

up **smuggling activities** and trafficking or whip up emotions in both countries.

- **Crisis as an Opportunity:** Neither Sri Lanka nor India can afford to have strained ties. As a much larger country, the **onus is on India**; it needs to be extremely patient and engage Sri Lanka even more regularly and closely.
 - There is also a need to **step up our people-centric developmental activities** while scrupulously staying clear of any interference in Colombo's domestic affairs.
 - The crisis should be used as an opportunity for New Delhi and Colombo to thrash out a **solution to the Palk Bay fisheries dispute** - a longstanding irritant in bilateral ties.

India's Response to Global Food Crisis

Global hunger is on the rise, driven by the climate crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic shocks, conflicts, poverty, and inequality. **Millions are living in hunger** and many more do not have access to adequate food.

Amid the global food crisis, **India has emerged as the friend in need** for a number of food-insecure countries fulfilling its **notion of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**. In the past decades, India has **transformed from requiring assistance to providing aid** to several countries.

What is the Global Hunger Scenario?

- In 2019, **650 million people around the world** suffered from **chronic hunger** — 43 million more than in 2014.
 - Since the onset of the pandemic, the number of people on the brink of starvation has doubled from 135 million people (pre-Covid) a year ago to 270 million.
- **More people are living in hunger than in 2015** when the member states of the **United Nations**, including India, agreed to **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** that provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.
- The global burden of **malnutrition** remains enormous, with almost **150 million children stunted**, nearly **50 million wasted**, and every other child (and two billion adults) suffering from **micronutrient deficiencies**.
 - The number of people in need of urgent food assistance — estimated at 270 million in 2021 — will grow significantly due to the **crisis in Afghanistan**

and the **ongoing war in Ukraine**.

What is India's Concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'?

- The concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (meaning '**Earth is One Family**') from India's traditional philosophical outlook that has gained huge relevance over the past 75 years since being cited in the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** to underline the collective nature of the crises and a matching response that is needed.
 - The concept describes how **different nations form one collective** and cannot escape the **common connection of concern and humanity**.
- In his 2014 UNGA address, the Prime Minister of India described the country's outlook towards the world as one family underlining its relevance not just for **global peace, cooperation, environment protection** but also for **humanitarian response including rising global hunger** and leaving no one behind.
- How India has Fulfilled this Vision in terms of Food Crisis?
 - **India's recent and ongoing humanitarian food assistance to the people of Afghanistan**, through the **UN World Food Programme (UN WFP)** is an example of its commitment and commendable steps towards humanitarian crises.
 - India, as per its commitment, is sending **50,000 Metric Tonnes (MT) of food** assistance in the form of **wheat** to Afghanistan, through Pakistan.
 - Considering that half the population of Afghanistan (22.8 million people) is projected to be acutely food insecure in 2022 including 8.7 million at risk of famine-like conditions, this assistance was extremely important.
 - In the past two years, India has also **provided aid to several countries in Africa and the Middle East/ West Asia** to overcome natural calamities and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Where does India Stand in terms of Food Sufficiency?

- Since the **Green Revolution**, India has made enormous progress in food production with an inspiring journey towards **self-sufficiency in food production**.
 - In 2020, India produced over 300 million tonnes of cereals and had built up a food stock of 100 million tonnes.

Note: