Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Examine the role of food-safety regulation in protecting consumers from adulterated, misbranded and substandard food products in India. What measures can strengthen enforcement and consumer confidence?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 03/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006; FSSAI; state enforcement agencies; food adulteration; misbranding; quality standards; laboratory testing; supply-chain accountability; consumer awareness; deterrent penalties

Model Answer

Introduction

Food safety is essential for public health and consumer protection. The reported seizure of 2,279.7 litres of Patanjali cow ghee valued at ₹20.20 lakh by Maharashtra's Food and Drug Administration highlights the role of enforcement agencies in addressing suspected food-safety violations.

Role of Regulation

The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, provides the legal framework for food safety in India. FSSAI establishes food standards, while state authorities undertake inspections, sampling and enforcement. Action against suspected misbranding or quality violations can help prevent misleading commercial practices and protect consumers.

Challenges

Limited inspection capacity, delays in laboratory testing, complex distribution networks and inadequate traceability can weaken enforcement. Seizure alone does not establish that a product is unsafe; appropriate testing and legal procedures are necessary to determine violations.

Way Forward

Authorities should strengthen risk-based inspections, laboratory capacity and digital traceability across supply chains. Transparent disclosure of test results, proportionate penalties for proven violations and accessible consumer complaint mechanisms can improve accountability. Businesses should maintain accurate labels and comply with prescribed quality standards.

Conclusion

Effective food-safety governance requires scientific testing, consistent enforcement and transparent legal procedures. These measures can protect public health and strengthen consumer confidence in India's food market.

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