and disorganised rural poor. It suggested that poverty-related conflicts in rural communities were often associated in different proportions with social injustices, including caste discriminations, sexual violence, etc. and cultural marginality, such as low caste status, illiteracy or customary deprivations.

Jaya Prakash Narayan visited Musahari in June 1970, at the height of Naxal violence. During his efforts to bring peace in the region, he realised the paramount need to tackle the problem of widespread poverty. He asked the Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD), a Gandhian rural development organisation, to prepare an integrated block-level development plan. The Sarvodaya workers were persuaded to form a local voluntary organisation named the Muzaffarpur Development Agency to implement the plan in Mushahari block and to gradually replicate it in other blocks. The local branch of the Bank of Baroda was motivated to provide loans for agriculture, allied activities, artisans and retail traders. By 1973, the Naxalite violence had ebbed to a large extent and the initial results of the Mushahari Plan had been quite encouraging. In 1974 the Government of India launched the Rural Industries Project (RIP) in Muzaffarpur district, which was entrusted to the Muzaffarpur Development Agency. In 1978, the RIP was merged with the District Industries Centre (DIC). The DIC in Muzaffarpur continued to be managed by Muzaffarpur Development Agency (MDA) until recently.

What were the prominent features of the Mushahari Plan in response to the conflicts and poverty? It was a five-year plan designed to harness the growth potentialities of the area through a phased

programme of agro-industrial development leading to a self-generating economy. The plan also had political and socio-cultural components to promote community spirit through participatory decision making and consensual changes for conflict resolution.

According to the plan, two related factors were aggravating the problems of poverty and underdevelopment: 1) land shortage or excessive pressure on land; and 2) inequalities in landholdings. Therefore, the major objective of the plan was to ensure rapid expansions in employment, outputs and incomes, with a view to establish a minimum level of living in the area. The plan had a total outlay of about Rs.2.4 crores and was designed to generate, by the end of the plan period, an additional annual income or net output (valued at 1970 to 1971 prices) to the tune of about Rs.1.12 crores, the value of net output per Rs.1,000 investment being 465 (or 46.5 percent). The rural credit scheme was probably one of the first initiatives of its kind in which institutional credit was used as an important input for sustainable development.

The Sarvodaya initiative received a positive response from government sources in its first five years. Apart from the RIP (1974) and the DIC, two more significant schemes converged with the initiative in Mushahari block. Based on the recommendation of the National Commission on Agriculture (1972), the Whole Village Development Plan (WVDP) was conceived in the Fifth Five-year Plan, implemented in 52 villages of seven districts in four states, out of which 23 were in Mushahari block. The programme involved diversification of agriculture and creation of income-generating assets through bank loans and subsidies. It is significant to recognise that the WVDP was the precursor of the IRDP. Similarly, with a view to ensuring backward and forward linkages for rural artisans, the All India Handicrafts Board launched a scheme to set up rural marketing centres (RMCs) at block level to provide an effective link with the market for raw materials and finished goods. Out of the 14 RMCs envisaged under the scheme, four were entrusted to the MDA and performed satisfactorily for some time. The other 10, entrusted to several other agencies, could not be started.

The Mushahari Plan was conceived within the Gandhian framework of Gram Swaraj (self-reliant village system). The requisites were: 1) provision of land for the landless through voluntary donations from

the landowner class; 2) setting up of a Gram Sabha (village council) for self-governance; 3) creation of a Gram Kosh (village fund) for credit support to the villagers; and 4) formation of a Gram Shanti Sena (village peace force) for the protection of the village (see Box 1). It was suggested that rural reconstruction through the organisation and development of Gram Swaraj would bring out the hidden constructive power of the village in the form of people power (Lokshakti), that it would not take long to change the condition of the villages and that this could establish the rule of the village. The Gandhians took the conflict of Mushahari as a challenge requiring a response not of 'revenge' but of change.

Jaya Prakash Narayan turned his mission into a struggle for social and economic justice through radicalisation of the Sarvodaya programmes of Gram Swaraj. Organisation required initiatives in three directions: economic, political and social. These initiatives were taken through a wide variety of instruments (see Figure 3).

A glance at the variety of instruments used in the Mushahari Plan demonstrates the inclusiveness of the Sarvodaya approach. It created spaces and programmes for voluntary associations, government departments, market forces and the village community. The Gandhian response was different and significant owing to its inclusiveness as well as its multidimensionality. The Mushahari project as conceptualised and implemented under the guidance of Jaya Prakash Narayan created space for cooperation between peasants, agricultural workers and the self-employed groups of villagers, across caste divides. There was centrality of the village community and primacy of the voluntary body specially formed for it out of the trained Gandhian workers (the MDA). The Gandhians created a campaign of awareness building in the villages to come together to undertake basic changes in the economic, political and socio-cultural setup of the villages of Mushahari block to settle issues of conflict. They presented the Gram Swaraj approach to promote holistic participatory development through utilisation of the resources of the village community, state authorities and market system.

The Mushahari conflict proved to be a mirror for the Gandhian workers as it demonstrated the declining significance of Sarvodaya work among rural communities, particularly in the context of injustices against the poor. It forced them into innovations in terms of their approach towards socioeconomic problems. It was after a

Box 1: First open letter of Jaya Prakash Narayan to the locals during his Mushahari stay

Friends,

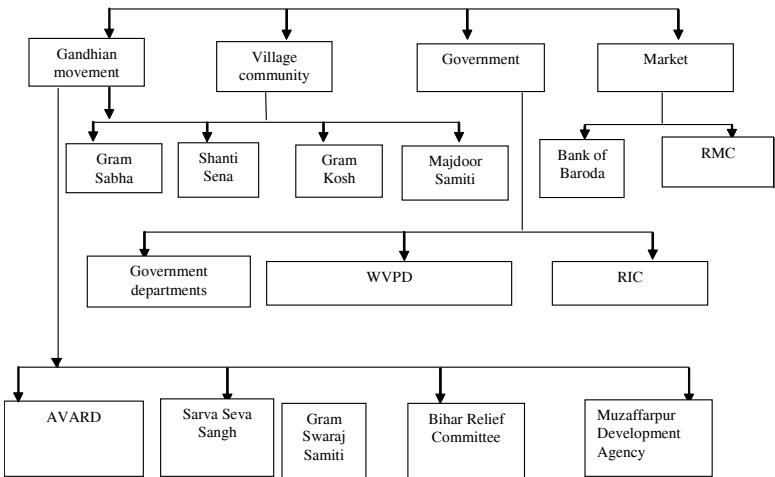
Staying in the Salha, Naroli and Budhagra Panchayat of your block since 9th June, I have been discussing with you about the organization and development of Gram Swaraj. I feel that my approach and the discussions on Gram Swaraj have been appreciated by you. Accepting this idea, most of the brothers of village have signed on the Gramdan declaration. My heartiest thanks to them and I also thank those brothers who have donated land in favour of the Beegha-Kattha principle. I hope that after giving careful thought to the idea of Gramdan, they will soon join the Gramdan movement.

Requisites for Gram Swaraj are: 1) arranging Beegha-Kattha for the landless; 2) setting up of Gram Sabha; 3) collecting village fund; 4) setting up of Gram Shanti Sena for the protection of the village.

I have been discussing about these programmes with you all. The hidden constructive power of the community will come out in the form of people's power through them and it won't take long to change the present condition of the villages. This could establish the rule of the village. Some of you still do not have faith in this idea, and their heart is not open for this thought. Our efforts to convince such people will go on till the time they willingly accept the idea of Gram Swaraj.

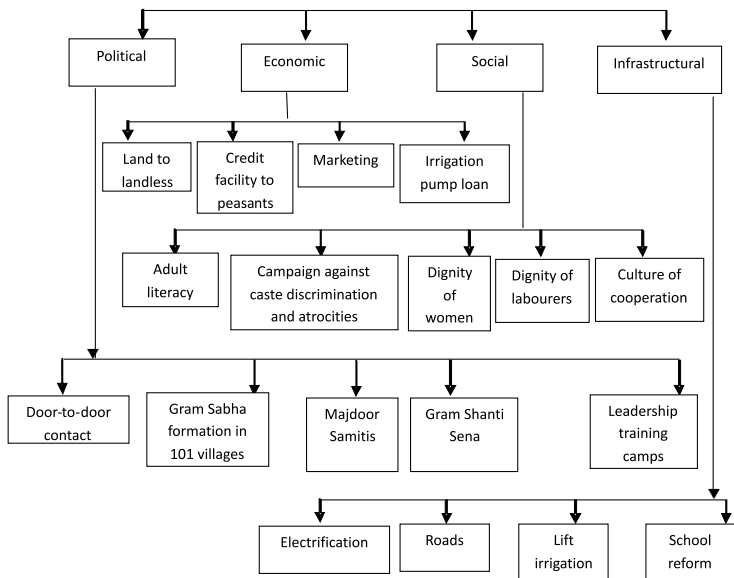
Today on 17th July, I am going out for some necessary work, but my friends will continue to work among you. I will be returning on 4th August and will visit rest of the panchayats. Again, I would like to inform you that till the time the work of this block does not get completed - I'm going to stay here. I believe that the remaining people will donate their Beegha Kattha and will facilitate the path of Gram Swaraj by forming Gram Sabha with the consent of all.

Jai Prakash Narayan

Fig. 3: Instruments of Gram Swaraj

month-long process of consulting the men and women of various classes, castes and communities and studying the causes of distress and destitution that Jaya Prakash Narayan, Prabahavati Devi and the band of Gandhian colleagues came forward with the triple programme of Gram Sabha, Gram Kosh, and Gram Shanti Sena to create a new framework to address the problems of pauperization and poverty-related conflict without allowing escalation of caste/class violence. This was reconciliation through reconstruction. Figure 4 presents the multidimensionality of the programmes launched by the Gandhians in Mushahari in an environment of terror and violence between 1970 and 1972.

Like any major programme of planned social change, the Mushahari Plan had its share of successes and failures. It was thoroughly scrutinised by a variety of people, including social scientists, journalists and political observers at the inception stage. Jaya Prakash Narayan, Avinash Bhai, Acharya Rammooorthy and many others from the Gandhian circle also presented their critique and evaluations at different points in time. Overall, it was agreed that the post-conflict work of the Gandhians under the leadership of Jaya Prakash Narayan at Mushahari did weaken the Naxalite forces in north Bihar in the 1970s. It is further agreed that it promoted internal criticism within the ranks of the Sarvodaya Movement as well as political parties about their orientation and engagements with the problem of rural

Fig. 4: Post-conflict programmes in Mushahari

poverty and the condition of the poorer sections and regions of Bihar and the rest of India (Avinash Bahai, 2006; Das, 1992; Kumar, 2006).

