

REPORT ON VISITS TO MUZAFFARPUR, EAST AND WEST CHAMPARAN DISTRICTS IN BIHAR

Introduction

With the approval of the Commission I visited Muzaffarpur as well as East and West Champaran districts in Tirhut division of Bihar, from 25-29th of December, 2013. In the districts I had discussions with the District magistrates, Senior Superintendents of Police and other district-level functionaries. The implementation of the Criminal Justice System at the district /sub-district level, the status of implementation of the Civil and Political Rights (including extremist movements in the districts) as well as Socio-economic Rights were discussed. Field visits were also made to assess the status of implementation of these Rights.

Tirhut Division

Tirhut division is an administrative and geographical unit of Bihar, with Muzaffarpur as its administrative headquarters. The division presently consists of West Champaran (Bettiah), East Champaran (Motihari) ; Muzaffarpur ; Sitamarhi ; Sheohar and Vaishali districts.

The districts comprising Tirhut Division are important from a religious, political and cultural point of view. Many places in this Division have mythological association with the epic of Ramayana. Besides, they have played an important role in the freedom struggle. George Orwell, author of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, was born in Motihari in 1903. Kesaria the tallest and the largest Buddhist Stupa in the world is in Motihari. West Champaran district is home to the Valmiki National Park, also home to two wildlife sanctuaries:

District Profiles

Muzaffarpur district is one of the thirty-eight districts of Bihar and Muzaffarpur city is the administrative headquarters of this district. Muzaffarpur is known as the 'Gateway to North Bihar' and is named after Muzaffar Khan, a Revenue Officer under the British rule. It is one of the largest commercial and educational centers in North Bihar. The district is famous for litchis.

East and West Champaran districts

In 1866 Champaran was made into a district, with Motihari as its headquarters. West Champaran District was carved out of the old Champaran District in 1972 as a result of re-organization of the district in the state. On 1 December 1977, it was again bifurcated into East and West Champaran districts.

Bettiah is the administrative headquarters of West Champaran district, located near Indo-Nepal border, 225 Kilometres north-west of Patna, in Bihar. It was the seat of *Bettiah Raj*, a *jamindari* established in the 17th century. It is the largest district in Bihar with an area of more than 6000 sq. Kms. Sugar cane cultivation is the main stay of the people which has replaced the earlier Indigo crop. There are 5 sugar mills in the area. Geographically Bettiah has a difficult terrain with Gandak and its ancillary rivers flowing through the area that often causes flash floods. It is a water surplus area.

Muzaffarpur is the main Industrial hub of North Bihar and that there are several small scale industries in Motihari sub-division. Agriculture is the main economic activity of this relatively poor region.

Administrative divisions

Muzaffarpur district comprises the East and West Sub-Divisions. The East sub-division comprises 9 blocks and the West Sub-Division 7 blocks. Shri Anupam Kumar is the DM and Dr. Saurav Kumar Singh is the SSP of Muzaffarpur district.

Motihari district comprises of Sub-divisions and blocks.

Dr.C.Shridhar is the DM and Shri Vinay Kumar is the SSP, Motihari.

The West Champaran district comprises three Sub-Divisions: Bettiah, Bagaha, and Narkatiaganj, with 18 blocks. Dr. Abhay kumar Singh is the DM. Shri Saurab Kumar Shah is the SSP, Bettiah.

Area & Population

According to the 2011 Census, Muzaffarpur district occupies an area of 3173 km² and a population of 4,801,062 (male 2,527,497; female 2,273,565). It is the third most populous district of Bihar (out of 39), after Patna and East Champaran.

East Champaran district occupies an area of 3969 km² and has a population of 5,082,868 (male 2674023; female 2408831). As of 2011, it is the second most populous district of Bihar (out of 39), after Patna.

West Champaran district occupies an area of 5,228 square kilometers. According to the 2011 census, West Champaran district has a population of 3,922,780 in 2011 (male 2,061,110; female: 1,873,932).

Sex ratio

In the state of Bihar as a whole the sex ratio reported in the Annual Health Survey (2010-11) was 919. As per Census 2011, Muzaffarpur has a sex ratio of 898 females for every 1000 males; East Champaran 902 females for every 1000 males. Sex Ratio in West Champaran, stood at 909 per 1000. The figures reported in the Annual Health Survey (2010-11) are lower-880, 896,987 in the three districts respectively. DM Bettiah pointed out that a few pockets in the district report poor sex ratios, as people live in isolation, due to difficult terrain. *Sex ratio reported in the three districts is well below the average national sex ratio in India at 940, as per Census 2011. These districts need to start special campaigns to improve sex ratios.*

Criminal justice system

4

The status of implementation of the criminal justice system is poor, although some welcome changes have been brought about in recent times, including recruitment of more police personnel, provision of more vehicles and equipment, setting up of fast-track courts and training of police officials at various levels.

According to the data furnished by the district administration, average number of criminal cases reported in the last 3 years in **Muzaffarpur** district was 746; average disposal of cases was 768 and convicted cases were only 110. 634 cases were registered in 2011; 669 in 2012 and 936 in 2013. While conviction was in 278 cases in 2011, in 2012 it was only 24 and in 2013 only 28. While 139 charge sheets and 1014 final reports were filed in 2011 the number reported was 908 and 164 respectively in 2012 and 54 and 26 in 2013. The number of IPC crimes like murder, dacoity and loot show an increase during the three year period. It was stated by the SSP that one full time officer has been designated to deal with cases under Arms Act. Fast track courts have been set up to speed up the criminal cases.

