

Food Insecurity: The defining challenge of the Century ahead.

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In this contemporary epoch of human history, the entire global community finds itself navigating through turbulent times, fraught with plethora of obstacles that could derail its progress and prosperity. Among the inexhaustive list of problems, food insecurity has no exemption at all. It has been fueled by various factors such as increasing climate-induced disasters around the world, underperformance of agriculture sectors and many others. The severity of this issue has been exacerbating with each passing day, thereby creating far-reaching implications for both individuals and states around the world. This menace of food insecurity is multiplying malnutrition ratios, stunted growth of childrens, economic meltdown of countries, poverty and inter alia. Fighting against food insecurity has now become an uphill battles, as the global community has remained ill-responsive to the gravity of this matter. As far as Pakistani case is concerned, it is feeling the heat of this issue mainly because of its fragiled agriculture sector; and government/country's limited capacity to meet the growing demands of public. However, the situation is not that much hopeless to be redeemed but does require some robust steps in the right direction. The need is to do more of the walk and less of the talk. In this regard, the global community must promote climate-resilient agricultural practice, ensure global unity against climate change, put lid on population growth in order to attain food security.

Before starting with proper discourse, it is pertinent here to shed light on the core idea of food insecurity. Basically, it means that the shortage of food items in a country or region. The United Nations Food Organization (UNFAO) defines food insecurity as the unavailability of foods, coupled with lack of access to food items at affordable prices. The magnitude and ratio of food insecurity is not constant around the world, but it varies across country to country and from region to region. According to But one thing is common among all states: they all face food crisis. According to UNFAO latest report, more than Forty percent of the world population is food insecure.

Numerous factors are responsible for fueling the food insecurity around the world.

In this regard, climate-induced disasters are multiplying the food crisis around the world, thereby leading to food insecurity. It is an irrefutable claim that disasters in the form of prolonged droughts conditions of floods and create condition of water logging and soil salinity but also directly impacts the crops and agricultural lands the country. The recent scourge of a floods in Pakistani agricultural is a case in point. According to UNFAO report.

the flood incurred more than Ten Billion USA dollars loss to merely agricultural sector of the country. This eventually creates food deficiency and shortages in a country, leading to Food insecurity.

Along with this, growing trends of urbanization at the cost of agricultural is also causing food insecurity. There is a growing recognition to the fact that the practice of migration of people from rural areas to urban area is gaining momentum with each passing day. What is more worrisome in this case is that this shift is happening by degrading land use changes. The recent report of UNFAO highlighted that there are 5 to 7 million acres land degrade each year. This is mainly due to urbanization. This degradation does not only cut off the fertile land but also altering the nature of soil which leads to food shortages and thereby insecurity.

In addition to this, growing population around the world is also causing food insecurity. There is no second saying in that when the population grows, it increases the demands of basic commodities. Similarly, it also multiplies the consumption of natural resources particularly food and water. In recent times, particularly in case of developing countries, the population of developing

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Countries has been increasing beyond the limit of their capacity. In this regards, UNFAO highlighted that more than 64 out of 107 countries' population have been growing at alarming rate beyond of their food capacity. This increasing rapidly population eventually leads to food insecurity.

Even more worrisome factor in case of food insecurity is the underperformance of agricultural sectors around the world. It is an undeniable fact that the job of agricultural sector is to meet the demand of population in the realm of food. Unfortunately, this sector has remained underperformed particularly in developing countries due to various reasons. Lack of political will and use of modern techniques coupled with climate change have rendered this sector into abysmal state. This ill-performance of agricultural sector is creating shortages of food for the world population around the world.

Food insecurity has far-reaching implications in both individuals and state life.

In this connection, food insecurity increases the malnutrition ratio in a society. The condition of malnutrition occurs when there is limited or no availability of food items. Malnutrition, in return, does not only stunt proper growth of a child but also increases the death ratio of children. This can be substantiated from facts by considering the situation of

Somalia. In African continent, it is the state which is more insecure in terms of food than any other. That's why malnutrition ratio of Somalia is higher than the rest of the countries in the continent.

Moreover, food insecurity also affects living standard and life expectancy of people in a state. There is no second saying in that the availability of food items is directly linked to the living standards and life expectancy. Today's countries like Finland, Norway, Denmark enjoy higher life expectancy rate than Pakistan, Afghanistan and many other developing countries. The main secret behind this is that the former enjoys food security while the latter countries are highly food insecure.

Furthermore, poverty is also exacerbated due to unavailability of food and food shortages. It is a matter of fact that when the supply of basic food commodities is unavailable to people at affordable prices then it pushes those people below the poverty lines. That is why poverty is prevalent in those countries which are food insecure. For the sake of argumentation take the example of Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the poverty ratio is more than 35% mainly because of shortage of daily commodities.

