



Did you know that...

We all need to help people who are not able to get adequate food on their own. Authorities can be held responsible by citizens for what they do or do not do to ensure the right to food for all of their people.

Some facts about my country

With more than one billion people, India is the second most populated country in the world. In the last century, a "green revolution" helped India recover from a great famine and changed it into a leading nation in the fields of agriculture and technology.

Yet, 850 million Indian people live on less than two US dollars a day.

One out of five Indians, over 220 million people, are hungry. Malnutrition affects nearly half of the children under five years old.

Rural poverty is widespread: three out of four rural families lack tap water and toilet facilities and half of all rural women are unable to read and write.

The Constitution of India recognizes the right to life and establishes the duty of government to raise the level of nutrition of its people.

In 2001 India experienced "hunger amidst plenty". People were going hungry while about fifty million tonnes of grain were stored in public granaries across the country. The Supreme Court of India responded to this by directing state governments to provide every child who goes to government primary school with a nutritious, cooked meal.



Read my story to find out...

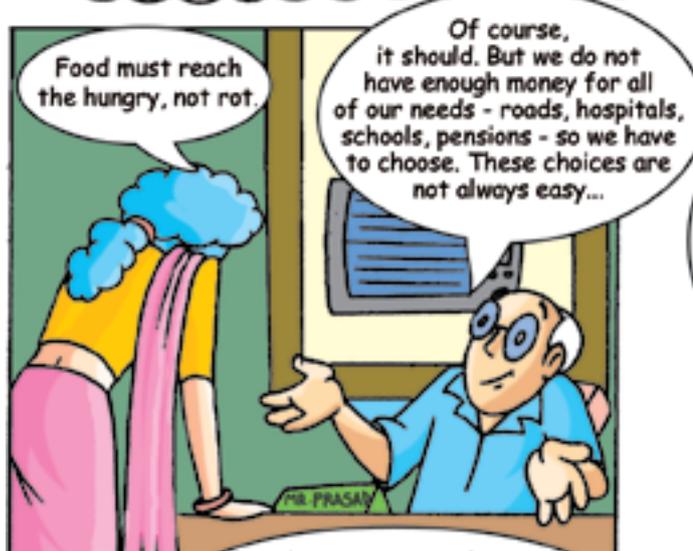
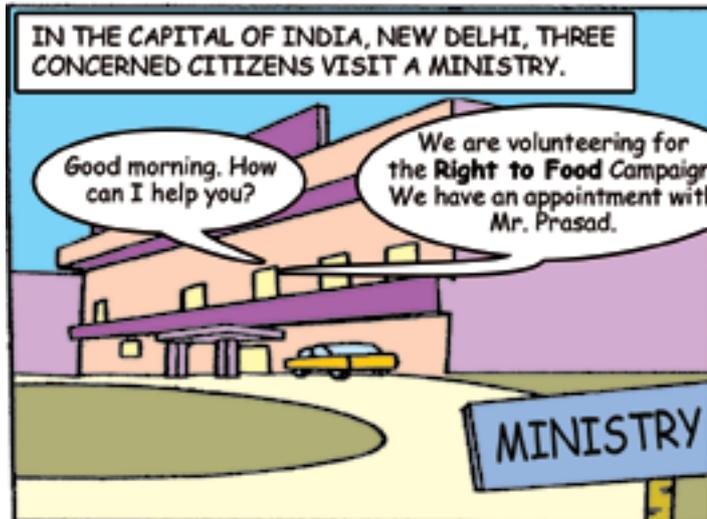


How we made our voices heard when we needed food.

What governments can do to help people who need food but are too poor to buy or grow it themselves.

How school lunches help us to be healthier and study better.

In the Name of the Law



right to food: the right of every man, woman and child to always have enough food for a healthy and active life

debt: money owed to another person or organisation

ration shop: a shop sponsored by the government where poor people can buy goods at a low price

In the Name of the Law

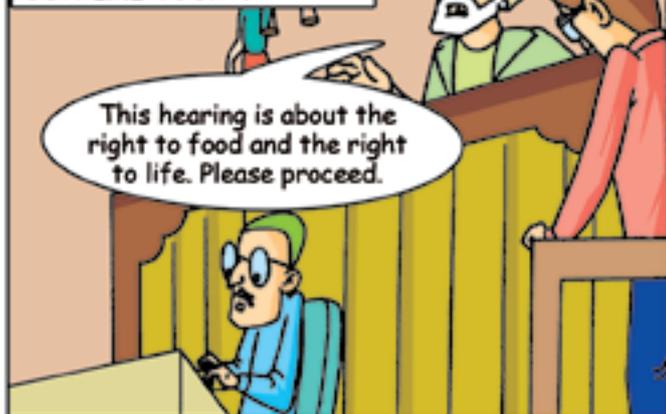
THE GROUP TAKES A BUS FROM THE CAPITAL TO THEIR HOME TOWN. AS THEY CROSS THE STATE THEY SEE POOR AND HUNGRY PEOPLE BEGGING FOR FOOD.



It is unacceptable that our people continue to go hungry! We must stop talking and take action. Let's go to the highest authorities.



MONTHS LATER AND AFTER MANY LEGAL STEPS... A HEARING BEGINS IN THE SUPREME COURT.



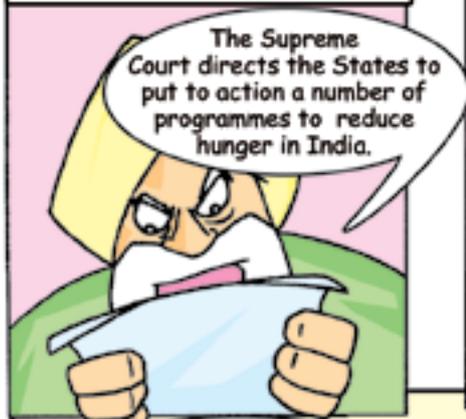
fundamental right: a basic right which everyone should have

namaste: a greeting in India

Supreme Court: the highest court of justice in a country

access to food: always being able to buy or grow enough food

SOME TIME LATER THE JUDGE READS OUT THE ORDER.



The Supreme Court directs the States to put to action a number of programmes to reduce hunger in India.

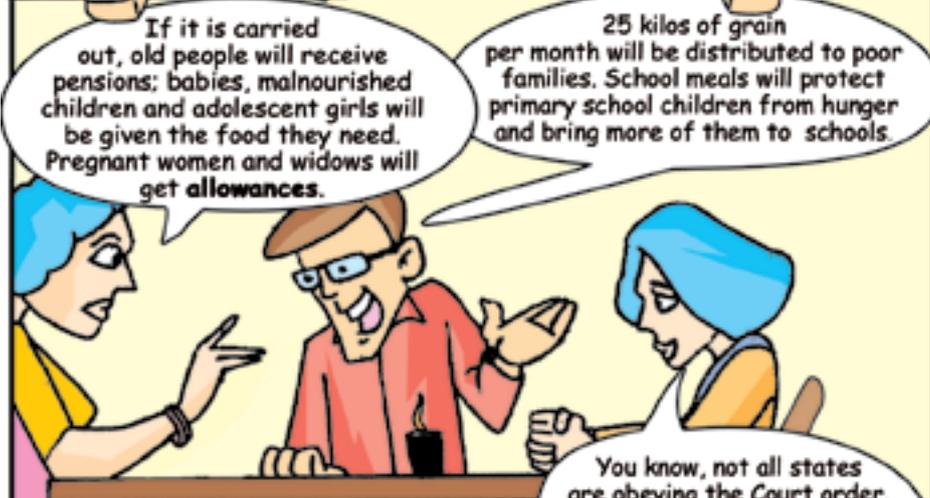


To start with, the States are to provide every child attending primary school with a cooked meal each school day for a minimum of 200 days a year...



WOW! The decision of the Supreme Court is very important.

SOME TIME LATER...



If it is carried out, old people will receive pensions: babies, malnourished children and adolescent girls will be given the food they need. Pregnant women and widows will get allowances.

25 kilos of grain per month will be distributed to poor families. School meals will protect primary school children from hunger and bring more of them to schools.

You know, not all states are obeying the Court order. Those states that are not serving school meals should answer for this violation of the law.



We should not rest until there is no more hunger in our country. Let us announce the National Day of Action!