It was stated by the SSP, Motihari that the district has only one police district with 45 police stations. Only 28 *thanas* have buildings. Despite repeated reminders no crime data was made available by the police administration of Motihari district.

Bettiah district has total number of 54 *Thanas* out of which 34 are in Bettiah and 20 in Bagaha. Bettiah happens to be on the main line from Nepal to Delhi and rest of north India, and, therefore, form the main transit point for Ganja and weapons smuggled across the border. Crime was so rampant in earlier times that the entire area was known as "mini Chambal". Kidnapping for ransom was the pre-dominant crime in the district in the 90's and till 2005 which was facilitated by difficult geography, with a number of fast flowing rivers originating from Nepal criss-crossing the district. Keeping in view the high incidence of crime and the vastness of its area, a separate police district -- Bagaha -- was carved out of the revenue district of Bettiah in

1993. According to SSP, Bettiah, a significant reduction in kidnapping and smuggling is reported in the area in recent times, although media reports still show criminal activities in the border areas. A number of Non-Governmental Organizations, besides the district police, have been working in the area.

According to data made available by the police in Bettiah, 4099 crimes were reported in the district in 2011 and 5500 in 2012; in 2013, 5677 cases were reported. Among the crimes reported the largest referred to burglary and theft (117 and 445 each in 2011; 136 & 515 in 2012; 138 and 516 in 2013). Kidnapping cases reported were also very high in the district (117 in 2011; 163 in 2012 and 170 in 2013). Total number of miscellaneous cases reported was 2612 in 2011, 3211 in 2012 and 3151 in 2013. The district Police also reported that only 338 cases were disposed of by December 2011, against 1230 cases pending; in 2012; 642 cases were disposed of in December, 2012 against 2028 pending and in 2013, by December end, 475 cases were disposed of, against 2104 pending. It will be seen that the rate of disposal of cases is very low in the district. 30 cases of dacoity were registered by different police stations of the district during 2013 against only 20 cases in 2012. Just 10 cases were reported in 2011 while 9 cases were reported in 2009. As per police records, armed dacoits looted properties and cash worth about Rs 80 lakh in different cases in 2013. Media reports show that the police have been successful in cracking only 3 dacoity cases out of 30 and have arrested over a dozen dacoits and seized 2 rifles, 4 guns, one country-made pistol and live cartridges from their possessions.

Death in police custody

No case of death in police custody is reported in Bettiah in the last 3 years Motihari and Muzaffarpur districts in the last 3 years.

It was mentioned by SSP, Bettiah that the Station House Officers (SHOs) are regularly briefed about the steps to be taken to protect the rights of individuals under police custody. DK Basu guidelines, as

6

mandated by the NHRC and the Central/State governments are prominently displayed in all police stations and other police offices.

Crimes against Women

Rape cases:

In Muzaffarpur district 56 rape cases were registered in 2011; 34 cases in 2012 and 33 cases in 2013. Charge sheets were filed only in 13 cases in 2011; 65 cases in 2012 and 06 cases in 2013. Final reports were filed in 24 cases and sentenced in 80 cases in 2011; No final reports could be filed nor any sentence awarded in any case in 2012. Only in one case final report could be filed and only in 05 cases the accused were convicted in 2013.

Cases involving 498 women have been registered in Motihari. One Mahila Thana has been set up to deal with these crimes. A Mahila Helpline has also been set up.

It was stated by SSP, Bettiah that women formed only 2% of the workforce earlier; it has now gone up to 33%. In Bettiah 20 cases of rape were reported in 2011; 36 cases in 2012 and 46 cases in 2013. The increasing incidence of rape in the district is a matter of concern.

Dowry cases

It is a matter of great concern that despite the awareness created by the media a large number of dowry cases continue to be reported in the three districts. 76 cases were registered in 2011 in Muzaffarpur district and in 20 cases charge sheets were filed; in 180 pending cases final reports were filed and in 20 cases sentences were awarded. In 2012, 83 cases were registered; in 86 cases charge sheets were filed; final reports were filed in 06 cases; only in 2 cases convicted. In 2013 70 dowry cases were filed; only in one case charge sheet was filed; only in one case each final report could be filed and conviction secured.

32 dowry deaths were reported in Bettiah district in 2011; 28 cases in 2012 and 27 cases in 2013. The district and police administration in the three districts ought to take up a campaign against the dowry system on a continuous basis at the panchayat and village levels. Services of Anganwadi workers and ASHA should be fully utilized; incentives should be provided to those panchayats which are free of dowry cases and those which work towards dowry-free marriages.

Atrocities against women

In Muzaffarpur district 91 cases of atrocities against women were registered; 80 cases in 2011 and 180 cases in 2013. Charge sheets could be filed only in 12 cases in 2011; 98 cases in 2012 and 23 cases in 2013. Charge sheets were filed in 13 cases in 2011; 98 cases in 2012 and 23 cases in 2013. Final reports were filed in 168 cases in 2011; only in 06 cases in 2012 and 03 cases in 2013. Convictions could be secured only in 22 cases in 2011 ; 02 cases each in 2012 and 2013.

