

* 02 * Report Writing *

* 1] Agenda of meeting :-

→ The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) convened the meeting of the Core Group on the Right to food on March 19, 2024, with following agenda:

1] Aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) :-

- Emphasize on SDG 1 No poverty & zero hunger & their relevance to India's policy.

2] Assessment of Current Food Security Mechanisms.

- Evaluation of effectiveness of Public Distribution System & its association with Poshan 2.0.

3] Challenges in Policy Implementation.

- Identifying gaps in government programs, particularly in food distribution, quality of meals & nutrition for vulnerable groups.

4] Technological Integration & Innovations.

- Discussion on initiatives like one nation one ration card (ONORC) scheme & the use of digital tools such as Poshan tracker.

5] Recommendation for Improvement:-

- Soliciting suggestions from stakeholders on enhancing policy framework, addressing malnutrition, improving redressal mechanism.

* 2) Important issues discussed in meeting:-

1) Challenges in Public Distribution System (PDS):

- Leakage and diversion of food grains
- Inefficiency in coverage & distribution mechanism
- Limited inclusion due to outdated population figures and exclusion errors.

2) Nutritional Gaps & malnutrition

- Persistent issues of undernutrition, overnutrition & micronutrient deficiencies.
- Specific challenges for vulnerable groups like children, pregnant & lactating mothers, tribal population.
- The need of dietary diversity in the PDS, with recommendation for adding items like millet, pulses.

3) Technological & operational challenges:-

- Implementation issues with the ANRCS scheme, including reliance on IT infrastructure, incomplete Aadar linkage, & low awareness
- Problems in using digital tools like Panen tracer for accurate data

4) Corruption & Accountability:

- Systemic corruption affecting the PDS, including pilferage & manipulation of records
- Ineffectiveness in giving redressal mechanism, with proposal of improving social audit & digital transparency.

* 3) Recommendation & advices to meeting:

- 1) Prioritize cost-efficient afforestation method for sustainable employment in barren landscape
- 2) Promote agroforestry to sequester carbon, improve soil health, create job in rural areas
- 3) Integrate climate-focused initiative into scheme like MNREGA for rural job creation.
- 4) Strengthen existing scheme like MNREGA for flexible work opportunities & upskilling of workers.
- 5) Define & prioritize green jobs, particularly in urban centers, with targeted skill training program
- 6) Adopt the Restoration opportunity Assessment methodology (ROAM) for inclusive planning
- 7) Advocate for comprehensive strategy addressing challenges & opportunities presented by the transition toward a low-carbon economy
- 8) Leverage India's renewable energy sector for job creation, emphasizing skill development & awareness-building for a smooth transition for accountability.

* 4) Authorities involved in meeting :-

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1) NHRC members :

- Smt. Vijaya Sajani - Hon'ble member, NHRC (Chair)
- Dr. Dnyaneshwar Muly - Hon'ble member, NHRC (Co-chair)

2) Govt. representative :

- Sri Ravi Shankar - Joint Secretary, Dept. of Food & Public distribution
- Smt Deepa Anand - Deputy Sec (mom), Ministry of Edu.

3) Research & Academics Experts :

- Dr. N. Arloppa - Scientist 'G', National Institute of Nutrition
- Ms. Dipa Sinha - Assistant professor, Ambedkar University
- Dr. Monomi Das - Dean, Assam Agriculture University

4) Institutional Representatives :

- Ms. Vandana Singh - CEO, India Food Banking Network
- Shri N. Venkateswaran - CEO, NABL

5) Other .

- Media Representation: Ms. Reshma Dasgupta, Economic Times