FOOD FOR CHILDREN

RIGHT TO FOOD IS FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

A MONTH LATER...



MIDDAY MEAL

Please sign the demand for school meals!

SIGN HERE TO SUPPORT

allowance: a sum of money given to a person regularly

In the Name of the Law

IN A VILLAGE IN THE SOUTH OF INDIA A FAMILY IS HAVING A SIMPLE DINNER. THEY ARE POOR AND CAN ONLY AFFORD ONE MEAL A DAY.



Yummy!

Your mum is a good cook and she uses all the tasty spices.



Our food is also good for our health, Gayatri. Rice gives us energy, vegetables provide necessary vitamins and many spices are medicinal.



How was school today?

Fun! We planted some vegetables in the school garden. Our teacher says this is a good way for us to learn about foods and help feed ourselves.

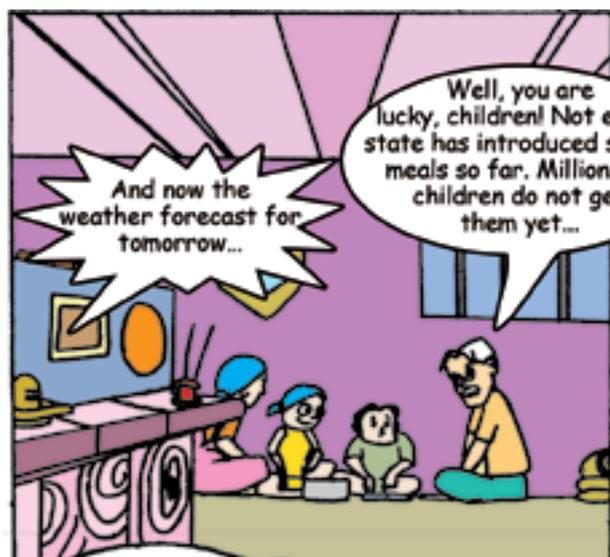
...And now news about the Supreme Court's decision on the right to food.



Wait, please, Kaushik. Let's listen to this news.

vitamin: substance found in small quantities in food and essential for the health and normal working of the body

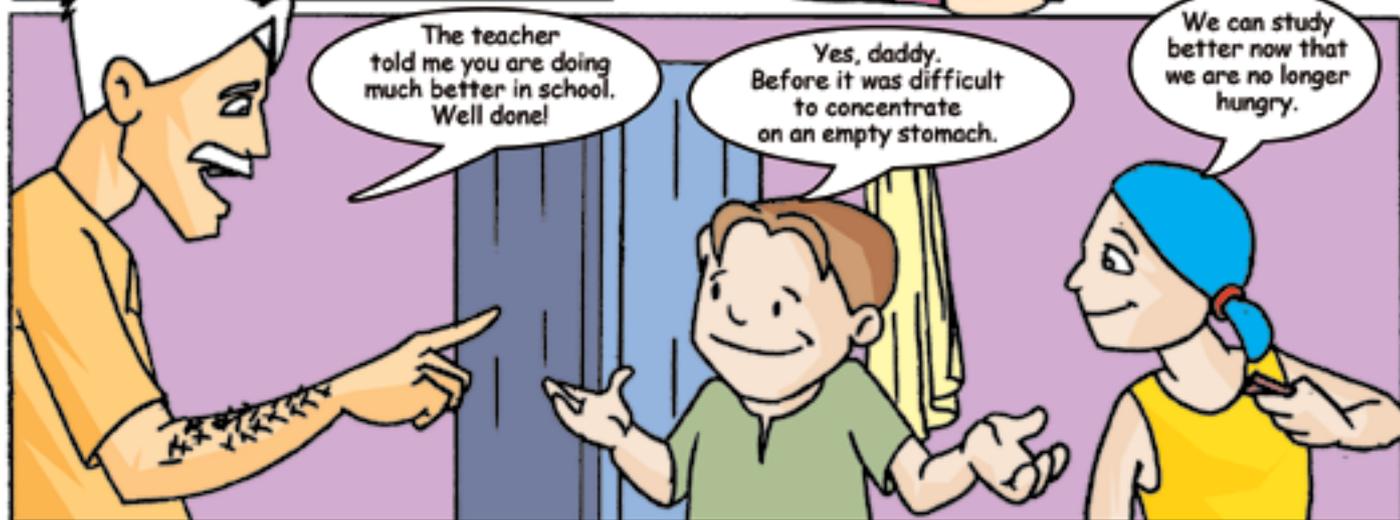
medicinal: a food or substance which can be used as medicine



Well, you are lucky, children! Not every state has introduced school meals so far. Millions of children do not get them yet...