No information was made available by the police administration, Motihari.

148 cases of atrocities on women were reported in West Champaran District in 2013. Data for previous years is not available.

Trafficking of Women and children

Human trafficking is an important issue in Bihar as the state shares an international border with Nepal. Trafficking directly affects the weaker sections of the society and is linked to prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst the population. Muzaffarpur and Champaran have been identified as the high risk zones of trafficking in Bihar.

Being on the multi- state border, Bettiah has, in the past, been a transit zone for human trafficking. Surprisingly SSP Muzaffarpur reported that no case of trafficking was registered in 2011 in the district and that only 02 cases were registered in 2012 in which 05 accused were arrested. In 2013, 4 cases were registered involving



arrest of 16 accused. A district level unit has been set up for handling Trafficking issues.

It was stated by the SSP Bettiah that in the last few years, due to greater vigil from all stakeholders, the law enforcement agencies, the presence of paramilitary (SSB on the Nepal border), the media, NGOs and a civil society increasingly connected with the government aided by modern transport and communication, the instances of human trafficking have been brought down. Out of 7 cases of human trafficking reported in the last three years, investigation has been completed in 5 cases which are presently pending in courts. The remaining 2 cases are fast-tracked and the investigation will be completed in a time-bound manner. SSP Bettiah further stated that the emphasis now is on greater reporting so that better conclusions are arrived at. However, he pointed out that while the rescue function is being attended to, there is no medium term and long term rehabilitation and alternative livelihood program for those rescued in those cases. The result is that there is always a possibility of the victims relapsing into the same profession.

It was stated that Motihari district is a conduit for trafficking. Stakeholder workshops are being organized in the district and that there is very close coordination between APPS and the police to ensure prosecution in all cases registered. However work by various NGOs is uncoordinated in the district. Short Stay Homes are run by reputed NGOs like *Prayas* and *Ujjwala* with the funds provided by Government of India.

The Department of Social Welfare, Government of Bihar launched the State Plan of Action called "*Astitva-Bihar*" to combat human trafficking in the state in the year 2008 which is an integrated approach involving participation of all the important stakeholders such as Government line departments, including the Departments of Education, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Labor, Human Resources, Health, ICDS, and Police, district administration, judiciary

and the media. However, impact assessment of this initiative is not available.

The NHRC, between 2003-05, had done a detailed mapping of trafficking routes in different states. The Indo-Nepalese border was identified as a major route for trafficking and the state governments were directed to take immediate necessary action. However, even today the problem continues in the area because :-

- While India has a strong set of laws against trafficking and child labor, the enforcement of these laws is tardy. Although special cells for dealing with trafficking cases have been set up in the districts, they have not been effective in curbing this problem. Setting up of a mechanism for checking government leniencies and loopholes that allow the problem to continue unchecked needs to be put in place.
- The administration has not been quick enough to provide effective economic alternatives for children and communities most prone or affected by trafficking nor involve the community directly in governmental and non-governmental programs.
- There is no comprehensive framework among the NGOs to tackle the problem even though they continue to be funded by international donors and the UN for their initiatives. While many NGOs have carried out community awareness programs, given legal aid and conducted research in the field, there has been no significant scaling up of any of these activities in co-ordination with other stakeholders.
- Absence of large scale community awareness on a continuous basis in highly affected areas.
- More awareness about human trafficking at the panchayat level, maintaining records of girls/women leaving for taking up jobs in towns/metros by the panchayats, counseling by women's groups/NGOs would be urgently needed to curb this social evil.

Missing women

366 cases of missing women have been reported in Bettiah district in the last 3 years. However, in most of these cases the women/girls have left homes by their consent, as admitted by the victims in their statement in courts, after their return. Of the 301 cases registered, 43 have been found to be true against the accused and the people involved have been sent to judicial custody and charge-sheets have been filed. In 208 cases the victims have, in statements before the judicial magistrates, claimed to have gone as per their own free will. In these cases the court usually allows them to leave as per their free will and the police files a final report as a mistake of fact in the original FIR. Thus the investigation in 251 out of 301 cases has been completed. It was reported that review of pending cases in this category is being conducted every month to ensure timely completion of investigation. Data from the other two districts was not available.

Rights of the Child

It was stated by DM Motihari that Child Welfare Committees have been set up in the district under the provisions of the JJ Act. Training has been imparted to all police officials on child rights.

According to DM Bettiah marriages take place on the average at 17-18 years of age for girls in the district.

It was stated by the SSP Bettiah that the JJ Act is being implemented in the district. Reputed NGOs like PRAYAS are running Child Protection Homes.

Status of Scheduled Castes and Tribes

Scheduled Castes

Bihar is one of the states in India with a sizable population of Scheduled Castes Scheduled Castes (SC) (16.4 per cent). Out of 23 castes identified under Scheduled castes in Bihar Chamar, Dusadh, Mushahar, Pasi, Dhobi and Bhuiya constitute the majority (98.2%) in these districts. The sex ratio amongst the Scheduled Castes is estimated at 923, marginally higher than that for the state of Bihar (919). In the estimate on poverty worked out by the Planning

Commission of India 42.3% is constituted by the Scheduled castes. According to the data compiled in NHFS-3 FMR amongst the SC is 66.44.5 % of the girls marry before the age of 18. Institutional delivery is estimated at 24.2%.

Muzaffarpur district has a SC population of 4, 64362 (439,655 rural; 24,707 urban) while East Champaran has 397,714 (385,516 rural; 121,198 urban) SC population, according to the 2011 Census. SC population constitutes around 16% of the total population in Muzaffarpur district while it is around 8-9% in Motihari district. It was stated that land distribution to 100% Mahadalits is complete.

Bettia has a total population of 3, 35,249 Scheduled castes (3, 17,428 rural; 1, 17,821 urban) against a total population of 23, 33,666 in the district (about 8%).

Scheduled Tribes

After the creation of Jharkhand, majority of the tribes fell within the administrative jurisdiction of Jharkhand. However, there is significant tribal population still left in Bihar. According to 2011 census, there are 13.36 lakh tribals in Bihar, which amounts to 1.3 percent of the total population. Before the partition of Bihar, tribals enjoyed 10 percent reservation in the state.

From the data provided by the NIC (National Informatics Center) Schedules Tribes (STs) are proportionately higher (1.6 per cent) in Paschim Champaran than the State aggregate (1.3 per cent). Muzaffarpur district has only a negligible population of Scheduled Tribes numbering 3472 (0.09%). Motihari too has only a very insignificant population of Scheduled Tribes numbering 1278 (1245 rural; 33 urban). However, West Champaran district has a concentration of *Tharu* tribe adjoining the Nepal border, on the Bagaha side. Those who belong to the Scheduled Tribes also generally belong to BPL category and derive the benefits available to those sections under various government schemes.

The *Tharu* as a community is today scattered across the Himalayan foot hills of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand as well as in Bihar. *Tharus* are also found across the belt of the Nepali Tarai. The capacity of Tharu society to survive in often extreme malarial conditions made them an irreplaceable source of labor in the Tarai

In Bihar, the community is concentrated in West Champaran District, with its largest settlements in the area also popularly known as *Tharuhat* – a flat stretch of about 45 square kilometers. There are over 25 Tharu-dominated villages in *Tharuhat*. In 2003 they were assigned the status of Scheduled Tribes by Government of India, after persistent demands from the community. Due to isolation and marginalization they continued to be identified as backward castes and were unable to benefit from programs directed at Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; they lost out again in the political decentralization that took place with the implementation of panchayati raj, when special provisions were made for the political representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Also the *Tharus*, who were politically marginalized and largely illiterate, were unable to compete with more powerful, better organized and more numerous Backward Class groups for the benefits that were available to the Backward Classes. The *Tharu* began an organized effort to change. In 2003 they were assigned the status of Scheduled tribes by Government of India. As happened in Nepal, the poverty of their communities and the exploitation and marginalization to which they are subject, have attracted many *Tharus* in Bihar to the ranks of Maoists in India. Bringing the community back to the mainstream by weaning them away from extremist activities and focusing on all-round development of the community remain as challenges to the district administration. After the partition of Bihar, Tribals here are no longer considered politically strong and are not seen as an important group as there is no unity among different groups of tribals. DM, Bettiah stated that the Tharuhat Vikas Yojana is being implemented in the district.

Muzaffarpur district

134 cases were registered under the Provisions of the Prevention of Atrocities against Scheduled Castes in ~~Muzaffarpur~~ district in 2011; charge sheets were files in 10 cases; final reports submitted in 345 cases; only 8 cases were sentenced. In 2012, 153 cases were filed. Out of all outstanding cases 170 cases charge sheets were filed; final reports submitted in 15 cases: None were sentenced. In 2013, 313 cases were registered. Only in 17 cases charge sheets were filed; in 18 cases final reports were submitted. In no case sentences were secured.

West Champaran District

Tharus are one of the most numerous ethnic groups in the terai region of Indo-Nepal border.

Scheduled Caste (SC) population is 15 per cent in the district, which is slightly less than the State figure of 16.4 per cent. A total of 449 cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Castes were registered in the last 3 years. Investigation has been completed in 322 cases and 127 cases are pending in various stages of investigation. The SSP stated that a separate police station is functional for crimes against SC/ST. Proposals for compensation to victims, as provided for under the act, are also sent to the competent authority for sanction.

No information is available from Motihari district.

Extremist activities

It is observed by experts that the growing linkage of the Naxalites in Bihar with Maoist insurgents in Nepal has been responsible, in many ways, for unification of Maoist parties and resultant expansion of their activities in Bihar. As per data provided by www.satp.org 254 civilians, 169 personnel of the State force and 168 terrorists totaling 631 were killed in the state in the last three years (table below)

Table: **Fatalities in Left-wing violence in Bihar**

Year	Civilians	State force	Terrorists	Total
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2012	16	10	15	41
2013	21	25	2	48
2014	4	0	2	6
Total	294	169	168	631
2004-14				

(Source: - www.satp.org)

According to the website, there has, so far, not been a single Maoist fatality in the State in 2013. Civilian and SF casualties in 2013 have also exceeded last year's casualty figures. On the other hand, arrests of and surrenders by Maoists have also gone down considerably. In 2012, 203 Maoists were arrested and 75 surrendered; in 2013, 76 Maoists have been arrested and just two have surrendered

MUZAFFARPUR: Media reports show that extremists are still active in the area. It was reported that suspected Maoists, numbering around 30, set afire two road building machines, one milling plant, a Bolero jeep and two motorcycles belonging to a road building company near the Siho railway station under the Maniyari police station area in Muzaffarpur district on Feb 9, 2014. Non-payment of extortion money is cited as one of the reasons behind the Maoist attack.

