Nobel Peace Prize

Why in news?

The Nobel Peace Prize 2020 was awarded to the United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP).

What is the Nobel Peace Prize?

- The Nobel Prizes would be dedicated to the person who shall have done the most or the best work
    1. For fraternity between nations,
    2. For the abolition or reduction of standing armies and
    3. For the holding and promotion of peace congresses.
- The Nobel Peace Prizes have been awarded since 1901.
- It was not awarded on 19 occasions including 1914-1916, 1918, 1939-1943 among some other years.
- Overall, the prize has been awarded to 135 laureates, including 107 individuals and 28 organisations.

What is the UN WFP?

- The WFP was established in 1961 at the behest of the US president Dwight Eisenhower.
- It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation committed towards its global goal of ending hunger by the year 2030.
- In 1960, Eisenhower proposed to the UN General Assembly that a scheme should be devised for providing food aid through the UN system.
- In 2015, eradication of world hunger became one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The WFP is the UN's primary instrument in achieving that goal.
- WFP runs entirely on public donations and its donors include governments, corporations and individuals.

Why did it win the prize?

- WFP was awarded the prize for its efforts to combat hunger and for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas.
- It was given the award for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.

How does WFP help people?

- It provides food assistance in two ways, either by way of providing food or by meeting people's food-needs by providing cash-based transfers.
- The cash-based transfers were launched for the first time in 2005 in response to the tsunami in Sri Lanka.
- In 2019, WFP provided assistance to close to 100 million people spread across 88 countries by supplying them with food, cash and vouchers.
- In 1962, the WFP undertook its first emergency operation after an earthquake in Iran killed over 12,000 people.
- In 1963, it launched its first development programme in Sudan.
- In 1989, WFP staged the largest humanitarian airdrop in history when it launched "Operation Lifeline Sudan" to provide assistance to people affected by the civil war.
- More recently, it has provided food aid to the victims of the earthquake in Nepal in 2015.

How does WFP measure hunger?

- It estimates hunger by the **prevalence of undernourishment**.
- The UN defines undernourished people as those individuals whose food intake falls below the minimum level of dietary energy requirements.
- These dietary energy requirements are set by sex and age groups in consultation between the FAO, UN and WHO.
- According to current estimates, about 8.9% of the world's population or about 690 million people are hungry.
- As per the WFP, if the current trends continue, by 2030 there will be 840 million hungry people.
- Further, about 135 million suffer from acute hunger mainly as a result of man-made conflicts, climate change and economic downturns.
- WFP estimates that the pandemic could possibly double that figure.

Does WFP work in India?

- Yes, WFP has been working in India since 1963.
- It has transitioned from food distribution to providing technical assistance as India became self-sufficient in cereal production.
- One-fourth of the world's undernourished population is in India.
- About 21% of the population live on less than $1.90 a day.
- Now, WFP is working to improve the government's targeted public distribution system to ensure that food reaches those that need it the most.
- It is also working with the government to improve the nutritional value of the Midday Meal programme.

- It is using its own software called the Vulnerability and Analysis Mapping to identify the most food insecure groups in the country.

Source: The Indian Express

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