Society & Social Justice · GS - II

India has made progress in reducing infant mortality, yet preterm births continue to pose a major public health challenge. Examine the importance of comprehensive follow-up care for preterm babies and suggest measures to strengthen it.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 16/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Preterm birth burden, neonatal mortality, developmental disabilities, nutritional support, developmental screening, Kangaroo Mother Care, early intervention, public healthcare infrastructure, ASHA and Anganwadi networks, follow-up services, equity in healthcare.

Model Answer

Introduction

Preterm birth, defined as delivery before 37 completed weeks of gestation, is a major contributor to neonatal mortality and childhood health complications in India.

Importance of Follow-up Care

Survival alone does not ensure healthy development. Preterm babies may face respiratory, neurological, nutritional and developmental difficulties. Regular screening helps identify delays in motor, cognitive, hearing and visual development. Nutritional support, immunisation, physiotherapy and early intervention can improve long-term outcomes.

Measures to Strengthen Care

India should strengthen neonatal follow-up clinics, integrate developmental screening into primary healthcare and ensure affordable specialist services. ASHA workers and Anganwadi networks can support family counselling and timely referrals. Kangaroo Mother Care, parental education and digital tracking can improve continuity of care, particularly in rural and economically weaker communities.

Conclusion

A shift from survival-centred neonatal care to continuous, development-oriented healthcare is essential for improving the long-term health and quality of life of preterm children.

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