It was stated by SSP, Motihari that naxalites are active in the district. Four blocks of the district namely Madhu, Patahi, phenhare and Pakridayal are affected by extremism. Grievence redressal camps are being organized as well as follow-up education of the public are taken. Border area development program is being implemented in the district. Monthly camps are organized for providing medical aid to children. Focus is also on skill development. Infrastructure

development program is also taken up. Block level computerized system is introduced.

Bettiah

The district is a declared SRE (Security Related Expenditure) district under the MHA norms and has seen naxal activity in the past. It was stated by the SSP Bettiah that in the last 3 years no significant overt naxal activity has been seen. No case has been reported in 2011, 2012 or 2013. However, the district police are vigilant as there are attempts to lure people into extremism. One case was registered last year under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Bihar government approved a new surrender and rehabilitation policy for Maoists, including payment of Rs 2.5 lakh to top leaders who (Security Related Expenditure) renounced arms. Rs 2.5 lakh would be given for state, regional, central committees and polit bureau members of Maoists who surrender under the new policy.

NDPS

63 cases under NDPS ACT have been reported in Bettiah district; 97 cases in 2012 and 183 cases in 2013.

Encounter deaths

It was confirmed by the SSPs of the three districts that no encounter death has been reported in recent times in the districts.

Complaints against the police

In Motihari district 3 cases have been filed against police officials. SSP Bettiah stated that on the average 3-4 complaints are received against the police and are promptly disposed of.

Grievances of the police personnel

It was stated by SSPs Motihari Bettiah that Police Sabhas are regularly held to consider grievances of the police personnel in the district. DM hears the complaints.

(16)

Right to health

The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) launched on 12th April 2005 with the objective of providing accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to the rural population has a comprehensive approach to the delivery of health care that encompasses individual health care, public health, sanitation, clean drinking water, access to food, and knowledge of hygiene, and nutrition. A comparison of health indicators at the national, state and district level reveals the extent of Improvement in the standard of living and health status of the population by its implementation.

Nation/ state/di strict	IMR	MMR /live births	TFR
Source of data	SRS-2011	NHP 2011	NHP 2010
Nation al	47/1000	212/100000	2.5
State	55 (AHS-2010-11)	306 (AHS 2010-11)	3.7 (AHS20 10-11)
Muzaff arpur 44 (60- AHS)		254 (319 AHS 2010- 11)	3.2 (3.2 AHS)

Motihari	56 (57 AHS)	356 (319 AHS)	3.8 (3.2 AHS)
West Champaran	32 (57 AHS)	231 (319-AHS)	3.96 (3.2AHS)

The health indicators for Muzaffarpur district reported by the Civil Surgeon are IMR 44; MMR 254 and TFR 3.2, but were 60, 319 and 3.2 respectively as per the Annual Health Survey 2010-11. As far as Motihari district is concerned, the Civil Surgeon reported the figures as 56, 356, and 3.8 as IMR, MMR and TFR. The AHS (2010-11) reported the indicators as 57, 356 and 3.8 respectively. In West Champaran too there was variation in the figures-IMR 32 (AHS: 57); MMR 231 (319 AHS) and TFR 3.96 (3.2 AHS). It appeared that the AHS figures quoted are the averages for the Division as a whole; not district specific. Compared to the national/state level indicators all the three indicators reported are mostly high. TFR and MMR are to be brought down drastically to attain the MDG goals by 2015.

To understand the field situation I visited PHC **Kanti** in Muzaffarpur district. This is the only PHC in the whole area between Muzaffarpur and Chakkia in Motihari district. The PHC is a 24x7 referral unit. Five doctors, including a CMO, are posted here. I was glad to find a Gynecologist working in the PHC. However, no regular Radiologist is posted here.

The average OPD attendance of patients in the PHC was reported as 300/day. The CMO mentioned that 77,000 patients have already visited the PHC since Jan 2013 up till now. Immunization is at 75% although it was 85% earlier. JE vaccination reported is at 94.5%.

It was stated that there is no outbreak of epidemics in the area. Not many cases of Malaria have been reported as this is not an endemic

area. However, 5 cases of Kalazar have been reported. 10 cases of TB are on the average reported per month. Although earlier tests used to be conducted for detection of chronic diseases, presently that are not being carried out.

4 HIV positive cases have been reported. They have been referred to the SK Medical College, Muzaffarpur which has an ART Centre. Out of 4 HIV affected are a 12 year boy and 5 month old baby. *No survey for identification of HIV positive cases in the area has been carried out.*

On the average 300 deliveries per month take place in the PHC. No maternal death has been reported in recent times. Institutional delivery is 80%. There is a provision for a charge- free ambulance for transporting pregnant women to hospitals for delivery. *It is learned that it is presently out of order. Another one with number 1099 is also not operational due to a strike by the operators on account of non-payment of dues.* The Trauma Centre attached to the PHC reported no accident cases.

