# Science & Technology · GS - III

**The growing influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour has created new challenges for public health and product regulation. Examine the regulatory and institutional measures required to address the risks associated with unverified cosmetic products.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| DAILY PRACTICE 21/11/2026 | GS - III | Science & Technology |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 15 | ~250 words |

## Answer Hint

**Social media influencers, consumer awareness, toxic ingredients, mercury exposure, Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO, BIS standards, Consumer Protection Act, misleading advertisements, e-commerce accountability, product traceability, regulatory enforcement.**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

Social media has transformed cosmetic marketing by allowing influencers and online sellers to reach consumers directly. However, unverified formulations, misleading claims and inadequate disclosure of ingredients can expose consumers to serious health risks.

### Major Public Health and Regulatory Concerns

1. **Toxic ingredients:** Mercury and certain heavy metals can cause systemic toxicity, including kidney and neurological damage.
2. **Unregulated marketing:** Products promoted without adequate safety information may encourage unsafe consumer practices.

3. **Misleading claims:** Influencer endorsements and exaggerated benefits can create false perceptions of product safety and effectiveness.
4. **Weak traceability:** Informal online sellers may make it difficult to identify manufacturers, ingredients and accountability.

**Existing Regulatory Framework**

- **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:** Provides the legal framework for regulating cosmetics.
- **Cosmetics Rules, 2020:** Govern manufacturing, import, quality and compliance requirements.
- **CDSCO and State Licensing Authorities:** Oversee relevant regulatory functions and enforcement.
- **Consumer Protection Act, 2019:** Addresses misleading advertisements and unfair trade practices.
- **BIS:** Develops standards relating to product quality and safety.

**Way Forward**

- Strengthen surveillance of online cosmetic sales and testing of suspicious products.
- Require transparent ingredient labelling and verifiable manufacturer details.
- Hold advertisers and influencers accountable for misleading endorsements.
- Improve coordination between drug regulators, consumer authorities and e-commerce platforms.
- Promote public awareness about product safety and adverse-effect reporting.

**Conclusion**

Consumer safety in the digital marketplace requires effective regulation alongside informed purchasing decisions. Strong enforcement, transparent marketing and scientific testing are essential to prevent avoidable health risks.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP