Cut in UN agency’s funding for food can push millions into starvation: Head of World Food Programme David Beasley

Part of: GS-II- International organisation (PT-MAINS-PERSONALITY TEST)

Head of the World Food Programme (WFP) David Beasley has asserted that the Corona virus pandemic is not only affecting world's rich economies, but also impacting the economies of vulnerable and conflict-torn countries where millions of people will face starvation, if there is a cut in the United Nations agency's funding for food. He said that maintaining supply chains is critical and there are many potential obstacles - export restrictions, closed borders and ports, farms not producing and roads closed.

Earlier, Mr Beasley warned the UN Security Council that as the world deals with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is on the brink of a hunger pandemic that could lead to multiple famines of biblical proportions within a few months if immediate action is not taken. He said, 821 million people go to bed hungry every night all over the world now.

A further 135 million people are facing crisis levels of hunger or worse and a new World Food Programme analysis shows that as a result of COVID-19 an additional 130 million people could be pushed to the brink of starvation by the end of 2020.

World Food Programme

Japan has donated $69 million to the United Nations World Food Programme to provide vital aid to 28 countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, with the biggest shares of the money being earmarked for Yemen and Iraq.

About WFP:

1. The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food assistance branch of the United Nations and the world’s largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
2. The WFP strives to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, with the ultimate goal in mind of eliminating the need for food aid itself.
3. It is a member of the United Nations Development Group and part of its Executive Committee.
4. Born in 1961, WFP pursues a vision of the world in which every man, woman and child has access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. The WFP is governed by an Executive Board which consists of representatives from member states.
5. The WFP operations are funded by voluntary donations from world governments, corporations and private donors. WFP food aid is also directed to fight micronutrient deficiencies, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, and combat disease, including HIV and AIDS.

The objectives of the World Food Programme are:
1. Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.
2. Support food security and nutrition and (re)build livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies.
3. Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs.
4. Reduce under-nutrition and break the inter-generational cycle of hunger.