It was stated that health camps are being organized in the PHC. The Chief Medical Officer confirmed that with the funds received from Government of India in the *Rogi Kalyan Samiti* , a waiting hall for patients and trolleys/stretchers for use in the PHC have been purchased.

In **Motihari** district I visited the PHC Integrated Referral Hospital at Dhaka. Apart from one CMO 4 regular and 4 contractual doctors have been engaged under NRHM. *However, neither a Gynecologist nor a Radiologist has been posted here.*

OPD attendance is 300-350 per day. Immunization reported is at 83%. No epidemic is presently reported in the area. It was stated that the incidence of Malaria is almost nil. On the average 17 cases of TB are detected. Between the period from April to December in 2013, 31 cases of HIV positive cases have been detected; out of these cases 11 are of women. Indoor hospital facilities are available; but not utilized properly. Institutional delivery is reported to be 67%. 8-10 deliveries

(300 per month) are being conducted daily. No maternal death is reported. 600 sub centres need buildings.

Bettiah

According to the Civil Surgeon, Bettiah the district has 18 PHCs, 32 APHCs, 2 Referral Hospitals, 1 District Hospital and 412 Health Sub-Centers. I visited PHC, Manjholia in the district. Apart from the CMO, a lady doctor, one Dentist and a Surgeon have been posted on regular basis; however, no Gynecologist, Radiologist or Anesthetist has been posted. One Anesthetist however is available on call. I was told that in the entire district no Gynecologist is available. Two doctors are on contractual basis. 35 Sub-centers have ANMs. Besides, 8 nurses are also posted. All ASHAs are also in position. AYUSH facilities are available.

It was reported that the daily OPD attendance is around 245. Indoor facilities are available. There is no epidemic in the district at present. It was stated that Malaria is not prevalent in the district.

Institutional delivery is stated to be 70% in the area. No maternal death has been reported so far. TFR is very high in the area. It was stated that family welfare camps are being organized. A New Born Care Unit is functional. According to DM Bettiah the Routine Immunisation (RI) in the district was only 64-65% last year, which has improved to 70-72 % this year. Among the chronic diseases 7 Leprosy cases have been reported. 4-5 TB patients visit the PHC daily. RNTPC program is being run in the PHC. 2 technicians have been posted for this purpose. Rogi Kalyan Samity is functional. All though cleaning is outsourced, the toilets were not clean or hygienic.

From the visits made to the health facilities in the three districts it is seen that

- * While the out- patient departments are functioning well, the conditions of indoor facilities are lamentable. In the indoor hospitals generally no patients have been admitted.



- ✕ One achievement of the NRHM has been that **at least** some medical officers have been posted. However, supporting staff is not available.
- ✕ Patients with diseases like malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS need comprehensive care.
- ✕ Identification and treatment of chronic diseases have been virtually left out.
- ✕ AYUSH Systems have not been mainstreamed as envisaged under the NRHM. Yoga should be an integral part of treatment of chronic diseases. A fixed day for consultation on Diabetes needs to be fixed.
- ✕ Huge efforts are needed to improve the health indicators. Maternal Mortality is at unacceptable levels. Maternal and neo-natal care need to be more comprehensive. Deliveries are conducted in a routine manner.
- ✕ Family welfare activities need to be up-scaled. The improvement needs to be in the quality of the program as well.
- ✕ Patient Welfare Committees need to be activated. All equipment and facilities should be kept in order.
- ✕ Hygiene in the facilities needs to be scrupulously maintained. Toilets for the patients and the public should be segregated.

Benefits of NRHM even after 8 years after its implementation can at best be described as partial only.

Right to Education

Average literacy rate of Muzaffarpur in 2011 stood at 63.43% with male and female literacy at 71.28% and 54.67% respectively.

East Champaran has a literacy rate of 68.02%, with male literacy at 58.26% and female literacy at 47.36%. School attendance was mentioned as 76-78%

Average literacy rate of West Champaran in 2011 was 55.70%; male and female literacy were 65.59% and 44.69% respectively.

These data indicate that the three districts ~~have to~~ go a long way in attaining 100% literacy. The state government has taken up girls' education on a priority basis. However, the quality of education is very poor in the schools I visited.

I visited the Adarsh Government Middle school in Haridaspur, Kanti in Muzaffarpur district. Serukahi High School is located in the same campus. The middle school has classes from 1-8. It has a total strength of 552 students. Only 315 students were present at the time of my visit. Out of 8 teachers only four were present at the time of my visit.

In Motihari district I visited the Government Upgraded Middle School with a total strength of 354 students (170 girl students). The school runs 1-8 classes. Out of 6 teachers only two were present. The Headmaster himself was absent. In the absence of teachers the students were without any work to do. Some of the villagers complained about the poor quality of education in the school. Since the schools were closed on account of severe cold, I could not visit any school in Bettiah.