4. Strengths and limits of the Gram Swaraj approach

There have been three phases in the Mushahari mission in response to the challenge of Naxal violence. The first phase (1970 to 1979) was one of the most significant initiatives for non-violent socioeconomic transformation to meet the challenge of rural poverty and related violence. The second phase (1980 to 1988) suffered from a lack of leadership, as Jaya Prakash Narayan passed away in October 1979, as well as active discouragement by the state agencies after a number of direct and indirect central investigations, particularly by the Kudal Commission. No instance of any impropriety was noted in any of the investigation reports undertaken by the official agencies. The third phase (1988 to 2005) was a period of benign neglect and gradual decline. It is regrettable that such a historical initiative between Gandhians and Naxalites on poverty and conflict was not allowed to evolve any further by the state after Jaya Prakash Narayan passed away and after the changes of government at the centre and in Bihar in 1979 to 1980. Any exercise of evaluation of this endeavour on

post-conflict reconstruction through a Gandhian approach of 'community-centred inclusive social change', instead of 'conflictive revenge', must be undertaken with an awareness of the drastic difference between the circumstances of the three phases of the experience.

There are two grounds for assessing the strengths and weakness of the Mushahari intervention by the proponents of the Gram Swaraj approach to conflict resolution. First, was it able to reorient rural society from a path of violent conflict (revenge) towards a process of socio-political and economic reconstruction (change)? Second, was the Gram Swaraj work (as evolved by Jaya Prakash Narayan and the Sarvodaya workers in Mushahari block) replicated elsewhere in later years?

The answer to the first question has been an unequivocal 'yes': the Gandhian intervention was able to change the direction of anti-poverty mobilisation from social violence to developmental reconstruction through people's participation in Mushahari block. There was no recurrence of class/caste violence on any side after the entry of Gram Swaraj workers, in spite of the fact that the rest of Bihar continued to sink deeper into chronic poverty and caste/class-based group killings.

Mushahari was the site of the first two instances of poverty-related violence in 1968 and 1970. After this, there were 140 or more incidents of killings and carnage between 1971 and 2003 in different parts of Bihar, except Muzaffarpur district. This is not an ordinary result in the given situation, where class/caste violence was spreading like wildfire after the first eruption in Mushahari and in fact continued: 1986 (13), 1991 (9), 1997 (12), 1998 (8) and 1999 (10) were some of the most violent years in terms of the frequency of such killings (see Annex 2).

The years 1984 to 1987 and 1996 to 1999 were particularly notorious periods: 225 and 409 people were murdered in these two time periods, respectively, in caste/class clashes around issues of land, wages, security and dignity. In terms of the districts of Bihar, at least 17 districts were affected by this kind of violence after 1970. Bhojpur (45), Jehanabad (32), Patna (14), Aurangabad (14), Gaya (14) and Rohtas (9) were among the most disturbed districts after the 1970 episode.

Who were the victims? Half of the total incidents involved victimisation of the dalit communities (74). The forward castes (17), other backward castes (21) and most backward castes (11) were also frequent sufferers. There were a few incidents targeting Muslims (2) and tribals (2). The Maoist cadres were also a frequent object of such violence (20). In occupational terms, agricultural workers were the most often attacked group (96 times) in these years of caste/class violence in Bihar. Landowning groups were victims in 37 incidents and in 13 incidents the sufferers were mostly sharecroppers. Two incidents saw a group of fishermen and police personnel killed.

How did the Mushahari villages find their way out of violence and destruction? Reorientation of the villagers of Mushahari block was achieved through the four-point programme, which promised inclusive as well as holistic development. Land to the landless labourers, formation of the village committee for a communitarian mechanism of village governance (Gram Sabha), creation of a village fund to provide microcredit services to needy households and creation of village volunteer force (Shanti Sena) to maintain security of the villages from external threats were the four pillars, as we have seen. Within the first 24 months after Jaya Prakash Narayan's arrival in June 1970, 101 Gram Sabhas were constituted in the Mushahari block. These proved to be the catalytic agents for implementing the development projects as well as conflict resolution processes.

Some of the obvious strengths of the Gram Swaraj work in the post-conflict Mushahari block were: 1) the charismatic leadership of Jaya Prakash Narayan; 2) the open-minded engagement of the Sarvodaya workers with various sections of the village community; 3) an integrated development scheme (Mushahari Plan) with a specific organisational system and the Muzaffarpur Development Agency; 4) cooperation of the village elite, political organisations and the rural poor; and 5) active association of the state machinery at the district and province levels.

Creating and developing a zone of non-violent social transformation in an atmosphere of poverty and violence was the most outstanding aspect of this process. Jaya Prakash Narayan presented a new definition of the situation, one which avoided the 'blame game' and

rejected the 'revenge road'. It was achieved as a result of a three-step process of constructive work:

- 1) Community building through an inclusive process of awareness about the root causes of crisis and conflicts through the central Gram Sabha as a people's instrument;
- 2) Identifying the basic needs of various sections and resource mobilisation for their fulfilment (drinking water, credit fund, proper wages, land ownership records, schools for children, health needs, electrification, negation of violence and atrocities, corruption-free role of police and bureaucracy) and presenting a holistic plan for inclusive reforms and development; and
- 3) Mutually complementary roles for voluntary groups, state agencies, interest groups, market forces and the village community through the Gram Swaraj programme around an integrative scheme of development of agricultural and non-agricultural activities. A consensus was created about: what was wrong in the present setting of economic and social relations; who was responsible for this; the consequences of an unjust approach; and the solution to the major causes of conflicts and crisis.

The approach promoted a new perspective which discouraged justifying the wrong practices of the village elite. It also encouraged people to avoid the path of violence in the context of conflict resolution by creating instruments of dialogue and negotiations.

Now let us look at the limits and weakness of the Gram Swaraj approach. It could be asked, if the Mushahari Plan was so effective in more than 150 villages of north Bihar that there was a wave of constructive activism and words of optimism after June 1970, why it was not replicated in the other parts of Bihar which kept on sinking further in the vicious cycle of pauperization, conflict and carnage? One of the obvious factors was the dramatic change in the role of the state apparatus between 1970 and 1975, from active encouragement to destructive interference owing to the Bihar Movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan between 1974 and 1977 and the Emergency Rule imposed to control it from 26 June 1975 till the

national elections of 1977. The Mushahari Plan received some renewed support during the Janta Party regime between 1977 and 1979, as this was brought into existence as a result of the blessings of Jaya Prakash Narayan and his Sarvodaya colleagues. But the return to power of Indira Gandhi created many new obstructions to the further evolution of the Gram Swaraj work, as there were continuous enquiries into all programmes led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and his supporters between 1980 and 1988 to 1989. The second factor was related to the imprisonment of Jaya Prakash Narayan and his later passing away on 8 October 1979. There was no alternative to his charisma and capacity in the Sarvodaya movement. Third, there was a decline in interest in the alternate section of the village community in Gram Swaraj works after the end of the Naxal threat in the area. It was found that the landowning sections of the villages were not sincere about their expected contribution to the wellbeing of agricultural workers, small peasants and village development. Most of them did not keep their commitments regarding voluntary donations of land for the landless, return of loans and withdrawal of cases against the poorer section of the village community. Finally, the issue of proper wages was approached without sincerity, considered a 'breach of trust' by Gram Swaraj activists, including Jaya Prakash Narayan (see Box 2).

**Box 2: Second open Letter of J P to the locals
during his Mushahari stay**

Dear Friends,

I am writing this open letter to you with great sorrow and anxiety. If my health would have been alright and if I would not have taken the decision of one year rest, then I would have travelled in each of the villages and talked to you directly. Till now 101 'Gram Sabhas' have been formed in the Mushahari block. In many villages 'Gram Shanti Sena' (village peace committees) have also been formed and many training camps for peace volunteers have been organized. Gram Sabha members and office bearers have also been elected in many places. One block committee has also been formed but due to political rivalry no office bearers have been elected in the block committee, only a coordinator has been nominated.

After I started work in Mushahari, electricity reached many villages and many farmers have installed electric pumps for irrigation in their lands. Bihar Relief Committee has installed more than hundred of hand-pumps in the lands of many poorer farmers. Due to my intervention Bank of Baroda has sanctioned loans of thousands of rupees for tobacco cultivation. A few water ponds have also been improved due to AVARD's initiative. A few roads have been constructed. Diesel pumps have been set up on boats to lift water from Gandak River for irrigation of the nearby fields. Many poor families have been provided free hand-pumps. In Harijan settlements several hand-pumps have been installed for drinking water. Many tenants have received land entitlement papers. AVARD has prepared a comprehensive plan for inclusive development of the block. 'Padyatras' have been organized many times in many villages of the block. Many training camps have been organized for the primary and secondary school teachers to increase their efficiency and it is still going on. Shri Joytibhai Desai has travelled from far away Gujarat on number of occasions for this purpose for invaluable guidance. Many personalities associated with Sarvodaya movement have visited the area. The atmosphere of terror that was widespread in the area before I arrived has now become a thing of the past. Violence and vandalism if not completely abolished has definitely become marginal.

But I feel all these efforts have gone in vain. Gram Sabhas have only been formed on paper and only a few are functional to the extent that there are occasional meetings. The conditions of Gramdan have not been fulfilled even after the formation of Gram Sabhas. Land has been redistributed only to a few people in a few places according to the Beegha-Kattha principle. Gram Kosh has been created due to the efforts of Avinash Bhai and others in a very few villages largely due to the contributions from the poorer farmers and agricultural workers only. Madhopur was one of the villages where the work initially picked up very well. Large amount of land was redistributed. Some money for Gramkosh was also collected. Many people volunteered in village road constructions, but some laxity has surfaced here also which is so prevalent in the area. Only a small percentage of the people who had taken loan for hand-pumps or tobacco cultivation have repaid and that too partially. Most disappointing is the fact that those people who got help from Electricity Department, Bihar Relief Committee and Bank of Baroda due to my personal intervention or AVARD were

the most lax in fulfilling their commitment. The established politicians of the area talk big when they are on stage but very few have worked earnestly for Gram Swaraj beyond taking the post or making personal benefits.

When I started the development work many of my Sarvodaya friends had cautioned that the stage is not ripe for this sort of work because people might sign Gramdan declaration and a few Gram Sabhas may also be formed on the paper due to the hope of some benefits of development but when their interest will be fulfilled the same people will become inactive and it is possible that they start opposing Gram Swaraj from behind the scene. But I had overruled such views. I was of the opinion that changes in the village orientation and the society at large should be simultaneous with development work as it will help in realizing the vision of Gram Swaraj sooner. Social and intellectual transformation and economic development will complement each other. Harmonization in the villages and rapid pace of development will expedite positive changes in the orientation of the peoples as well as the society. But now I feel that my expectation were helpless and those friends who have cautioned me were eventually proved correct.

Thus keeping in mind these circumstances, I have taken the following decisions:

- 1) Such villages where the Gram Sabhas are not functioning and do not start to function soon then those villages would be deleted from the name of Gram Sabhas and no developmental work would be undertaken there.
- 2) In the villages where the Gram Sabha office bearers have not donated land on the Beegha-Kattha basis and did not contribute to the Gramkosh in a regular manner they will have to vacate their posts. In their place only such people will be appointed who show commitment towards the reconstruction and development of the villages. In the villages, only such families will be included in the development work who have made voluntary land donation on the basis of Beegha-Kattha (if only they have land) and contributed for the Gramkosh. Only those villages will be chosen for holistic and integrated development where people have signed the declaration for Gramdan and have fulfilled the conditions associated with it.

In other words, the change in role of the state, the death of the leader and a lack of commitment in the upper sections of village communities were three major limitations to the Gram Swaraj approach in Mushahari. These factors together became responsible for preventing a great experiment from opening up a constructive path of conflict resolution through change. Although new optimism and activism existed in the villages of Mushahari block after June 1970, this limited replication in other areas. This was exacerbated by the period of interference and decline (1980 to 1988), when there was an atmosphere of helplessness and hopelessness, and government programmes failed to provide justice to peasants and agricultural labourers.

5. Poverty and society in Mushahari: The post-conflict scene

This exploration of the post-conflict face of poverty and society in Mushahari block of villages of Muzaffarpur (Bihar) can be concluded with an overview of the present situation after more than three decades of violent conflict and two decades of the Gram Swaraj campaign. It is also necessary to present a brief outline of the overall situation of poverty, politics and society in Bihar.

Between 1980 and 2000, the share of Bihar with regard to Indians below the poverty line increased from 14.31 percent to 16.36 percent. In rural areas the share went from 16.58 percent to 19.48 percent (see Annex 3) and in urban areas from 6.25 percent to 7.33 percent. Bihar was identified as a least developed Indian state at the beginning of the new millennium, faring poorly on almost every scale of human development when ranked against the other states. Only 10 percent of the population resides in urban areas. Just one half of the population is literate. The situation among the marginalised communities (dalits and tribal people) is far worse. The creation of Jharkhand has further impoverished the state, having been robbed of access to mineral resources. The pressure on the agrarian economy has become acute, as indicated by the fact that the population density in rural Bihar (880 persons per km²) is about three times that of rural India as a whole. The process of liberalisation has not brought any benefits to Bihar. There was a worsening of per capita income in the state in the 1990s. In 1961, the average Bihari income was about two-thirds of that of an average Indian; by 2004, this had fallen to less than one-third (Sridhar, 2007).

Bihar has been through five phases of regime change since the inauguration of Gram Swaraj in June 1970. Congress ruled between 1971 and 1977, then the elections of 1977 brought a political change, with a new government under Chief Minister, Shri Karpoori Thakur, which lasted up to 1980. Bihar was ruled by Congress again from 1980 to 1989. A fourth wave of electoral change took place in 1989 to 1990, led by Shri Laloo Prasad against Congress rule, and he was in command of Bihar between 1990 and 2005. The fifth phase is characterised by the coming to power of Shri Nitish Kumar in alliance with Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) in 2005, which rules till date. As such, the state has not been unstable, as there was a clear mandate for a definite political formation in spite of the four major changes of government between 1971 and 2005.

The Muzaffarpur scene was also quite dynamic in terms of electoral competition during these four decades. In Lok Sabha, Muzaffarpur elected a Congress candidate in 1971. Then it was represented by Janta Party leader George Fernandes between 1977 and 1984, between 1991 and 1998 and from 2004 until now. Muzaffarpur chose a Congress leader, Shri LP Shahi, in 1984 to 1989. Shri Jainarayan Nishad was the Lok Sabha member in the 1998 to 2004 period. In all these years, the Member of Parliament from Muzaffarpur was included in the Union Cabinet. Vidhan Sabha, the area of Mushahari, was represented by a variety of political parties, including the Communist Party of India (CPI) (1971 to 1977), the Janta Party (1977 to 1980), Congress (1980 to 1985), Lok Dal and Janta Dal (2000 to 2005). One of the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Shri Ramai Ram, was Member of the Bihar Cabinet as Minister for Land Reforms in the 1990s. But this political dynamism failed to provide any direction to the people to exit the trap of pauperization and unrest. In fact, the area has become a victim of the crime-politics nexus in the past few years, with a deepening of depression and destitution.

Regarding current village conditions in Mushahari block, according to targeted random sampling, four villages (3.6 percent) out of a total of 119 Community Development Block Mushahari were selected for study. These four villages are Madapur Chaube, Madhopur, Tarawra Gopalpur and Akbarpur. Through the village-level survey, questions were asked from a total of 951 households of the villages: 158 from Madapur Chaube, 320 from Madhopur, 377 from Tarawra

Gopalpur and 96 from Akbarpur. Data collection was carried out in 2005 to 2006.

Madapur Chaube is situated southwest of and 15 km away from Mushahari town. Madapur Chaube has interior rural village characteristics, with most of the population depending on agriculture-related professions. It has high incidence of migration, for a variety of reasons. Madhopur is situated southeast of Mushahari and has a combination of urban and rural characteristics. It was one of the favourite villages of Jaya Prakash Narayan. Tarawra Gopalpur is situated north of Mushahari, consisting mainly of daily wage earners. Their livelihood is governed by fluctuations in the availability of employment opportunities in neighbouring villages and towns. This is a multi-caste and hetero-religious village, approximately 6 km away from Muzaffarpur city. Akbarpur is situated midway between Madhopur and Tarawra Gopalpur. It is approximately 10 km away from Mushahari block headquarters. Agricultural labourers inhabit this village. There are only two peasant households with marginal landholdings. This village received developmental inputs under Jaya Prakash Narayan and there was mobility among the landless labourers and sharecropper categories.

The average size of a household is 7.4, 8.8, 5.7 and 5.7 in Akbarpur, Madapur Chaube, Madhopur and Tarawra Gopalpur, respectively: average size of household is smaller in the larger villages than in the smaller villages. This requires further study, as there was no clear association between landholding and family size. Most of the agricultural labourers were found to belong to smaller households. In all the four villages, women's share in the workforce is greater in bigger size households. On the whole, the share of male members in the workforce is bigger in small-sized households.

5.1 Caste and religion

Bihar is a caste-based society, with castes among the Muslims also. Table 1 gives us a clear picture of the caste profile of the villages in question. It also gives us the male to female ratio, number of persons per household as well as household size, against the particular castes mentioned. Household size is further categorised into lowest, middle and highest categories. Tatmas are the most populous caste in the region, with a population of 14.2 percent, followed by

Bhumihars (9.6 percent) and Chamars (6.7 percent). Striking male to female ratios are found among the Julahas (1571), Lohars (1056), Kahar, Kanu and Nunia, all at 1024. The lowest is recorded among the Dhunias (645). There are great variations in household size also. Thus, we can see how difficult it is to bring a particular region covering only four villages under one single frame and generalise on the basis of this.

5.2 Education scenario

Nearly one in five of the children of these villages are out of school at primary level. Around 94 percent of all male students do not go beyond the Standard 10; this figure is 96.5 percent for female students. Female students do not participate in the Diploma in Engineering, Graduation in Sciences and Graduation and Post-graduation in Arts. Only 34.7 percent of all boys and girls are enrolled at primary level, 8.1 percent at senior primary level and 3.6 percent at ninth to tenth standard. A very meagre (1.8 percent) number of rural boys and girls are able to reach Standard 11 and 12 (Table 2).

On average, the rate of dropout is higher for male than female students. More than half (57.6 percent) of male students are dropouts at Standards 9 and 10. Except primary-level boys (19.5 percent) and girls (21.6 percent), the rate of dropout is around three to five times higher for boys (24.5 percent at Standard 5 to 8, 57.6 percent at Standard 9 to 10 and 18.8 percent at Standard 11 and 12) than girls (6.1 percent, 12.1 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively). These figures show that the standard of education is very poor in the selected surveyed villages (Table 3).

There are two types of literacy: perception-based and real. Real literacy is where a student is enrolled, completes the expected duration of enrolment and is able to pass the required tests at the end of the course. Perception-based literacy is identified with enrolled students who might be forced to leave the educational process to go to earn a livelihood to support their family. For instance, castes like the Halwai (Hindu caste), Momin, Julaha, Musehar and Mehtar (sweepers) are outside the education scenario in the region. It is often found that such castes are high on perception-based literacy but poor on real literacy. However, there are no sign of dropouts among the Dhobi, Kahar, Mali and Kumhar. Figure 5 gives an overview of the literacy gap existing between different castes.

Table 1: Caste profile of the selected villages

S. No.	Caste/ religion	Caste distribution (%)	Female to male ratio*	No. persons/ household	Household size		
					Lowest	Middle	Highest
1	Bhumihar	9.6	963	6.6	1	7	22
2	Brahmin	1.9	933	7.25	4	7	11
3	Chamar	6.7	938	5.3	2	6	11
4	Dhobi	1.6	792	5.9	2	6	17
5	Dusadh	3.7	907	4.7	1	5	9
6	Halwai	0.6	947	5.3	3	5	7
7	Hazzam	1.7	789	6	4	6	9
8	Kahar	1.4	1024	6.9	3	8	15
9	Kanu	2.8	1024	6.2	2	7	17
10	Kumhar	3.2	806	6.1	2	7	13
11	Kurmi	3.3	968	5.5	2	6	15
12	Kushwaha	1.0	968	6.1	1	7	14
13	Lohar	1.2	1056	5.3	2	6	10
14	Mali	0.7	905	5	3	6	7
15	Mallah	11.9	903	7.8	2	8	23
16	Mehtar	Neg.#	750	7	7	7	7
17	Musehar	Neg.#	667	5	5	5	5
18	Muslim	18.2	934	7.2	2	8	21
19	M-Dhunia	0.8	645	5.1	3	5	7
20	M-Julaha	0.6	1571	7.2	5	8	11
21	M-Momin	0.7	720	7.2	1	7	10
22	Nunia	2.8	1024	7.4	1	8	19
23	Pasi	0.9	966	4.8	2	5	7
24	Tamoli	1.1	971	5.3	1	6	9
25	Tatma	14.2	957	6.1	1	7	14
26	Teli	5.3	851	7.5	2	8	27
27	Yadav	2.2	650	6.6	4	7	10
	Total		922	6.2	2	7	13

Note: *FMR (female to male ratio) denotes females per 1000 males in the community. # Less than 0.1 is denoted by negligible.

