Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Food security; poverty reduction; welfare delivery; employment generation; nutrition outcomes; leakages; inclusive growth

Model Answer

Introduction

Hunger and poverty undermine human development and citizens' ability to exercise their rights. Successive governments have introduced food security, employment, livelihood and social protection programmes, producing important gains but leaving persistent gaps.

Progress Achieved

- **Food security:** The National Food Security Act, 2013, provides subsidised food grains to eligible households.
- **Rural employment:** MGNREGA guarantees eligible rural households wage employment and creates community assets.

- **Livelihood support:** Self-help groups and livelihood missions support income generation, particularly among rural women.
- **Financial inclusion:** Direct Benefit Transfer and bank-account expansion have improved the potential for targeted welfare delivery.
- **Poverty reduction:** Improved access to education, healthcare, sanitation and basic services has contributed to better living standards.

Persistent Challenges

- Malnutrition and anaemia remain concerns despite food availability.
- Informal employment, low wages and regional inequality sustain economic vulnerability.
- Exclusion errors, leakages and poor grievance redressal reduce programme effectiveness.
- Climate shocks and food-price volatility threaten vulnerable households.

Measures for Improvement

- Improve nutrition through diversified diets, maternal care and stronger school and child nutrition programmes.
- Generate productive jobs through labour-intensive manufacturing and rural non-farm enterprises.
- Strengthen public health, education and social protection.
- Improve beneficiary databases, local monitoring and social audits.
- Support farmers and vulnerable households against climate and price shocks.

Conclusion

Government programmes have expanded food access and social protection, but durable progress requires quality employment, effective service delivery and nutrition-focused development. Good governance must measure success by improved human capabilities, not expenditure alone.

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