Muzaffarpur is the second leading centre of education in Bihar after Patna. It has a medical and an engineering college and is seat of one of the oldest universities of Bihar (Bihar University, now known as B. R. Ambedkar Bihar University. Motihari and Bettiah also gave many educational institutions at college level. However, without ensuring quality of education at the basic levels, the quality of students who pass out of these institutions is indeed very poor. The state government has endeavored to provide good infrastructure to schools which is indeed very welcome. But the complementary action in providing good quality teachers leaves much to be desired. Teacher absenteeism due to many reasons (including deputation for other items of work like Census) is plaguing education

at the basic levels. More number of institutions for providing skill-training, instead of college education is very much needed in Bihar.

Bonded Labour

The DMs of Muzaffarpur, Motihari and Bettiah district confirmed that no case of bonded labour has been reported in their districts in recent times.

Manual scavenging

The DMs of the three districts confirmed that no case of Manual scavenging is identified in their districts.

Rural Development Table: District wise Indices for Poverty Criteria

District	Muzaffarpur	Motihari	W Champaran
% of Rural Population below poverty line	33.5 (24)	38.9(9)	35.2 (22)
% of Rural house-holds with no	45.8(32)	41.8 (34)	46.1 (28)

consumer durables			
Percentage of rural households living in one room	47.9 (13)	33.1(25)	35.8 (23)
Work participation rate for females	6.7 (33)	7.8(30)	14.0 (11)
Rank with respect to combined Poverty index	28	31	24

Districtwise Indices for Vulnerability

Vulnerability Criteria

	Division / District			
	Muzaffarpur Bihar	Motihari	Bettiah	
Percentage of rural workers engaged as	34.1(16)	41.7(8)	42.9(7)	34.3

24

agricultural labourers				
Percentage of SC/ST among rural population	16.6(20)	13.6(33)	16.6(22)	17.4
Percentage of Muslims in among rural population	14.41(13)	17.84(9)	20.11(6)	14.39
Rank with respect to combined Vulnerability Index	20.3	13.2	7.1	

(Source: -A jeevika.govt.in poverty and social assessment a district-wise study)

Note: (i) Data on Muslim Population for Rural Areas relate the year 1991.

(ii) Group-1- Much above average, 2- Above average 3- Average 4 – Below average, 5- Much below average Rural poverty 33.8% (2009-10 urban 20.9% total 29.8 NHP-2011)

In Muzaffarpur district I visited Sheru Kanhai panchayat, with Scheduled Caste population. Sudarshan Misra is the *Mukhya* of the panchayat since 2001. Out of 15 members in the panchayat, 7 members are women. One of the Panchayat Samiti members is also a woman.

The Panchayat has a population of 8896 with 4649 male and 4247 females. The SC/ST population is 1503, with 773 male and 750 females. BPL constitutes 1102, of which 306 have been identified under the Antyodaya scheme.

The Panchayat has received Rs.2.42 lakh under the Border Road Grant Fund (BRGF) from Government of India; Rs.6.10 lakhs under the 4th Finance Commission Award and Rs.6.25 lakhs for construction of an Anganwadi building. BPL families are provided 35 kg of Rice and wheat per month. There are altogether 15 ration shops for distribution of food grains. The villagers were by and large were satisfied with the public distribution system. It was mentioned that there is no incidence of bonded labour in the Panchayat. But it was admitted that child labour is common. The Panchayat members denied that there is any case of trafficking of women and children from the village. It was stated that the Village Self Help Groups are involved in various activities benefitting women. Rs 5000/- is paid at the time of marriage of a girl child from BPL families.

I also visited a road scheme of 1km length taken up under MNREGA at a cost of Rs.1, 34 lakhs which generated 150 man-days. The laborers stated that they were paid Rs.168/day. Under BRGF a 500 ft road was taken up at a cost of Rs.4, 98 lakhs in village Bariachi Sooti, a Mahadalit tola of 500 families. Indira Awas has been provided to a few families. Cost of the scheme appeared to be somewhat high. A *Vikas Mitra* is engaged in the village to assist the villagers; however, he was away for some work at the time of my visit. Some of the villagers complained about their being left out of social security pension. Others wanted houses under the Indira Awas Yojana.

Targeting and upliftment of the really poor people, especially the dalits, by the district administration needs to be appreciated.

However, development schemes are implemented in a piece meal fashion and gave the appearance of being imposed from above. The employment generation through these schemes is limited as the villagers have to take up odd jobs barring a few days in which employment is provided by the state. Gandhi's vision of all-round development of villages, including their educational and spiritual needs, still evade the development programs.

In Motihari out of 450 panchayats only 160 have buildings. In the district I visited the Mahadalit village of Rai Singha. There were altogether 80-90 houses of Mahadalits. Only two Indira Awas were sanctioned in the village. The estimate of Indira Awas has been raised to Rs.70, 000/- from Rs.45, 000/- by providing additionally for a toilet. 10-15 families are still homeless. The villagers wanted more number of houses to be sanctioned. They also wanted the left out families also to be provided with social security pension. Children were roaming around the village without going to school. I saw a road scheme taken up in Patterva village of Amar Chatoni Panchayat taken up at a cost of Rs.3, 83 lakhs. It was stated that 112 Mandays were generated under the scheme.

I met Nibha Priyadarshini, Ward Member of Jhauwaram Panchayat. She was accompanied by members of her husband's family who tried to prompt replies from her. There are 6 villages in the Panchayat. Those who belong to BPL category number 2716. More number of people wanted to be included under the BPL category.

