

## **Diabetes: ‘Poverty amidst Plenty’ and ‘Hunger – in the Modern World of Plenty’ in the Twenty First Century**

**Urban John Arnold D’Souza, Aza Sherin Mohamad Yusoff, Sadia Choudhury Shimmi**  
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Sabah, Malaysia

According to the latest report of the United Nations (UN), about 20 million people are facing famine with around 1.4 million children are at a risk of dying. Secretary General Antonio Guterres of the United Nations has made it clear to the world that, parts of Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen and south Sudan are at a higher risk of the famine and a possible catastrophe that may be highly dangerous to the mankind. Diabetes mellitus is a metabolic disorder, wherein plenty of sugars or glucose in the blood circulation, keep the cells and tissues hungry because it is an insulin related disorder. Similarly, in the modern World of plenty, where a greater number of World populations are filled with enormous wealth and food and amidst this population, a less fortunate population is dying because of hunger! Shortage of food, malnourishment and few people dying on a daily basis are the outcome of the famine. According to the UN, lack of money in the UN treasury, donor countries, conflicts, problems of delivery of relief are few of the concerns which are looming the UN.

On the other-hand nutrient deficiency is another major problem that mainly affects the children in the world. Micronutrients, vitamins –A, folate, minerals –iodine, iron and zinc deficiencies are due to a lack of quality of food due to the lack of awareness which affect both the physical and mental health. Billions of people are possessing one or the other micronutrient deficiencies such as folate, vitaminA, iodine, etc., which results in weakening the immune system and vulnerable to a variety of diseases. Around 30 – 35% of the children in the developing

world are vitamin A deficient with a high grade of health problems. Anaemia among the women, iodine deficiencies, though they eat plentiful is a masked hidden hunger. Inadequate diet or its quality need to be made aware to the parties. Micronutrient deficiency is not a problem only among the poor but also among the affluent where there is no proper awareness among the public. A variety of food in moderation such as eggs, fish, legumes, meat, fruits and vegetables are in daily need for the body for a normal physical and mental growth. Southeast Asia being mostly a green belt, luckily has a wealth of blessing but need the responsibility of educating the public at large on the need of micronutrients on a day-to-day regular basis is a priority. Poverty amidst plenty as stated above also applicable in terms of micronutrients, and hunger only is not the cause for lack of food, but plenty of food without proper awareness also may be a kind of ‘poverty amidst plenty’. If proper awareness and nutritional education is made available at large to the growing population of the world along with generosity of affluent may make a difference in the world. Let us join hands in alleviating the hunger of the world!

### **REFERENCES**

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/22/world/africa/why-20-million-people-are-on-brink-of-famine-in-a-world-of-plenty.html>: A version of this article appears in print on February 23, 2017, on Page A8 of the New York edition with the headline: 20 Million Face Famine in a ‘World of Plenty’

