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A food-sufficient India needs to be hunger-free too

(The Hindu, 16-10-24)

Context: Ending hunger, food insecurity and any form of malnutrition is one of the Sustainable Development Goals set to be realised by 2030.

What is the current global situation regarding hunger and food insecurity?

- 757 million people (9.4% of global population) are undernourished as of 2023
- Africa has the highest proportion (20.4%) of undernourished people
- Asia has the largest number (384.5 million) of hungry people
- By 2030, half of the world's hungry are projected to be in Africa

What are the key factors contributing to food insecurity and malnutrition?

- Lack of access to and unaffordability of healthy diets
- Rising cost of healthy diets (CoHD), averaging 3.96 PPP dollars per person per day in 2022
- Unhealthy food intake patterns, even among higher-income groups
- Limited purchasing power prevents access to nutritious food
- Income disparities lead to uneven food distribution within societies
- Extreme weather events disrupt agriculture and food production Ex: Soil degradation and water scarcity reduce crop yields
- Poor storage and transportation facilities lead to food waste
- Limited access to modern farming techniques reduces productivity
- Rapid population increase strains food production capacities
- Global food system inefficiencies i.e. Food waste in developed countries contrasts with shortages elsewhere

What is the situation of food security and nutrition in India?

- 63.3% (527.4 million) of rural Indians in 2011 couldn't afford a required diet even with 100% income spent on food
- Diets are generally unhealthy and imbalanced compared to EAT-Lancet or ICMR recommendations
- 3.2% of the population doesn't consume a minimum of 60 meals a month
- 2.5% of the population falls short of having two square meals a day

What can be the solution to address hunger and food insecurity?

- Precision agriculture and vertical farming to increase local food production & reduce transportation costs.
- Setting up food banks to avoid food waste and ensure food distribution
- Establish community gardens and food cooperatives
- Alternative protein sources and food innovation Ex: cultured meat alternatives
- Personalized nutrition through technology Ex: AI-powered apps for individualized dietary recommendations
- Improve traceability and reduce food wastage through Blockchain-based food supply chains.

Can you answer the following question?

Examine the challenges in achieving zero hunger and food security in India and globally. Suggest innovative strategies to ensure universal access to affordable, healthy diets.

Nobel Peace Prize 2024

(The Hindu - 16-10-24)

Context: The Nobel Peace Prize for 2024 was awarded to **Nihon Hidankyo**, a Japanese organization of atomic bomb survivors (also known as Hibakusha) from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

- An estimated 1.5 lakh people died due to the bombings, and many more later due to the after-effects of the exposure to radioactivity.

What has been the impact of Hidankyo's activism?

- Lobbied for medical and welfare benefits for survivors
- The survivors' powerful testimonies serve as a stark reminder of the horrors of nuclear war
- Despite enduring immense suffering, the Hibakushas engaged with others to promote peace (embodies the principles of resilience & hope)
- Helped shift political discourse in Japan towards democracy and justice
- Sensitized the public to the doctrine of pacifism (moving away from war)
- Conducted international tours (including in India) to share their experiences and raise awareness

What is the current state of nuclear weapons and disarmament globally?

- Nuclear states continue to deploy weapons and use them for sabre-rattling
- Russia has threatened to use nuclear weapons in retaliation for conventional attacks
- Some countries, like Israel, have surreptitiously acquired nuclear weapons
- Existing non-proliferation mechanisms are affected by geopolitics

What is the significance of this Nobel Peace Prize award?

- Recognizes the efforts of hibakusha (survivors), whose average age is now over 86
- Reminds the world about the horrors of atomic bomb attacks
- Aims to stir debate on meaningful nuclear disarmament
- Highlights the ongoing need for nuclear disarmament efforts

Can you answer the following question?

Discuss the role of civil society organizations like Nihon Hidankyo in promoting nuclear disarmament. In light of the current global scenario, evaluate the challenges and opportunities in achieving meaningful nuclear disarmament.