5.3 Incidence of chronic poverty

The disabled, the elderly, female-headed households and widows

Table 2: Students enrolled in different classes

S. No.	Education standard	% of total no. of students		% out of total of boys and girls	% dropout of total students
		Boys	Girls		
1	1-5	66.1	78.3	34.7	20.5
2	6-8	19.8	12.1	8.1	19.0
3	9-10	8.4	6.1	3.6	42.4
4	11-12	4.1	3.1	1.8	14.3
5	Diploma in Engineering	0.2	0	Neg.#	
6	Diploma in Medicine	Neg.#	Neg.#	Neg.#	
7	Graduation in Sciences	0.4	0	0.1	
8	Graduation in Commerce	0.4	0.2	0.15	
9	Graduation in Arts	0.3	0	Neg.#	100.0
10	Post-graduation in Arts	Neg.#	-	Neg.#	
	Total				21.6

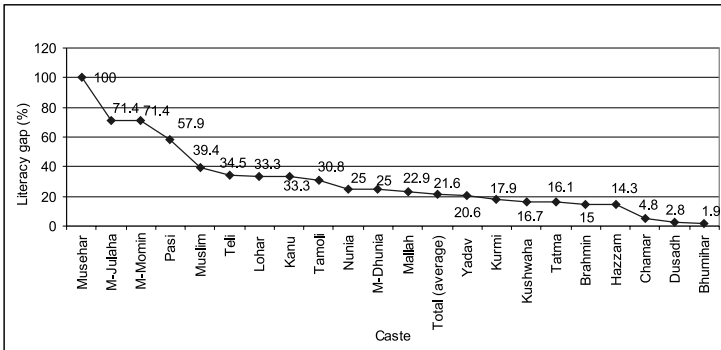
Note: # Less than 0.1 is denoted by negligible.

Table 3: Dropouts by education standard

S. No.	Education standard	% of dropouts of all students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	1-5	19.5	21.6	20.5
2	6-8	24.5	6.1	19.0
3	9-10	57.6	12.1	42.4
4	11-2	18.8	5.9	14.3
5	Diploma in Engineering			
6	Diploma in Medicines			
7	Graduation in Sciences			
8	Graduation in Commerce			
9	Graduation in Arts	100.00		100.0
10	Post-graduation in Arts			
	Total	23.7	18.6	21.6

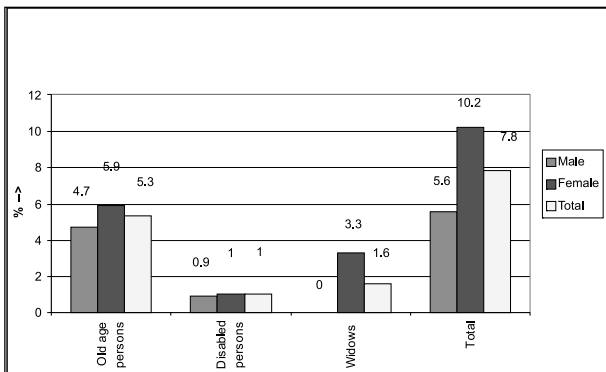
are found mostly among those in chronic poverty. Disability means an inability to carry out any substantial gainful activity owing to any medically determinable physical or mental impairment. Disabilities may occur at any stage of life. Male disabilities might be tolerated

Fig. 5: Literacy gap, by caste



and entail the cooperation of the family. But disability among females is considered as a curse for the family. Victims suffer a great deal and their lives become very painful. Old age is another important element of chronic poverty. In healthy and affluent families, old age starts at the age of 65. In lower class and lower caste families, it starts much earlier, around mid-50. Social as well as economic conditions of old age are different among males and females. In rural society, old widowed women are found in a condition of neglect and resourcelessness. They are victims of social as well as cultural exclusion, which is a significant and persistent feature of chronic poverty, along with diminishing capability (Brady, 2003). The combined organic effect of social exclusion and diminishing capability contributes to the sufferings of chronically poor people. Figure 6 shows a comparative view of the incidence of chronic poverty,

Fig. 6: Comparative view of incidence of chronic poverty



demonstrating that females are the most affected across categories.

Female-headed households may also be characterised by chronic poverty. Women take charge of running the household in two situations: either the male has migrated away from the village to earn a livelihood or the woman is a widow or a deserted person. Most female-headed households belong to the vulnerable sections of society, and the women are victims of social exclusion. According to the data, female-headed households account for 18.3 percent of the total of 951 households in the selected villages. There is very significant ratio of female-headed households in the reference region.

Table 4 shows the caste/religion of female-headed households in the surveyed region. Dhobi, Halwai, Kanu, Mehtar, Musehar, Dhunia, Momin, Pasi and Teli castes are not included in the map of female-headed households in the region. Nunia and Tamoli are at the top of the list, followed by Brahmin, Kahar, Kushwaha, Lohar, Yadav and Mali.

Caste is an important social variable and it influences the life chances of every member of the rural community. Here, we present the caste dimensions of chronic poverty groups. Among Hindu old persons, 13.4 percent are Mallah (boatpersons), 9.6 percent Bhumihar, 9 percent Tatma and 5.6 percent Nunia (Table 4a). There are no old persons among Mali (gardener), Dhobi (washer), Mehtar (sweeper) and Musehar (agricultural labourer) castes. Around one-quarter (23.8 percent) of old persons in the region come from the Muslim community. In general terms, the Muslims comprise 9.8 percent of the total population; Hindus comprise 91.2 percent and hold 76.2 percent of old persons. Thus, it may be that life expectancy among Hindus is lower than among Muslims.

Four castes, Mali, Dhobi, Mehtar and Musehar, are not included on the list. M-Momin (9.3 percent), Julaha (5.6 percent) and Muslim (6.3 percent) in the Muslim community and Yadav (9.1 percent), Kanu (8.3 percent), Kushwaha (8.2 percent), Pasi (7.0 percent), Lohar (ironsmiths) (6.8 percent), Dusadh (6.2 percent), Kahar (6.0 percent), Mallah (5.9 percent) and Tamoli (5.8 percent) are above the poverty line and the rest are below the line (Table 4b). The Bhumihar are found to be at the average level in terms of old persons. A caste analysis of incidence of old persons shows: 1) marginal communities and most poor communities have no incidence of old persons; 2) the

Table 4: Female-headed households, by caste

S. No.	Caste/religion	Out of total no. of households in the caste (%)	Out of total no. of households (%)
1	Bhumihar	16.9	1.6
2	Brahmin	6.3	0.1
3	Chamar	37.7	3.0
4	Dusadh	16.7	0.8
5	Hazzam	29.4	0.5
6	Kahar	8.3	0.1
7	Kumhar	28.1	0.9
8	Kurmi	30.9	1.8
9	Kushwaha	10.	0.1
10	Lohar	14.3	0.2
11	Mali	12.5	0.1
12	Mallah	11.8	1.2
13	Muslim	17.5	2.8
14	M-Julaha	20.0	0.1
15	Nunia	56.5	1.4
16	Tamoli	53.8	0.7
17	Tatma	17.6	2.6
18	Yadav	5.0	0.1
	Total		18.3

Table 4a: Poverty among old-age persons (age 60 and above)

S.no No.	Caste	Out of total no. of Household selected in the caste (%)	Out of total no. of Household in village
1	Mallah	13.4%	7.8%
2	Bhumihar	9.6%	6.6%
3	Tatma	9%	6.1%
4	Nunia	5.6%	7.4%

highest percentage of female old persons, belong to most backward Muslim as well as Hindu communities.

Only one percent of persons are physically disabled. Incidence of orthopaedic disabilities, mostly because of polio, is very high (around one-quarter of all the disabled). Mentally challenged persons make up 16.9 percent and totally blind persons 13.6 percent. Around one-

Table 4b: Persons above poverty line caste/religion groups (%)

S.no	Caste	Persons above poverty line (%)	Out of total no. of household in village
1	Momin (muslim)	9.3%	7.2%
2	Julaha (muslim)	5.6%	7.0%
3	Other Muslim	6.3%	8.4%
4	Yadav	9.1%	6.6%
5	Kanu	8.3%	6.2%
6	Kushwaha	8.2%	6.1%
7	Pasi	7.0%	4.8%
8	Lohar	6.8%	5.3%
9	Dusadh	6.2%	4.7%
10	Kahar	6.0%	6.9%
11	Mallah	5.9%	7.8%
12	Tamoli	5.8%	5.3%

fifth of all disabled persons come from the upper castes – Bhumihar and Brahmin. The disabled are also from the scheduled castes (8.5 percent), Dhobi and Dusadh; other backward castes (5.1 percent) and most backward castes (20.4 percent). Out of the total number of those with mental disorders, 30 percent belongs to the Mallah caste. Around 47 percent of polio-infected persons and 50 percent of totally blind persons belong to Muslim communities. Thus, Muslims are the most vulnerable section of the society in terms of disabilities.

The highest incidence of widows is in the Muslim communities (0.7 percent). There is no incidence in the Brahmin, Kumhar, Kushwaha, Mali, Mehtar, Musehar, Dhunia, Julaha, Momin and Tamoli castes. Out of all women, Bhumihar and Mallah castes represent 0.5 percent of widows, respectively; 3 percent of women in Kurmi, Tatma and Teli castes are widows. It may be pointed out that widow remarriage is relatively acceptable among the non-upper caste communities of the observed villages. In the upper castes, a widow is not generally allowed to remarry. Their whole life becomes torturous and they are the worst sufferers of social exclusion. Poor and old widows are forced to earn money through hard labour, begging, etc. Thus, widowhood is a very significant attribute of chronic poverty in rural settings.

5.4 Occupations and unemployment

The employed are classified into eight categories: cultivation, agricultural labour, non-agricultural work, industrial work, self-employment, services, traditional professions and non-specified occupations. In this area, the majority of the population is engaged in agricultural labour, followed by cultivation. The livelihoods of 36.7 percent of males and 23.8 percent of females depend directly on agriculture and cultivation (Table 5).

Persons engaged in cultivation

Agricultural cultivation is the main occupation in rural areas. Out of the total workforce, 13.4 percent are employed in agricultural professions and cultivation. Of the Bhumihar, 46.3 percent are engaged in cultivation. The corresponding estimate is 27.4 percent for Teli, 27.3 percent for Yadav, 23.1 percent for Kushwaha, 20.0 percent for Tamoli, 19.2 percent for Hazzam, 18.0 percent for Kumhar, 13.6 percent for Tatma and 10.2 percent for Mallah. The estimates for Brahmin, Chamar, Dusadh, Dhobi, Tatma and Muslims males are below the average (13.4 percent).

