Grains or Guns?

The world is passing through a very crucial phase where the geopolitics based on guns and grains are competing with each other. Escalated food prices and famine rates associated with climate change have acted as stressor that contributed to unrest in different parts of the world. The guns are vying among different groups to take control of socio-economic and geopolitical situations. On one side the different human organizations under the stewardship of United Nations are trying to satiate the diabolical internal restless enemy in terms of hunger; the guns are being used to silent and annihilate the subjective external enemies. The two schools of thought are clearly vying for their mode of survival; grains or guns?

Every diabolical psychological social unrest under the globe had lineage to hunger at one or the other point of time. The peace in the world can be contemplated only by targeting grains production rather than guns. The irony is that currently the young generation detest agriculture as a profession. The trend is vehemently alarming. The displacement of farmers both in number and age is neither appropriate nor inexorable. The dicey situation is still made complicit by factors like the farmland has become too expensive to be afforded by ordinary farmer. The risks and uncertainties in agriculture are the other deterrents to be tolerated by the farmers. The bottom line is that situation is complex, retain the youth in agriculture or they will find some other ways to release their frustrations. And of course, there is
no other way out but to counter the trend; since we are not going to stop eating.

The biggest predicament of agriculture as on the day is can the agriculture be catapulted as social enterprise? The concerted endeavour should focus on putting more young farmers on smaller farms so that they can contribute in producing qualitatively nourishing food. The proper balancing needs to be done between the requirements of land for biofuel that otherwise could have been used for enhancing grains repertoires. The global consensus for rejuvenating and resuscitating debilitating natural base is well documented but requires concerted efforts to manage that from different angles.

The global food production is good enough to meet the global food requirements but for equitable distribution among the haves and have-nots. The stench of the festering problem can be had from the fact that a whopping thirty odd per cent of food produced goes to waste. We all preach waste reduction but still add volume to the humongous problem in one way or the other. The salacious mangoes of Gujarat are known for their quality. We have acquired even the geographical indications for Kesar mango of Gujarat. However, virtually only a few remain eatable; the rest go bad. These mangoes travel to different nook and corners of the world and predominant of them are chucked out during handling. This need to be appreciated that when the food is wasted, all the resources that are utilized in to growing, packaging and transporting it are wasted too.

And the worst part is that this wasted food goes to dump and landfills, where it decomposes in the open to produce methane, which is 20 times more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

Mango is cited as a symbolic example because we all love it. The narration is the same in others too. Food is wasted in supply chain, retailers cull out imperfect quality, hotels have lots of left over meals and event caterers are left with untouched connoisseur cuisines. We had myriad projects entailing food processing from farm to fork. However, understanding waste is the first step towards reducing it. Can we discourage wastage of food? And of course, there is need to develop a structured participatory system where the excess or left over food can become accessible to the ones who are not so privileged. We can create better farming policies that attract investments and lot many new young farmers/ ranchers eager to practice it volitionally rather than compulsion. And of course, irrespective of whether the monsoon is normal or 88 per cent deficient, the farmers should be ensured against calamities and market prices. Once the society at large and youth in particular get attracted to grains production in farms, when the internal enemy of humankind called hunger that is the sole cause of crimes gets addressed adequately; the guns will automatically go silent for the sake of peace and tranquillity under the sky. Amen!

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