Fortunately, ours has. I feel calmer, knowing that the school takes care of both education and meals. And it is easier to send the kids off to school in the morning.



The teacher told me you are doing much better in school. Well done!

Yes, daddy. Before it was difficult to concentrate on an empty stomach.

We can study better now that we are no longer hungry.



Two new girls came to our class! And you know what?! They said their parents can send them to school now that meals are being provided.



Still, I do not think it is right that the food is cooked by a Dalit.



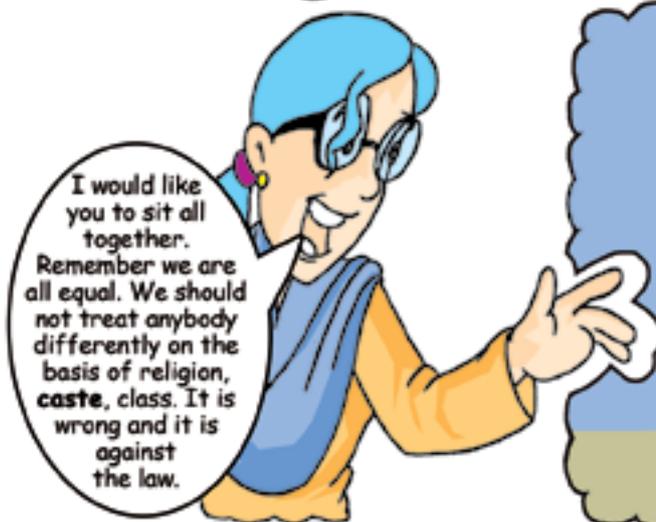
What is wrong with that? Times are changing, no one is considered unclean any more. Discrimination is no longer happening in India.

Ah, no? And don't women eat after everyone else any more?

