

1. India produces enough food for its people, but not all people get enough food to eat. Discussing this paradox, highlight some of the major interventions taken in the past few years in this regard.

Answer :

India's food-grain output in 2016-2017 was a record **273.3 million tonnes**, and as per **World Economic Forum**, India needs approximately **230 million tonnes** of food per year to feed its population. India is also one of the largest producers of vegetables and fruits in the world. This shows that India has surplus amount of food. However, according to the FAO's 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (2017)' report, India has the **highest number (one quarter) of undernourished/hungry people** (190.7 million or 14.5% of its population) in the world.

India ranks **100th among 119 countries in GHI** and faces a 'serious' hunger problem. 38% Indian children, under five years of age, are stunted, and 51.4% of Indian women in reproductive age suffer from anemia. In addition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, often called "hidden hunger" leads to undernourishment.

The paradox does not end here. Ironically, **Right to Food** is a legal right in India and still people are dying of hunger and malnutrition. Reasons for such a scenario include:

- Absence of storage infrastructure: This results in loss of food due to rotting. For example, 61,824 tonnes of foodgrains were damaged in the FCI godowns between 2011-12 and 2016-17.
- Corruption and leakages in government schemes like PDS.
- Low level of awareness about balanced diet, health and hygiene as well as about accessing entitlements and rights under the government's schemes/resources and services.
- Absence of real-time data and reliable information to track progress of various interventions.
- Poverty, social and gender injustice and inequalities.
- Lack of funds and political will to correct the scenario.

However, various interventions to fight hunger and starvation have been taken recently. These include:

- National Food Security Act, 2013 provides legal entitlement to 2/3rd Indian population through Public Distribution System.
- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) to cover all vulnerable groups (children of 0 -6 years age, out of school adolescent girls, mothers, expectant women).
- Mid-Day Meal scheme (MDM) to feed 6-14 years old children.
- National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyan)
- National Iron+ Initiative, 2013 to address the deficiency of iron.
- Establishment of Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres; Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committee.
- Fortification standards for five staples (rice, wheat flour, oil, milk, and salt) by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

Despite such a large number of initiatives, India shares platform with Sub-Saharan Africa in Global Hunger Index (GHI). As per the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "Fundamentally, the roots of the problem of hunger and malnutrition are not lack of food but lack of access to available food."

Hence, achieving food sufficiency is not enough and it is time that access to nutritious food is ensured to all for a sustainable future.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. India sees Indian Ocean as not just a water body, but a global stage for continued economic, social, and cultural dialogue. Elaborate.
(150 words)
2. In the context of India taking greater responsibility in management of the global commons, there has been a shift in India's climate change negotiation stance. In this context, analyze the evolution of India's climate policy.
(150 words)