



World Food Day

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Why in News

World Food Day is celebrated to commemorate the establishment of the United Nation's **Food and Agriculture Organisation** (FAO) on **16th October 1945**.

- The Prime Minister of India released a **commemorative coin of Rs. 75 denomination** to mark the **75th Anniversary of the FAO**.
- FAO is a **specialised agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.

Key Points

- **About World Food Day:**
 - It is observed **annually on 16th October** to address the problem of global hunger.
 - It emphasises on the **Sustainable Development Goal 2** (SDG 2) i.e. **Zero Hunger**.
 - **Theme for 2020:** “Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together.”
There has been a renewed focus on food, **nutrition**, health, immunity and sustainability due to the unprecedented challenges posed by the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
- **75th Anniversary of FAO:**
 - Over the years, FAO has **helped to increase agricultural production and eradicate hunger all over the world**, including India and has played an important role in increasing nutrition.
 - **2020's Nobel Peace Prize** to the **World Food Programme** is also a major achievement for the FAO as the programme was started by FAO.

- **Indian Context:**

- FAO has closely watched **India's fight against malnutrition** in the past decades but its scope had many constraints.

Due to reasons such as pregnancy at a young age, lack of education and information, inadequate access to drinking water, lack of cleanliness, etc. **India is lagging behind in achieving the expected results of “malnutrition free India” by 2022**, envisaged under the **National Nutrition Mission** (POSHAN Abhiyaan).

- FAO **supported India's proposal to declare 2023 as the International Year of Millets**.

The move will **encourage intake of nutritious food, increase their availability** further and **benefit small and medium farmers** who mostly grow coarse grains on their land where there is a problem of water and the land is not so fertile.

Highlighted Indian Initiatives

- **Eat Right India** and **Fit India Movement** along with **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**, **Jal Jeevan Mission** and other efforts will improve the health of Indians and heal the environment.
- **Introduction of 17 new biofortified varieties of crops** to overcome the shortcomings of the common variety of crops which lacks important micronutrients.
Example: **MACS 4028 Wheat**, **Madhuban Gajar**, etc.
- **Increased ambit and effective implementation** of the **Food Security Act, 2013**.
- **Amendments** to the **APMC (agricultural produce market committee) Acts** to make them more competitive.
- Steps to ensure that farmers get one and a half times the cost as **Minimum Support Price** (MSP), which along with the government procurement, is an important part of ensuring the country's food security.
- Development of a large network of **Farmer Producer Organisations** (FPOs).
- **Amendments in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955** to deal with the issue of grain wastage in India.

- Government is making efforts to **make India Trans Fat free by 2022**, a year ahead of the **World Health Organisation** (WHO) target, in synergy with the vision of **New India @75** (75 years of India's independence).
 - **Trans Fat** is a **food toxin** present in **Partially Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils** (PHVOs) (e.g. vanaspati, shortening, margarine, etc.), baked and fried foods.
 - It is a major **contributor to the rise in non-communicable diseases** in India and also a modifiable risk factor for **cardiovascular diseases** (CVD). Eliminating CVD risk factor is especially relevant during Covid-19 as **people with CVD are predisposed to have serious conditions having** an impact on mortality.

Source: PIB