Out of the total workforce, 12.0 percent of females are employed in cultivation. Of the Kurmi, 60 percent work in cultivation. For Momin this is 50 percent, Tamoli 41.7 percent, Dusadh 19.6 percent, Mallah 12.8 percent, Kumhar 10.3 percent, Tatma 10 percent, Bhumihar 8.1 percent, Yadav 8 percent, Teli 7.1 percent, Brahmin 4.3 percent, Muslim 3.1 percent and Chamar 2.2 percent. Overall, Bhumihar, Tatma, Kurmi, Muslim, Mallah and Teli comprise around 78 percent of the total workforce is engaged in cultivation (Table 5).

Persons engaged in agricultural labour

Agricultural labourers are the backbone of agriculture. As shown in Table 5, 17 percent out of the total workforce are engaged as agricultural labourers. The caste breakdown is as follows: 63.6 percent of Mali, 49.3 percent of Kurmi, 40.7 percent of Dusadh, 35.3 of Nunia, 34.7 percent of Chamar, 33.3 percent of Halwai, 33.3 percent of Tamoli, 23.2 percent of Tatma, 29.7 percent of Muslim, 19.2 percent of Brahmin, 15.4 percent of Hazzam, 15.2 percent of Yadav, 14 percent of Kumhar, 7.1 percent of Teli and 2.0 percent of Bhumihar are employed as agricultural labourers.

Table 5: Occupational distribution in the region

S. No.	Workforce category	Out of total workforce* in the region (%)		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Uneducated unemployed	10.4	5.6	8.1
2	Educated unemployed	10.7	6.4	8.7
3	Cultivation	15.6	12.0	13.4
4	Agricultural labour	21.1	11.8	17.0
5	Non-agricultural work	19.2	3.5	11.9
6	Industrial work	3.4	4.2	3.5
7	Self-employment	8.9	3.6	5.8
8	Services	4.4	2.5	3.0
9	Traditional professions	6.3	4.3	5.3
10	Non-specified	0.0	46.1	23.3
11	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: * Here all such persons (male/female) who are above the age of 18 years and not disabled as well as those not engaged in higher education are recognised as part of the workforce.

Around 12 percent of women work as agricultural labourers. Here, Dusadh (48.2 percent), Nunia (45.2), Tamoli (33.3 percent), Muslim (23.1 percent) and M-Momin (20 percent) participate at above the average rate (11.9 percent). Muslim, Tatma, Dusadh, Mallah, Kurmi, Chamar and Nunia comprise around 84 percent of all persons employed as agricultural labourers.

Caste distribution of non-agricultural labourers

Non-agricultural work includes construction labour, loading/carrying of goods, work in villages, digging holes, pits or wells, rickshaw or trolley pulling, porters' work and other manual activities; this covers 19.2 percent of males and 3.5 percent of females. Male and female workers of the Musehar community are engaged as non-agricultural labourers.

Out of the total workforce, 11.9 percent are engaged as non-agricultural labourers: 73 percent come only from the Tatma (2.9 percent of total workforce), Muslim (2.3 percent), Kanu (1.3 percent), Mallah (1.2 percent), Chamar (0.5 percent) and Kurmi (0.5 percent). Among males, Musehar (100 percent), Momin (90 percent), Julaha

(83.3 percent), Kanu (76.9 percent), Tatma (34.6 percent), Kushwaha (30.85), Brahmin (26.9 percent), Muslim (23.7 percent) and Kurmi (20.5 percent) are significant contributors. In terms of female participation, Musehar (100 percent), Mehtar (65 percent), Julaha (33.3 percent), Yadav (28 percent), Nunia (19.4 percent), Kanu (16.3 percent), Pasi (14.3 percent) and Bhumihaar (8.7 percent) are significant groups.

Incidence of traditional profession

Around 6.3 percent of males and 4.3 percent of females are in traditional occupations. Estimates regarding traditional occupations show that Dhobi, Hazzam, Kahar and Lohar work in traditional professions; they obtain good incomes and high market value. On the other side, Pasi, Mehtar and Julaha have no alternative choices and are also engaged in traditional professions.

Other occupations

Industrial workers are engaged in manufacturing industries, cottage industries and petty manufacturers' workshops in the urban part of Muzaffarpur and the town area of CD Block Mushahari. In fact, these industrial workers are engaged mostly in cottage industries and small-scale workshops: there are no large-scale industries in the area. A small part of the workforce is engaged as industrial workers in the region: 3.4 percent of males and 4.2 percent of females.

Self-employment includes running cottage industries, teashops, cloth merchants, vegetable vending, grocery shops, carpet and sari weaving, etc. Approximately 8.9 percent of males and 3.6 percent of females are engaged in such occupations as self-employed persons. Services comprise peon, chowkidars, engineering, management and other services and account for 4.4 percent of males and only 2.5 percent of females.

As many as 46.1 percent of females are non-specified workers: home management, which is not recognised as a regular work, e.g. cooking food, washing clothes, cleaning utensils, caring for sick family members, looking after infants and young children and other family affairs. Females of Mali, Mehtar, Musehar, Julaha, Momin, Tamoli, Tei and Yadav castes are not seen as non-specified workers. They are engaged in different jobs either with males of their households or they themselves are engaged in different occupations. According

to our study, the highest incidence of non-specified professional persons is in the Kushwaha caste (100 percent).

Unemployment

According to the 2001 Census (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2001), the number of jobless in India grew by more than three times in 10 years – from 13.8 million in 1991 to 44.5 million in 2001, of which 8.5 million were illiterate and 36.7 million literate. Table 5 shows the occupational distribution in the region. Out of the total male workforce, 10.4 percent of males reported being in a state of uneducated unemployment and 10.7 percent in educated unemployment. Here, ‘educated’ consists of those educated above senior basic school level (Standard 8). Out of the total female workforce, 5.6 percent of females are uneducated unemployed and 6.4 percent educated unemployed. Thus, out of the total workforce, 8.1 percent persons are uneducated employed and 8.7 percent educated unemployed. In total, 16.8 percent out of the total workforce are unemployed in the region.

A look at the unemployment figures suggests that 13.47 percent of Muslims are in the category of uneducated unemployed. They are followed by most backward castes (9.73 percent), other backward castes (5.62 percent), dalits (4.03 percent) and upper castes (0.86 percent) (see Table 6). In the category of educated unemployed, the percentage of the upper castes, other backward castes, most backward castes, dalits and Muslims are 14.41 percent, 13.97 percent, 11.91 percent, 6.05 percent and 6.34 percent, respectively.

Table 6: Unemployment in different social groups

S. No.	Social group	Uneducated Out of total workforce within the social group (%)	Educated Out of total workforce within the social group (%)
1	Upper castes	0.86	14.41
2	Other backward castes	5.68	13.97
3	Most backward castes	9.73	11.91
4	Dalits	4.03	6.05
5	Muslims	13.47	6.34

5.5 Landholding in the region

Bihar has seen major large-scale voluntary land distribution. Marxists and socialists gave the slogan of land to tillers while Gandhian thinkers like Acharya Vinoba Bhave launched the Bhoodan (donation of land) movement, later taken up by Jaya Prakash Narayan.

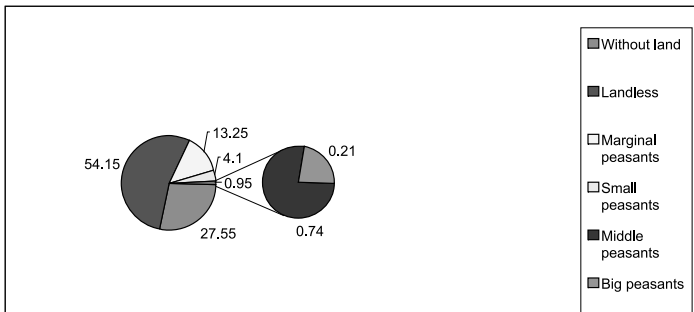
Table 7: Landholding sizes in the region

	Landholding size (acres)						
	Without land	Landless (0.0-0.5)	Marginal (0.5-2.5)	Small (2.5-5.0)	5.0-10.01	0.0-50.0	Total
% of total households	27.55	54.15	13.25	4.10	0.74	0.21	100.00

According to Table 7, around 28 percent of households have no land except their homestead.

According to the Figure 7, landless households cover more than half (54.15 percent) of the total sphere. Households with from 0.01 to 0.49 (0.5) acres of land are recognised as landless and 13.25 percent of households are marginal peasants, with from 0.50 to 2.49 (2.5) acres of land (and engaged in agricultural occupations). Small peasants comprise 4.1 percent of all households in the region and have 2.5-5.0 acres of land. Only 0.74 percent of all households are in the category of middle peasant, with 10-25 acres of land. Big peasants are at only 0.21 percent, with 25-50 acres of land.

Fig.7: Land distribution structure in the region



Land distribution by caste

Muslim (19.08 percent), Chamar (17.56 percent), Tatma (9.16 percent), Dusadh (8.40 percent) and Nunia (6.11 percent) account for 61 percent of households without land (Table 8). Only 5.6 percent of households in this category belong to the upper castes.

According to our information, Dhunia, Dusadh, Hazzam, Nunia and Chamar are the most vulnerable persons among the rural communities in terms of landlessness. Also among the landless are 93.75 percent of Brahmin households and 29.2 percent of Bhumihaar households. These findings regarding the upper castes the Bhumihaars and Brahmins refute the notion that upper castes are landlords and well-off families.

On average, two-fifths of all households of Musehar, Chamar, Pasi, Tatma, Dhunia, Julaha, Momin, Nunia and Dusadh are vulnerable to chronic poverty in the region. Musehar and Pasi are victims of chronic poverty. More than half a century has passed since independence but their socioeconomic situation remains static.

Of all households, Bhumihaar (28.57 percent), Kurmi (12.7 percent), Mallah (11.9 percent), Dusadh (8.73 percent) and Yadav (7.14 percent) comprise 69 percent of all households of marginal peasants. Within each caste, 40.45 percent of Bhumihaar households, 45 percent of Yadav, 60 percent of Kushwaha, 29 percent of Kumi and only 1.3 percent of Chamar are marginal peasants. In rural Bihar, more than 90 percent of marginal peasants suffer from poverty and above 60 percent of marginal peasants carry the attributes of chronic poverty.

Out of all households, 4.1 percent are small peasants. Small landholding size is an indicator of the fluctuating economic life of villagers. During a good monsoon year, small peasants are secure. In years of flood and drought, the small peasant economy is not stable and people suffer acute misery. More than half of small peasants come from the Bhumihaar caste and 41 percent from backward castes, with only 7.69 percent from the Muslim community (Table 9). Big peasants are least in evidence: the share of middle and big peasants is less than one percent in the region.

Table 8: Incidence of landless and marginal peasants, by caste

S. No.	Castes/ religion	Without land (%)			Landless (0.0-0.5) (%)			Marginal (0.5-2.5) (%)		
		Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households within landholding size	Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households within landholding size	Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households within landholding size	Of total households within landholding size		
1	Bhumihar	3.82	11.24	3.11	17.98	28.57	40.45			
2	Brahmin	2.29	37.50	1.75	56.25	0.79	6.25			
3	Chamar	17.56	59.74	5.83	38.96	0.79	1.30			
4	Dhobi	2.67	43.75	1.36	43.75	1.59	12.50			
5	Dusadh	8.40	45.83	2.91	31.25	8.73	22.92			
6	Halwai	0.76	28.57	0.97	71.43	0.00	0.00			
7	Hazzam	4.58	70.59	0.58	17.65	1.59	11.76			
8	Kahar	1.15	25.00	1.55	66.67	0.00	0.00			
9	Kanu	—	—	4.66	88.89	2.38	11.11			
10	Kumhar	3.82	31.25	2.91	46.88	4.76	18.75			
11	Kurmi	3.44	16.36	5.83	54.55	12.70	29.09			
12	Kushwaha	0.38	10.00	0.58	30.00	4.76	60.00			
13	Lohar	2.29	42.86	1.36	50.00	0.79	7.14			
14	Mali	—	—	1.36	87.50	0.79	12.50			
15	Mallah	3.05	8.60	11.84	65.59	11.90	16.13			

16	Mehtar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.79	100.00
17	Musehar	—	—	—	0.19	100.00	—	—	—	—
18	Muslim	19.08	32.47	18.25	61.04	—	—	5.56	—	4.55
19	M-Dhunia	3.05	80.00	0.39	20.00	—	—	—	—	—
20	M-Julaha	—	—	0.97	100.00	—	—	—	—	—
21	M- Momin	—	—	1.17	100.00	—	—	—	—	—
22	Nunia	6.11	69.57	1.17	26.09	—	—	0.79	—	4.35
23	Pasi	0.00	0.00	2.33	100.00	—	—	—	—	—
24	Tamoli	1.91	38.46	1.36	53.85	—	—	0.79	—	7.69
25	Tatma	9.16	16.90	22.52	81.69	—	—	1.59	—	1.41
26	Teli	5.73	34.88	4.08	48.84	—	—	3.17	—	9.30
27	Yadav	0.76	10.00	0.97	25.00	—	—	7.14	—	45.00
	Total	100.00	27.55	100.00	54.15	—	—	100.00	—	13.25

Table 9: Incidence of small, middle and big peasants, by caste

S. No.	Castes/ religion	Small (2.5-5.0 acres) (%)		Middle (5-10 acres) (%)		Big (15-50 acres) (%)	
		Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households	Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households	Of total households within landholding size	Out of total households
1	Bhumihar	51.28	22.47	85.71	6.74	50.00	1.12
2	Kahar	2.56	8.33	—	—	—	—
3	Kumhar	2.56	3.13	—	—	—	—
4	Mallah	17.95	7.53	14.29	1.08	50.00	1.08
5	Muslim	7.69	1.95	—	—	—	—
6	Teli	7.69	6.98	—	—	—	—
7	Yadav	10.26	20.00	—	—	—	—
	Total	100.00	4.10	100.00	0.74	100.00	0.21

Distribution of 'leased-in' and 'leased-out' land

Peasants suffer from floods, crop failure and usury. In order to get out of these situations, they take land on a lease to sharecrop for a period, usually one or two years. They are also found to lease out land to big peasants in some special cases. Most of those engaged in leasing in and out land, belong to the category of landless households, i.e. those with less than 0.5 acres of land are engaged in leasing out land. This shows that people who are poor are engaged in endless efforts to get out of poverty. According to the study, 47.6 percent of Kurmi, 31 percent of Dusadh, 11.9 percent of Tatma and 9.5 percent of Bhumihar lease out their land. Muslim, Mallah, Kurmi and Chamar were found to lease in land (Table 10).

Out of all households that were leasing in land, 37.2 percent belong to the landless, 52.7 percent are marginal peasants and 9.4 percent are small peasants. There is meagre involvement of small farmers (5-10 acres).

Sharecropping patterns in the region

Sharecropping is a major form of agricultural activity among the landless and marginal peasants. Out of all sharecroppers, only 3.8 percent give cash payments. 38.5 percent give half of the total produce to the landlord. This sharecropping system is known as *half payment of total produce*. Under this type of sharecropping, Dusadh are at 53.4 percent and Muslims 23.4 percent. Chamar are at only 2.5 percent out of all sharecroppers. Except in cash payments, Mallah play a role in each type of sharecropping in the region. Out of all sharecroppers' households, only Mallah hold 37.2 percent (Table 11).

5.6 Migration

Bihar is vulnerable to socioeconomic sufferings and natural disasters such as floods and droughts. Of all migration, 17.7 percent and 13.9 percent are the result of flood and droughts, respectively. Hunger is a direct indicator of poverty: 18.1 percent migrated because of hunger. More than one-fifth of migrants are forced to leave because of their burden of debts. Around one-quarter are self-motivated and 5.1 percent migrated as a result of oppression by dominant castes (Table 12).

Table 10: Distribution of leased-in and leased-out land, by caste (percent of households within landholding size)

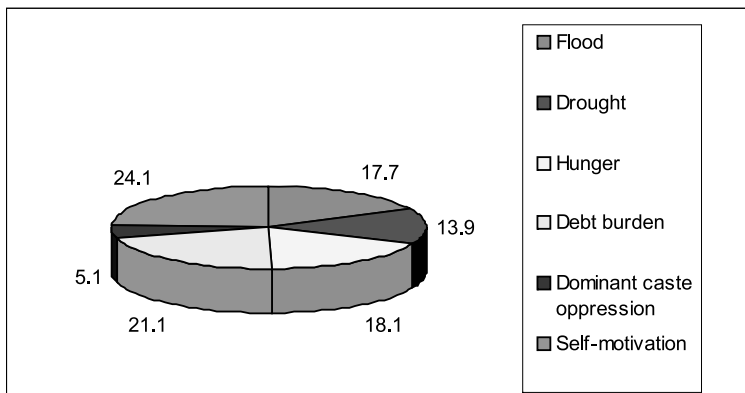
S. No.	Caste/ religion	Leased in (% of households within landholding size)					Leased out (% of households within landholding size)					
		0.0-0.5	0.5-2.5	2.5-5.0	5.0- 10.0	Total	0.0-0.5	0.5-2.5	Total	0.0-0.5	0.5-2.5	Total
1	Bhumihar	3.6	6.4	0.0	0.0	4.7	3.0	33.3	4.7	3.0	33.3	9.5
2	Brahmin	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
3	Chamar	10.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
4	Dusadh	0.0	6.4	7.1	100.0	4.7	30.3	33.3	4.7	30.3	33.3	31.0
5	Halwai	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
6	Kanu	5.5	3.8	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
7	Kumhar	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
8	Kurmi	21.8	1.3	0.0	0.0	8.8	54.5	22.2	8.8	54.5	22.2	47.6
9	Kushwaha	0.0	9.0	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
10	Lohar	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
11	Mallah	3.6	26.9	92.9	0.0	24.3	0.0	0.0	24.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
12	Muslim	36.4	19.2	0.0	0.0	23.6	0.0	0.0	23.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
13	M-Julaha	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
14	M- Momin	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
15	Nunia	1.8	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
16	Tamoli	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
17	Tatma	9.1	14.1	0.0	0.0	10.8	12.1	11.1	10.8	12.1	11.1	11.9
18	Teli	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		37.2%	52.7%	9.4%	0.7%		78.6%	21.4%				

Table 11: Batiadari or Half Share – cropping system

Caste	% in share - cropping
Dusadh	53.4
Muslim	23.4
Chamar	2.5
Mallah	37.2

Table 12: Different reasons for migration since 1985

Flood (%)	Drought (%)	Hunger (%)	Debt burden (%)	Dominant caste oppression (%)	Self-motivation (%)	Total
17.7	13.9	18.1	21.1	5.1	24.1	100.0

Fig.8: Reasons for incidence of migration

Distribution of migrants by caste

Migration has become a means to find a better source of income in Bihar. Out of the total number of migrants to different cities and states in India, 18.9 percent are Tatma, 14.9 percent Chamar, 10.7 percent Muslims, 8.0 percent Bhumihar and 6.25 Teli. Flood has led to the migration of a significant section among the following: Chamar (29.2 percent), Tatma (18.0 percent), Mallah (16.9 percent), Bhumihar (6.7 percent) and Kanu (5.6 percent). Chamar, Kahar and Tatma are found to be most vulnerable to dominant caste oppression (Table 13). Tatma and Chamar are also vulnerable to hunger and are forced to migrate to earn a livelihood, to the villages of Punjab, towns

Table 13: Distribution of migrants, by caste (different reasons and out of total migration)

S. No.	Caste/ religion	Flood (%)	Drought (%)	Hunger (%)	Debt burden (%)	Dominant caste oppression	Self-motivation (%)	Total (%)
1	Bhumihar	6.7	10.0	0.0	12.3	0.0	11.6	8.0
2	Brahmin	2.2	4.3	1.1	2.8	0.0	3.3	2.6
3	Chamar	29.2	15.7	23.1	6.6	23.1	3.3	14.9
4	Dhobi	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.8
5	Dusadh	4.5	10.0	12.1	4.7	7.7	2.5	6.4
6	Halwai	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.2
7	Hazzam	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.9	0.0	5.0	1.8
8	Kahar	0.0	0.0	4.4	0.0	26.9	2.5	2.8
9	Kanu	5.6	4.3	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.8	2.2
10	Kumhar	1.1	2.9	1.1	2.8	0.0	1.7	1.8
11	Kurmi	3.4	2.9	7.7	3.8	0.0	1.7	3.6
12	Kushwaha	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.6
13	Lohar	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	1.7	0.6
14	Mali	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.4
15	Mallah	16.9	8.6	7.7	3.8	0.0	2.5	7.0
16	Muslim	4.5	15.7	9.9	16.0	0.0	10.7	10.7
17	M-Dhunia	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.8
18	M-Julaha	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.8
19	M- Momin	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.6
20	Nunia	4.5	0.0	1.1	1.9	0.0	6.6	3.0
21	Tamoli	1.1	4.3	0.0	0.9	7.7	8.3	3.4
22	Tatma	18.0	12.9	25.3	19.8	26.9	15.7	18.9
23	Teli	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.3	7.7	14.0	6.2
24	Yadav	1.1	8.6	0.0	0.9	0.0	2.5	2.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

of Assam and different cities in India and abroad, including Bhutan and Burma.

