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Refugee rights, the gendered nature of displacement

(The Hindu, 10-08-24)

The current global refugee situation is worse as by the end of 2023, 11.73 crore people were forcibly displaced worldwide.

- Among them, 3.76 crore were refugees.
- The number is expected to increase due to ongoing conflicts (Israel-Hamas, Ukraine-Russia) and persecution (Rohingyas in Myanmar).

What are the challenges with refugee crisis?

- Scale and resources: Large numbers of refugees strain host countries' infrastructure, services, and budgets.
- Integration: Linguistic, cultural, and economic barriers can hinder refugees' integration into host societies.
- Security concerns: Some worry about potential security risks, though evidence shows refugees rarely pose threats.
- Political backlash: Anti-immigrant sentiment can lead to social tensions and political shifts in host countries.
- Legal issues: Determining refugee status and processing asylum claims can be lengthy and complex.
- Health and trauma: Many refugees have faced violence or persecution, requiring specialized medical and mental health care.
- Education: Providing schooling for refugee children, especially in emergency situations, is challenging.
- International cooperation: Coordinating responses across countries and organizations is complex.
- Gendered impact: Women and girls face disproportionate burdens in displacement situations. They often bear sole responsibility for childcare, elder care, and family sustenance.

How are women and girls affected by displacement?

- 46% of refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR India are women and girls.
- They face disproportionate burdens: childcare, caregiving for the elderly, and family sustenance.
- They are at higher risk of gender-based abuse and mental health issues like PTSD, anxiety, and depression.
- Displaced women are twice as likely to exhibit PTSD symptoms and four times as likely to show depression compared to men.

What are the challenges faced by refugee women with psychosocial disabilities in India?

- Limited access to mental health services due to stigma, shame, and communication barriers.
- Exclusion from public health and nutrition programs available to citizens.
- Lack of community participation and platforms to voice concerns.
- Financial constraints limiting access to private healthcare.

What legal frameworks exist to protect refugee women with disabilities, and what are their limitations?

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) guarantees rights to persons with psychosocial disabilities.
- India's Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPWDA) provides similar guarantees.
- However, these protections often don't extend to non-nationals, leaving refugee women in a legal gap.
- India lacks specific legislation for refugees, especially those with disabilities.

Can you answer the following question?

Discuss the challenges faced by refugee women with psychosocial disabilities in India and critically examine the existing legal frameworks to protect their rights.

Clean Plant Programme

(The Hindu, 10-08-24)

The Cabinet has approved the Clean Plant Programme (CPP), with an outlay of Rs 1,766 crore, under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).

What is significance of Horticulture sector in India?

- Horticulture is the practice of producing, utilizing, and enhancing fruits, vegetables, spices, condiments, ornamental plants, plantation crops, and medicinal and aromatic plants.
- It contributes about 33% to agriculture Gross Value Added to Indian economy.
- India is the second largest producer of vegetables and fruits in world after China.
- India's horticulture production in 2023-24 is estimated to be 352.23 million tonnes, which is a 0.91% decrease from 2022-23.
 - **Fruits:** 112.63 million tonnes, with increases in banana, lime/lemon, mango, guava, and grapes
 - **Vegetables:** 204.96 million tonnes
 - **Tomatoes:** 208.19 lakh tonnes, which is a 1.93% increase from 2022-23
- It has many benefits like
 - **Employment generation:** It provides employment opportunities to millions of people, especially in rural areas.
 - **Nutritional security:** Fruits and vegetables are essential for balanced diets and addressing malnutrition.
 - **Crop diversification:** Horticulture promotes diversification from traditional grain-based farming.
 - **Higher returns:** Many horticultural crops offer higher returns per unit area compared to traditional crops.
 - **Export potential:** India exports various horticultural products, earning foreign exchange.
 - **Agro-processing industry:** It supports the growth of food processing industries.
 - **Climate resilience:** Some horticultural crops are more adaptable to changing climate conditions.

What are the features of Clean Plant Programme?

- The programme, proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, aims to enhance the quality and productivity of fruit crops across the nation.
 - It was earlier announced in the Budget speech by finance minister in February 2023.
- **Implemented by:** National Horticulture Board in association with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- The CPP **will address virus infections** in horticultural crops, affecting both productivity and quality.
- **Key components of the programme**
 - establishment of nine world-class Clean Plant Centres (CPCs) across India, equipped with advanced diagnostic therapeutics and tissue culture labs; and
 - implementation of a robust certification system under the Seeds Act 1966.
 - CPP includes infrastructure support to large-scale nurseries for efficient multiplication of clean planting material.
 - The programme will prioritise affordable access to clean plant material for all farmers, regardless of their landholding size or socioeconomic status.
 - It will also actively engage women farmers in its planning and implementation.
- **Benefits**
 - The CPP is expected to benefit farmers, nurseries, consumers, and **boost exports**.
 - It will provide farmers access to virus-free, high-quality planting material, leading to increased crop yields and improved income opportunities.
 - The initiative aligns with Mission LiFE and the One Health initiatives, promoting sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural practices while reducing dependence on imported planting materials.

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