

Q. Discuss the importance of nutrition for school children and associated government policies. (10 marks)

Introduction:

A proper nutritional diet and healthy lifestyle can affect young children throughout the rest of their lives. During early development, children are highly impressionable and start to implement routines and tools that they carry with them into adulthood. Aside from habits and routines created, children who do not obtain proper nutrients as they develop, can suffer from physical ailments as well.

Body:

Nutrition holds even greater significance for school children as it is needed for:

- Physical development – Control stunting and wasting
- Cognitive development – Learning outcomes
- Prevent from non communicable Diseases – better human capital
- Improve immunity – Prevent from communicable diseases such as covid 19

Government Strategies:

- **Mission Poshan 2.0** : to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition. Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology to improve governance.
- PM- poshan scheme – Mid day meal for primary and secondary school students.
- Poshan Vatikas at Anganwadi centers to meet dietary diversity gap leveraging traditional knowledge in nutritional practices has also been taken up.
- Free cereal to SC/ST hostels
- FSSAI regulations to curb sale of junk food in and around schools
- Food fortification under PDS
- MAA scheme to promote breastfeeding for infants

Conclusion:

Government initiative are aimed to fulfil directive under article 47 of the constitution and to safeguard the future of the country by ensuring better human capital generation.