Migrants return home with money and a strong will to protect their cultural and social rights. They purchase land for residential use; some lease in land to produce grains and vegetables. Migrants provide money for agricultural inputs, resulting in an increase in sharecropping. Some landless Tatma and Chamar have become involved in a different pattern of sharecropping thanks to their income from migration.

Interest in providing an education to children has also increased in the region. Political involvement has also been growing during the past 15 years. As such, migration has become an encouraging and vital force in terms of increasing socioeconomic and politico-cultural activities in the region.

5.7 Summing up

This section has underlined a few aspects of poverty and society in post-conflict Mushahari villages that are significant in the context of the dynamics of chronic poverty. First of all, it is observed that most of the children of the scheduled castes are dropping out in the primary stage of education. Mushars (100 percent) and Julaha (72 percent) are most serious victims of this problem. Such children may enter adulthood as victims of chronic poverty.

Second, the largest numbers of illiterate unemployed persons are from the Tanta and Mallah castes, whereas the largest numbers of educated unemployed are found among the Bhumihars, who are the dominant caste of the block.

Third, there are large numbers of landless households among the Chamars (80 percent) and Brahmins (65 percent). A large section of Yadav (45 percent) and Kushwaha caste (60 percent) households are in the marginal peasant category. Only a very small proportion of households (1.12 percent) are in the category of big peasants.

Fourth, a good proportion of the small and marginal peasant households from Mallah and Muslim communities are engaged in leasing in land from other communities for agriculture. Therefore, any study about rural poverty and mobility has to take both facts into account: both the land ownership pattern and the facts about who is 'leasing out' and who is 'leasing in' land for agriculture. This is changing the traditional pattern of relations between castes and land ownership in favour of the other backward castes and the most backward castes and against the forward castes.

Fifth, a significant proportion of households have members engaged in migration to meet the challenges of survival in Mushahari villages. This includes Chamars (45 percent of the whole caste) Bhumihars (17 percent) and Yadavs (10 percent). In other words, migration as a way out of poverty-related problems is a common practice in all sections in different proportions.

Sixth, there has been a significant decline in incidence of inter-caste and inter-clan violence since the early 1970s. There is more use of channels of negotiation than brute force in conflict situations. However, there has been a growth in the crime–politics nexus in rural settings in recent years. This is affecting the youth of nearly every community and represents a new source of tension and conflict between and within major caste groups in the villages. Meanwhile, there is only a superficial presence of democratic institutions in the rural Mushahari villages. There appears to be no functional scheme of rural development in the area. Whereas there is an immediate need for schemes to promote irrigation facilities, agro-based small-scale industries, marketing centres and employment-generating programmes.

6. Towards conclusions

In short, in 1970, Mushahari was a block of villages with a very high presence of agricultural workers with exceptionally low wages and a high degree of unemployment. The area was marked by extensive poverty and underdevelopment. The political system was organised around dominance of landlords. After three decades, there has been a change in the political power of the other backward castes and the social status of the most backward castes and the scheduled castes owing to a variety of forces, including the legacy of the Gram Swaraj work, democratic changes in the rural polity and spread of caste consciousness. Certainly, the era of dominance of landlords and the upper castes has ended. These villages have entered the phase of dominant caste democracy, which includes the possibility of socio-political mobility among the other backward classes and the capacity for resistance among the marginal groups, including the scheduled castes. But poverty has continued to dominate village life owing to a persistent lack of infrastructure improvement, natural calamities like floods and droughts and socioeconomic challenges like malnutrition, caste deprivations, illiteracy, unemployment and the crime–politics nexus. Modernisation of agriculture, migration and leasing-out and leasing-in of land have emerged as three major coping strategies among those suffering from pauperization in the area.

As such, it is obvious that the changes in the political sociology of Bihar and Muzaffarpur, including the villages of Mushahari block, have been quite significant in the post-conflict period since the 1970s,

as reflected in the change of regimes and representatives. But they have failed to change the political economy of the people dependent on the rural economy, particularly agriculture.

The endeavour to understand the post-conflict face of poverty and society in the context of Mushahari block leads to a number of conclusions, which deserve further exploration through a comparative study of post-conflict sites in other parts of Bihar:

- There are a number of reasons for the continuity of poverty and discontent in the villages of Musahari block in the post-conflict period, despite the consensus on the need for attention to the root causes of poverty and the development initiatives of the Mushahari Plan. These reasons are related to the changing nature of four major components in conflict resolution: the state, market forces, caste/class conflict and the community system. We have to ask whether the people's power-based Gram Swaraj approach became a victim of the party rivalries involved in the politics of power.
- Furthermore, all observers, including the Gandhians and Maoists, suggest that there is a high correlation between the institutional collapse of the democratic system and the eruption of violent conflict in Mushahari block and other areas with similar settings. Politics fighting poverty is being replaced by a nexus of politicians, bureaucrats, rich farmers and contractors, who are together promoting institutional decay. On the other hand, village communities, particularly the poorer sections, have demonstrated their capacity to engage creatively with each other to address the challenge of poverty through political innovations and economic initiatives, as experienced during the Mushahari project led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and other Sarvodaya workers. Is there a need for further study of the role of the power elite in the context of the continuity of poverty in post-conflict societies?
- This study has demonstrated the marginality of the impact of the Gram Swaraj work in the long run through empirical facts about the presence of deep poverty in the villages of Mushahari today. This suggests that there is a need for further comprehensive study on similar developmental initiatives on rural poverty in order to obtain a better understanding of their strengths and limits in responding to the challenges of conflict for justice through poverty alleviation.

- The study also demonstrates the expansion of poverty-related problems beyond the polarities of the caste system. The impact of Mandalisation² of the discourse of power on poverty and destitution demands further enquiry about the relationship between the trajectories of 'politics of social justice' and 'mobilisation against poverty'.
- It has been argued that Bihar is exposed to five kinds of crisis, which are collectively contributing towards the growth of chronic poverty: economic crisis; political crisis; educational crisis; crisis for women; and crisis for entrepreneurs. Is it correct to conclude on the basis of the micro study of the Mushahari block that the people of Bihar are becoming debilitated owing to the cumulative consequences of a multidimensional crisis? Violent conflicts and migration are two poles of this.
- The last conclusion from the study is related to the remarkable absence of any inclusive approach regarding the poverty question by the socio-political leadership and movements of Bihar since the passing away of Jaya Prakash Narayan and the fading away of the Gram Swaraj approach as well as the marginalisation of the politics of violence in Mushahari block. Bihar is continuously victimised by the politics of social splits (identity politics) in the search of 'vote banks' and the politics of class conflict (politics of interest). This is not helping society to make any progress in the eradication of poverty and destitution. Thus, it may be relevant to revisit the communitarian inclusive endeavour of conflict resolution through 'change' (and not 'revenge'). Jaya Prakash Narayan led the Gram Swaraj mission's response to Naxal terror to make an outstanding impact on Mushahari, with a constructive role for the village elite and the state powers.

² Mandalisation refers to the policy of providing reservation to the Other Backward Classes (non Upper Castes who are considered above the category of the Scheduled Castes) in government jobs which has resulted in the consolidation of the middle castes into a 'power block' in elections in north Indian States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in particular.

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Annex 1: Bihar: Profile of districts

District	Below poverty line	Literacy rate (%)	Infant mortality rate (per 1000)	Scheduled castes (%)	Scheduled tribes (%)	Sex ratio	Flood prone	Drought prone
Araria	78.6	34.94	65	3.66	1.29	916	Yes	--
Madhubani	75	42.35	49	16.34	0.71	915	Yes	Yes
Sheikhpura	74	49.01	63	NA	NA	920	(Partly)	(In 1965)
Nawada	73	47.36	61	24.42	0.09	948	Yes	(Every summer)
Siwan	72	52.01	66	11.14	0.58	1033	Perennial	--
Rohtas	71	52.01	66	18.81	1.62	909	Yes	(Severe in 1965)
Darbhanga	70	44.32	51	14.56	0.01	914	Yes	--
Madhepura	69	36.19	54	16.34	0.71	915	Yes	Yes
Purnea	69	35.51	47	12.48	4.37	916	Yes	--
Sitamarhi	69	39.38	58	12.12	0.02	893	Yes	--
E.Champaran	69	38.14	65	13.07	0.04	898	Yes	--
Kishanganj	67	31.02	54	6.62	3.04	940	Yes	--
Saharsa	67	39.28	72	15.48	0.3	910	Yes	--
Saran	65	52.01	51	11.71	0.13	965	Yes	Yes
Nalanda	64	53.64	59	19.40	0.02	915	Yes	Yes
Banka	63	43.40	69	NA	NA	908	--	--
Lakhisarai	63	48.21	49	Na	Na	923	--	--
Supaul	63	37.63	61	NA	NA	920	Yes	Yes
Vaishali	63	51.63	59	19.85	0.07	921	Yes	Yes
Samastipur	62	45.76	57	18.03	0.02	927	Yes	--
Sheohar	62	37.01	59	NA	NA	917	--	--
Jamui	58	42.74	61	NA	NA	917	--	--
Begusarai	57	48.55	48	14.5	0.05	911	Yes	--
Musaffarpur	56	48.15	48	15.72	0.04	928	Yes	Yes
Aurangabad	54	57.50	41	23.26	0.03	936	Partly	Yes
Bhabhua	54	55.57	39	28.62	19.47	907	--	--
Buxar	54	57.49	42	NA	NA	901	Partly	--
Bhojpur	52	59.71	39	14.36	0.25	900	--	--
Khagaria	52	41.56	49	14.49	0.003	890	Yes	Yes
Bhagalpur	51	50.28	44	10.41	3.46	878	Yes	--
Patna	51	68.82	40	15.48	0.15	873	Yes	--
Munger	50	60.11	39	16.74	2.31	878	Yes	Yes
Gaya	49	51.07	38	29.58	0.05	937	Yes	Yes
Jahanabad	47	56.03	53	18.39	0.02	927	Partly	--
Gopalganj	46	48.19	63	12.23	1.12	1005	Yes	--
West Champaran	44	39.63	51	14.37	1.33	901	Yes	--
Katihar	43	35.29	39	8.77	5.58	919	Yes	--

Annex 2: Social conflict-related killings, encounters and carnage in Bihar (1968 to 2003)

