Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Evaluate the limitations of a single-nutrient approach to tackling malnutrition in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Micronutrient deficiencies, anaemia, Vitamin B12, dietary diversity, POSHAN Abhiyaan, outcome-based monitoring

Model Answer

India's nutritional challenges are multidimensional, involving inadequate dietary intake, micronutrient deficiencies, poor maternal health and unequal access to nutritious food. Addressing them through a single-nutrient approach can leave important deficiencies untreated.

Limitations of a narrow approach

1. **Multiple deficiencies:** Anaemia may result from iron, folate or Vitamin B12 deficiency, infections and other health conditions. Iron supplementation alone cannot address every cause.
2. **Dietary diversity:** Dependence on a limited range of staple foods can result in inadequate intake of essential vitamins, minerals and proteins.
3. **Life-cycle vulnerability:** Pregnant women, adolescent girls and young children require targeted nutritional interventions.
4. **Measurement gaps:** Aggregate indicators may conceal differences in severity, age groups, geographical distribution and underlying causes.

Strengthening nutritional governance

POSHAN Abhiyaan and related programmes should integrate nutrition education, diversified diets, supplementation, food fortification and regular screening. Anganwadi services, schools and primary healthcare institutions can provide coordinated delivery.

Financial allocations must translate into actual service delivery through timely fund utilisation, local monitoring and outcome-based evaluation. Survey findings should inform programme redesign rather than merely administrative reporting.

India needs a comprehensive nutrition strategy that addresses both calorie adequacy and micronutrient deficiencies. Its success should be measured through improved nutritional outcomes, not expenditure or supplementation coverage alone.

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