dalit: the name for the lowest caste of people in India

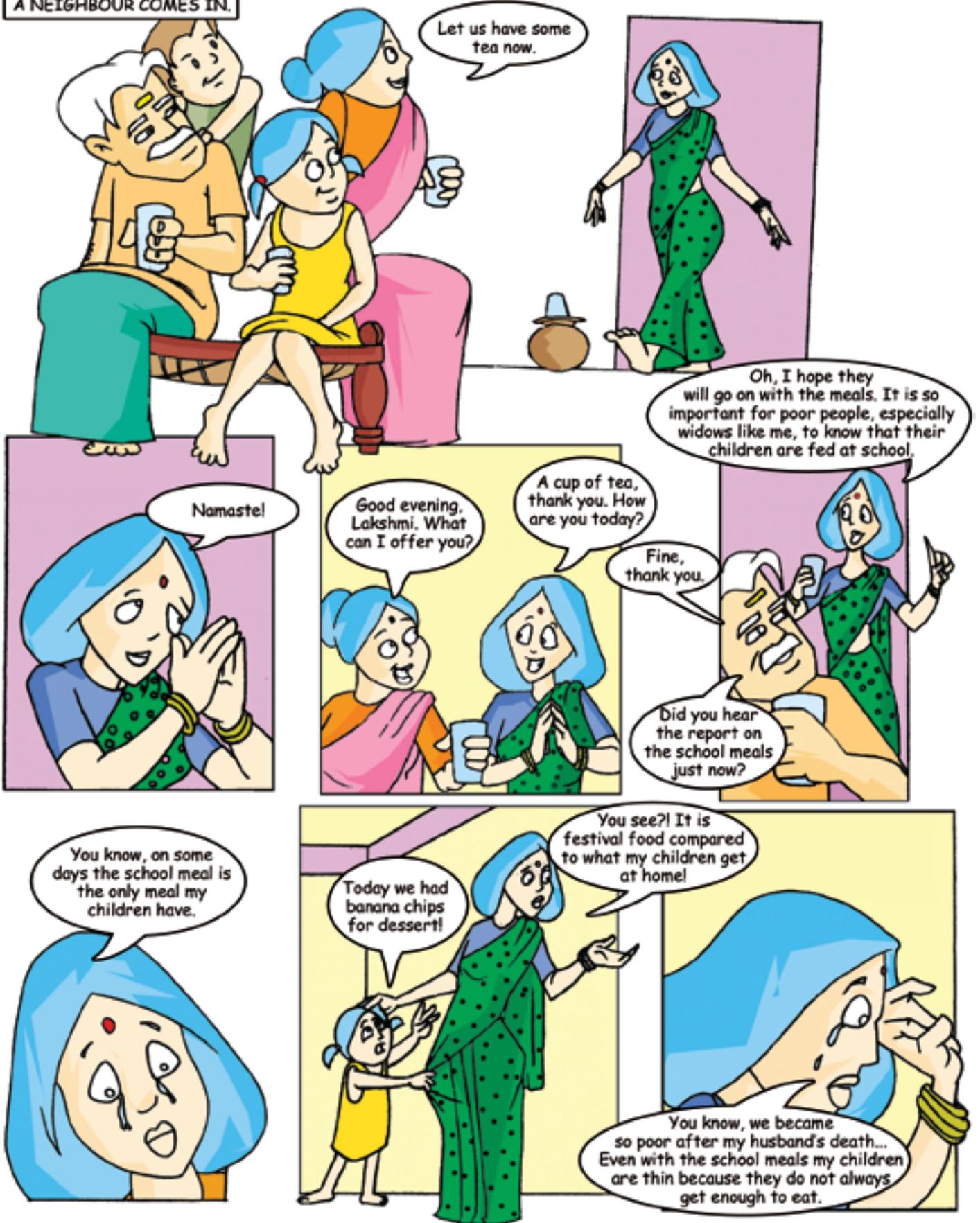
discrimination: when people are treated unfairly because of their race, religion, colour, sex or origin

In the Name of the Law

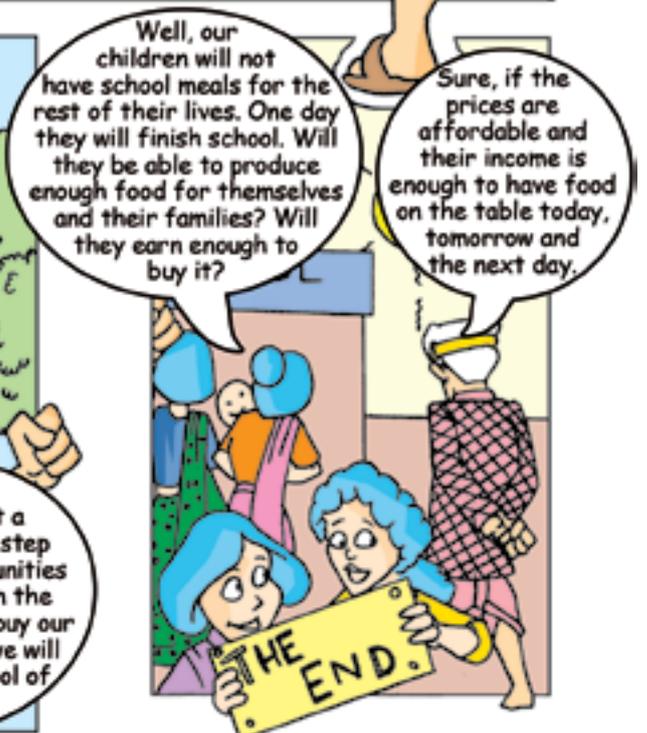


caste: a social class in India

A NEIGHBOUR COMES IN.



In the Name of the Law



So, what do YOU think?



Have you thought about...

why Gayatri and Kaushik study better now that they get a meal at school?

what governments can do to help hungry people?

what the courts, the public and the press can do to ensure everyone's right to food?

Is it fair that...

hungry people have to beg for food?

many children have to go to school hungry?

people are treated differently because of their race, religion, sex, origin or income?



Everyone can do something

Choose a problem in your community that you find unacceptable and do something to change it.