Sno	District		Village		Victims	Victims' occupation
1	Muzaffarpur	1968	Mushahari	6	Forward caste	Agriculture
2	Muzaffarpur	1970	Mushahari	5	Maoist	Middle peasant/ sharecropper/ agricultural labourer
3	Purnea	1971	Rupaspur	14	Tribal	Agricultural labourer
4	Bhojpur	1972	Ekwari	7	MBC/dalit	Agricultural labourer
5	Bhojpur	1972	Chouri	1	Forward caste	Agriculture
6	Bhojpur	1972	Ayar	1	Forward caste	Agriculture
7	Bhojpur	1973	Punpun	2	Dalits	Agricultural labourer
8	Gaya	1973	Bishambharpur	2	Forward caste	Agriculture
9	Bhojpur	1973	Semraon	1	OBC	Sharecropper
10	W. Champanan	1974		1	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
11	Bhojpur	1975	Jagdishpur	1	OBC	Agriculture
12	Bhojpur	1975	Dekuli	5	OBC	Agriculture
13	Bhojpur	1975	Parthu	16	Dalit/OBC (police encounter)	Agricultural labourer and sharecropper
14	Bhojpur	1975	Punpun	1	OBC	Marginal peasant
15	Patna	1975	Madhuban	4	Liberation Maoist personnel	Landless and small peasant
16	Bhojpur	1976	Basuhar	5	Liberation Maoist personnel	Landless and small peasant
17	Bhojpur	1976	Bahuara	4	OBC	Agriculture
18	Bhojpur	1976	Semraon	1	OBC	Agriculture
19	Bhojpur	1976	Akodi	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
20	Jehanabad	1977	Kargha	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
21	Patna	1977	Belchi	14	Dalit	Agricultural labourer

22	Bhojpur	1977	Brahmapur	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
23	Jehanabad	1978	Kaila	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
24	Rohtas	1979	Samhauta	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
25	Bhojpur	1979	Bajitpur	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
26	Jehanabad	1980	Parasbiggha	11	MBC	Agricultural labourer
27	Monghyr	1980	Amiya	30	OBC	Agriculture
28	Patna	1980	Pipra	14	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
29	Bhojpur	1981	Mathia	3	Maoist	Agricultural labourer
30	Patna	1982	Pipra	1	Forward caste	Agriculture
31	Patna	1982	Near Patna	2	Dalits	Agricultural labourer
32	Aurangabad	1982	Maini Bigha	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
33	Bhojpur	1983	Parthu	1	OBC (police encounter)	Agriculture
34	Gaya	1983	Panania	5	MCC cadres, Maoist	Agricultural labourer
35	Patna	1983	Pipra	5	OBCs	Sharecropper
36	Rohtas	1984	Gagan Bigha	5	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
37	Aurangabad	1984	Ambari	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
38	Bhojpur	1984	Danwar-Bihta	22	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
39	Aurangabad	1984	Kharakpura	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
40	Patna	1984	Pipra	11	OBC	Agriculture
41	Monghyr	1985	Laxmipur	12	MBC	Agricultural labourer
42	Aurangabad	1985	Kaithabigha	11	Dalits	Agricultural labourer
43	Aurangabad	1985	Banshi	15	Liberation cadres, Maoist	Agriculture
44	Bhojpur	1985	Kunai	2	Liberation cadres, Maoist	Agricultural labourer

45	Gaya	1986	Neelampur	5	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
46	Jehanabad	1986	Aminabad	3	Muslim	Agricultural labourer
47	Patna	1986	Jeenpura	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
48	Aurangabad	1986	Gaini	12	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
49	Jehanabad	1986	Arwal	22	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
50	Jehanabad	1986	Kaniara	15	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
51	Rohtas	1986	Parasibigha	17	MBC	Agricultural labourer
52	Siwan	1986	Mainwa	8	Dalit	Sharecropper
53	Rohtas	1986	Babhani	11	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
54	Jehanabad	1986	Arwal	24	MKSS cadres, Maoist	Agriculture
55	Jehanabad	1986	Kansara	8	MBC	Agricultural labourer
56	Aurangabad	1986	Oarasdug	11	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
57	Aurangabad	1986	Dhamian	17	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
58	Aurangabad	1986	Dharmian	11	Forward caste	Agriculture
59	Aurangabad	1987	Chotki-Chhechani	7	OBC	Agriculture
60	Bhagalpur	1987	Near Bhagalpur	15	MBC	Fisherman
61	Aurangabad	1987	Dalelchak Bahuara	56	Forward caste	Agriculture
62	Jahanabad	1988	Arhan	4	OBC	Sharecropper
63	Jahanabad	1988	Daumha	11	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
64	Jahanabad	1988	Golapur	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
65	Jahanabad	1988	Daumha	9	MBC	Agricultural labourer
66	Jahanabad	1988	Kodaria	7	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
67	Jahanabad	1989	Nanhi-Nagwan	21	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
68	Rohtas	1989	Tirojpur	6	Forward caste	Agriculture

69	Jahanabad	1989	Meti Bigha	5	MBC	Agricultural labourer
70	Hazaribagh	1989	Kilhari	1	OBCs	Agriculture
71	Gaya	1989	Konch Bolock	1	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
72	Rohtas	1990	Kesari	10	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
73	Jahanabad	1990	Laksawar	5	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
74	Patna	1990	Driapur	5	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
75	Patna	1991	Tiskhora	15	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
76	Prunea	1991	Malbaria	11	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
77	Bhagalpur	1991	Near Bhagalpur	12	MBC	Agricultural labourer
78	Gaya	1991	Mein-Barsima	10	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
79	Bhojpur	1991	Dev-Sahara	15	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
80	Jahanabad	1991	Sawnbigha	7	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
81	Jahanabad	1991	Manbarsimha	9	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
82	Patna	1991	Karkar Bigha	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
83	Gaya	1991	Theendiha	7	MBC	Agricultural labourer
84	Rohtas	1992	Chainpur	4	Maoist	Agricultural labourer and middle peasant
85	Gaya	1992	Ashabigha	6	MCC cadres	Agricultural labourer
86	Gaya	1992	Bara	39	Forward caste	Agriculture
87	Rohtas	1993	Dadar	3	Maoist	Agricultural labourer
88	Bhojpur	1993	Ekwari	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
89	Rohtas	1994	Aghoura	4	Maoist	Agriculture
90	Gaya	1994	Matgharha	11	Maoist	Sharecropper
91	Bhojpur	1994	Nadhi	9	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
92	Bhojpur	1995	Khopiara	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer

93	Bhojpur	1995	Sarathua	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
94	Aurangabad	1995	Gulzar Bigha	4	Maoist	Agriculture
95	Bjojpur	1996	Nanaur	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
96	Aurangabad	1996	Mathanbigha	7	Maoist	Sharecropper
97	Bhojpur	1996	Chandi	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
98	Bhojpur	1996	Nadhi	9	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
99	Bhojpur	1996	Bathani Tola	22	Dalits and Muslims	Agricultural labourer
100	Bhojpur	1996	Pathalpura	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
101	Bhojpur	1996	Morath	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
102	Bhojpur	1996	Purhara	4	Dalits	Agricultural labourer
103	Bhojpur	1996	Khanet	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
104	Bhojpur	1996	Ekwari	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
105	Bhojpur	1997	Khanet	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
106	Bhojpur	1997	Machil	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
107	Jehanabad	1997	Katesar Nala	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
108	Jehanabad	1997	Khadasin	8	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
109	Patna	1997	Indo	6	Maoist	Agriculture
110	Bhojpur	997	Ekwari	10	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
111	Patna	1997	Ranepur	9	Forward caste	Agriculture
112	Jehanabad	1997	Akhopur	4	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
113	Patna	1997	Jalpura	11	Forward caste	Agriculture
114	Jehanabad	1997	Haibaspur	10	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
115	Jehanabad	1997	Laxmanpur-Bathe	61	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
116	Jjehanabad	1997	Chauram	9	Forward caste	Big peasant

117	Bhojpur	1998	Nagri	10	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
118	Nahawada	1998	Bhuwansujas	6	OBC	Small peasant
119	Jehanabad	1998	Aiyara	3	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
120	Purnea	1998	Vikhrati	20	Scheduled tribe	Sharecropper/ agricultural labourer
121	Palamu	1998	Atkadih	10	MBC	Agricultural labourer
122	Jehanabad	1998	Ramdev-Aiyara	7	Forward	Agriculture caste
123	Gaya	1998	Sigori	6	Maoist	Sharecropper
124	Gaya	1998	Mahadevbigha	4	Maoist	Agricultural labourer
125	Jehanabad	1999	Shankarbigha	23	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
126	Jehanabad	1999	Bheempura	4	Forward caste	Agriculture
127	Jehanabad	1999	Senari	35	Forward caste	Agriculture
128	Jehanabad	1999	Narayanpur	11	Dalit	Agriculture
129	Jehanabad	1999	Usri Bazar	7	Forward caste	Agriculture
130	Buxar	1999	Sujathpur	16	Maoist	Agriculture
131	Gaya	1999	Sendani	12	OBC/dalit	Sharecropper/ agricultural labourer
132	Gaya	1999	Khajuribigha & Jokharibigha	12	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
133	Lakhisarai	1999	Lakhisarai	11	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
134	Aurangabad	1999	Mianpur	35	OBC	Middle peasant/ agricultural labourer
135	Nawada	2000	Rajebigha	5	OBC	Agriculture
136	Nawada	2000	Baghi	3	OBC	Agriculture
137	Nawada	2000	Afsar	13	Forward caste,	OBC Agriculture
138	Bhojpur	2000	Dumariyan	5	OBC	Middle peasant/ agricultural labourer
139	Patna	2001	Maturha	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer
140	Patna	2001	Damol	6	Dalit	Agricultural labourer

141	Gaya	2002	Chironichi igha	6	Police	Police
142	Jehanabad	2003	Kariambura	5	Maoist	Agricultural labourer

Note: OBC = other backward castes; MBC = most backward castes; MCC = Maoist Coordination Center'; MKSS = Majdoor Kisan Sangharsh Samiti

Source: Louis (2002).

Annex 3: Comparative levels of poverty in Bihar and India

Year	Persons below Poverty Line (lakhs)						Bihar's share of poor in India (%)		
	Bihar			India			Rural	Urban	All
	Rural	Urban	All	Rural	Urban	All			
1983	417.7 (64.37)	44.35 (47.33)	462.05 (62.22)	2519.57 (45.65)	709.4 (40.79)	3228.97 (44.48)	16.58	6.25	14.31
1987- 1988	370.23 (53.63)	50.7 (48.73)	420.93 (52.12)	2318.79 (39.09)	751.59 (38.20)	3070.49 (38.86)	15.97	6.74	13.71
1993- 1994	450.86 (58.21)	42.49 (34.50)	493.35 (54.96)	2440.31 (37.27)	763.37 (32.36)	3203.68 (35.97)	18.48	5.57	15.40
1999- 2000	376.51 (44.30)	49.13 (32.91)	425.64 (42.60)	1932.43 (27.09)	670.07 (23.62)	2602.5 (26.10)	19.48	7.33	16.36

Source: Radhakrishna, R. and Shovan Ray (2005).