



Starvation and India's Democracy (Routledge Advances in South Asian Studies)

Dan Banik

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This book analyzes India's impressive efforts in responding to sensational and easily visible disasters in contrast to the 'silent emergency' of drought-induced under nutrition and starvation deaths. Building on Amartya Sen's famous claim that no famine has ever occurred in a democratic country, it re-examines the relationship between democracy, public action and famine prevention. Drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data in India at national, state and local levels as well as in-depth field visits to two states on India's east coast, Orissa and West Bengal, the author analyzes the following issues:

- the interaction between specific institutions in India and their accountability to the public
- the role of the media in highlighting problems of extreme poverty and destitution and the effectiveness of political and administrative responses to such reports
- the extent to which tribal groups are vulnerable to starvation and famine, and an analysis of whether starvation deaths in drought-prone Kalahandi district in Orissa are unique in India
- the impact of two major nutrition programmes, the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), in reducing the incidence, duration and impact of starvation deaths.

Starvation and India's Democracy will be of interest to researchers in economics, political science, philosophy, development studies and South Asian studies.

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