Similarly, food insecurity also exacerbates vulnerability of children to mental illness and diseases. It is an ineluctable reality that proper diet and nutrition is mandatory for proper growth of mental health. Their unavailability or shortages don't only create ~~the~~ hampers mental growth but also makes them feeble both physically and mentally. Then these paralyzed and weak and unhealthy people become burden on state resources. In case of the United States of America, its workers are skilled and healthy because the country has guaranteed the basic requirements of workers while the case in Pakistan is quite the opposite mainly due to food inefficiency.

To make it more worst, food insecurity also increases economic meltdown of a country. Hardly deniable is the fact that when a country import basic food commodities from the foreign countries at higher prices then it in return results into balance of payment crises, trade deficit and many others. Likewise, when there is shortage in the supply of foods at global level then it ultimately increases the prices of food items which directly or indirectly hurts import-orient economies. The ^{hike} price in food price generate by the recent Ukraine-Russia war is a case in point.

In a similar vein, food insecurity also leads to inter and intra-state conflict among States.

It is a stark reality that unavailability of food items in various regions and create states creates the hostile atmosphere of war, anarchy and even in some cases a civil war scenario. The Arab Spring in 2011 is a case in point. The food crisis along with many other social issues compelled people to revolt against their rulers which drastically changed the entire political landscape of Middle East. It also resulted in civil war in so many states - Syria is being one of them.

In the same manner, food insecurity also multiplies the rate of social crimes in a society. As largely perceived that the unavailability of basic commodities of food compels or enforces many to adopt illegal means to meet their ends. That is why social crimes are prevalent in food inefficient states. Crimes like robbery, looting, kidnapping, sexual harassments, property theft etc finds more space amongst hungered societies. The case study of Pakistan is enough to prove the claim. Pakistani population are faced up with food shortages and that is why its majority major chunk of the food insecure population is involved in social crimes.

The global community has recognized the severity of this issues and has taken some steps in this regard. The UNFAO has initiated some projects and programmes in the

the most food insecure nations. Under the umbrella of UNICEF, the UN is providing aid and basic food facilities to many countries around the world. The world Food Programmes in case of Afghanistan and Pakistan is a case in point. Along with this, the UN is striving hard to unite the global community against climate change. Similarly, it is promoting sustainable development initiatives, disaster management initiative which are either directly or indirectly linked to food security initiatives.

As far as Pakistani case is concerned, despite being an agrarian economy, it finds itself food insecure. Its agriculture sector has become stagnated and climate changed disasters have rendered it helpless in meeting the demands of growing population in terms of food availability. That's why the major chunk of population is insecure. The UNFAO reported that more than 18% of its population faces severe food shortage while 36% of its entire population is food insecure. This phenomenon has been worsened by the country's limited financial capacity to import food for its growing population.

The problem of food insecurity is not insurmountable, but does require some efficacious steps in the right direction.

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Community must promote climate smart and resilient agricultural practices in order to lessen the impacts of climate change on food insecurity. The countries must start the plantation of drought-resistant crops, heat resistance and diseases resistant crops. States ought to come under one umbrella and cooperate and collaborate with one another in order to increase the practice of climate-smart agriculture. This will multiply the overall food production, thereby food availability.

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Secondly, even more importantly, Controlling the exponential growth of population is mandatory for guaranteeing food security. This is even more significant for underdeveloping countries where population growth has gained momentum. To curb population, it is essential to promote contraceptive methods, and awareness about the threat associated with growing population. In this underdeveloping countries like Bangladesh, China & Iran Model of controlling population. Moreover, developed nations must help the underdeveloping countries, at least financially in this regard.

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Thirdly, Global unity against climate change is necessary for coping with the issue of food insecurity. It is a well-documented fact that climate change is impacting agriculture in one way or the other. Unfortunately, the climate change

related crisis are gaining momentum mainly due to absence of collaborative approaches on the part of global community. In this way, the United Nations ought to play its due role by compelling countries to come together and lessen the severity of this crisis.

In a nutshell, it goes without saying the problem of food shortages is growing with each passing days, thereby becoming a serious challenge in the century ahead. This menace has been fueled by so many factors, leading to create havoc on the backbone of state lives. The problem of food shortage is not a natural one but it has been fueled due to anthropogenic activities. That is why coping with it is not beyond the capacity and capability of the global community. The global community only needs to realize the gravity of the situation and take efficacious steps in the right directions - By doing so, the entire community won't only put lid on this problem but will also ensure healthy and prosperous life for all inhabitants.