She confirmed that there are no bonded laborers in the Panchayat and there were no instances of human trafficking. I pointed to her that health and sanitation need to be attended to in the area. The adjoining Sub-centre was found closed at the time of my visit. It was stated that JE vaccination was going on in the Panchayat.

In Bettiah I visited Vaidyanathpur nahar on both sides of which 3000 saplings have been planted in 2011-12. The cost of plantation was mentioned as Rs.8,36 lakhs. A *Van Poshak* is engaged to look after the plants at a payment of Rs.162/day under MNREGA. The yield from these trees when mature will be the property of the Panchayat. Out of five units 54,000 Mandays were generated. It was observed that the plants, mostly fruit plants, are surviving. 128 units of plantation have been taken up and one crore plants have been planted in the district. Under BRGF the Panchayat has taken up an 800ft road scheme. With the awards under the 13th Finance Commission four Anganwadi buildings have been constructed. *The roadside plantation model which has been implemented in these districts wherein old, handicapped, widow and women job card holders were employed under MNREGA is indeed one which could be emulated by other districts (Planning Commission of India - quote)*

In Bettiah I visited Belwa Tola, again a concentration of Mahadalits. 40 families, with members numbering 250 are residing here. 1/3 are children. Most of the women in reproductive age had 3-4 children. Almost 100% of the families belong to the BPL category. There is no skill up-gradation program taken up for the youth. But for employment in government sponsored schemes for short periods they were mostly jobless. The villagers stated that they are mostly landless too. They had difficulty with drinking water. They had received ration only up to August, 2013 only.

ICDS

I visited an Anganwadi in Passi tola in **Muzaffarpur** district. It had no building and was housed in a make-shift building with small children huddled together on the dirty floor. Both the Anganwadi Sevika and Helper were present. *I was told that 100 Anganwadis in the district have no buildings.* It was stated that 40 children attend the Anganwadi. The children were being given *halwa*. It was seen that that the *halwa* cooked was of poor quality, without the right quantity of sugar or any *ghee*. The children were finding it difficult to eat it. Pregnant women are given dry ration. Immunization was reported to

be around 80%. The Anganwadi center needs to be shifted to a secure and hygienic location and the quality of food improved.

I visited the Anganwadi Center at Rai Singha in **Motihari** district. Both Sevika and Helper were present. 42 children, mostly dalit, attend the program. The building was constructed by the local Panchayat. The villagers who assembled there *complained that the pregnant women in the village were not getting their ration from the Anganwadi*. The women folk also complained that *all eligible children are not covered*. On inquiry the Sevika was not able to state the status of immunization coverage of children. ASHA was not present during my visit.

In Bettiah I visited the Anganwadi at Basant Tola. 40 children were present at the time of my visit. The Anganwadi is run in a rented building. *There was no kitchen attached to the building. The food for children was being cooked in the open, adjoining an open drain*. The district administration ought to locate the center in a better area or alternately a kitchen needs to be set up within the same premises, away from the drain. *Kichdi* with Soya bean was being cooked which was nutritious. It was seen that the children are being taught basic skills. Immunization coverage was reported to be at 80%.

I was told that the state government is constructing buildings for Anganwadis in a phased manner, with funds available under programs like MNREGA, the State Finance Commissions etc. However, till such time buildings are constructed, it needs to be ensured that they are housed in secure and hygienic places. The quality of food being provided to children has to be ensured at all costs. Accountability of officials needs to be fixed in monitoring ICDS. As suggested in my earlier reports the present practice of distribution of dry ration to pregnant women needs to be reviewed, as women come to the centre only to collect their dry ration and not for fully participating in the program leading to improvements in their health seeking behavior. Timely payments to the Sevika and Helper also have to be ensured.

General

Like other parts of Bihar the three districts of Muzaffarpur, Motihari and Bettiah are also in a state of transition from a state of poverty, backwardness and crime into development and modernity. Although the economy of the districts is still agriculture-based, industrialization has helped usher in prosperity to at least some sections of people. Once notorious for crimes, through appropriate interventions, the situation has been brought under control in recent times. Having stated those positive developments it may be pointed out that these districts continue to be poor with 30-38 % of the population below the poverty line. High incidence of crime has now been replaced by sporadic incidence of Maoist violence. In fact the changes brought about towards modernization remain fragile; that ~~it~~ could any time revert to the earlier position, if care is not taken.

Quality education still remains a distant dream for the poor with high drops due to non/under functioning government schools. Private investments in education mostly cater to the interests of those who can afford it. Likewise while attendance in OPD in Government health facilities has improved many folds, indoor facilities are poorly maintained. People have to therefore depend on private hospitals for indoor care at considerable out of pocket expenditure. Health indicators remain much below the mark. The districts cannot make much economic progress without stabilizing their population. Special focus on *Mahadalits* is a welcome intervention on the part of the state government worth emulation by other similarly placed states. However, this approach needs to be holistic, free from bureaucratic tangles.

The state has been concentrating on improving the status of socio-economic rights of its people. However, much needs to be done in

30.

improving the status of Civil and Political rights of the people, especially the vulnerable sections. It is already brought to the notice of the Commission that the condition of the jails in these districts leaves much to be desired. Although much has been done in these districts, much needs to be done.