PREFACE

India is the second most populous country in the world, contributing to 17.5% of the world’s total population. However, 25.7% rural people and 13.7% urban people of the country live below the poverty line.

In our country, a large section of the population subsists on an inadequate as well as poor quality intake of cereal-based diet, mostly devoid of animal foods and fruits, having a dietary inadequacy of vegetables and fatty foods. Such a diet is usually deficient in energy, protein, fat, iron, calcium, magnesium, zinc, potassium and vitamins but high in sodium content. In this scenario, various forms of malnutrition are widespread, both in rural and urban areas of our country. Women and children are the worst sufferers of malnutrition.

It is not possible for them to incorporate any high-cost food in their diet on a regular basis due to low purchasing capacity. There are many health drinks available in the market but all are high-cost foods which are out of reach of the poor. For the betterment of the poorer section of the community, it is an urgent need to develop a low-cost, nutritious, supplementary food by using locally available foodstuffs and to distribute it among the “at risk” groups.

There are several types of cheap, highly nutritious, less familiar seasonal, vegetables which are abundantly available but are wasted every day due to ignorance of the common people. These neglected foodstuffs can provide a substantial amount of bio-available nutrients if they are properly processed and utilised.

Cauliflower leaves and pumpkin seeds are considered as agro-industrial wastes and discarded, which can be collected free-of-cost. The egg shell is another common kitchen waste which can easily be procured. Previous studies showed that these three unconventional foods are highly nutritious foodstuffs. The current research work is an effort to utilise the nutritional potentials of these three zero-cost, neglected foodstuffs to prepare a low-cost supplementary food.