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Q2(c)

How do the recommendations of Swaminathan Commissions (2004-2006) ensure food and nutrition security for the Indian masses?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society
Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

Core demand of the question

- How do the recommendations of **Swaminathan Commissions** (2004-2006) ensure food and nutrition security for the Indian masses?
- Keep to a 15-mark length

Revision summary

The **Swaminathan Commission** treated food security as farmer livelihood plus nutrition.

MSP, credit, and insurance were meant to keep producers alive.

PDS and micronutrients were meant to feed the poor, not only fill godowns.

Rainfed and tribal India were named as the skipped masses.

Recommendations ensure security only when implemented beyond surplus belts.

Introduction

The M. S. **Swaminathan National Commission** on Farmers argued that food security is not only a granary. It is livelihood security of cultivators plus nutrition of eaters. Its 2004-2006 recommendations try to join farm income, ecology, and access so the masses eat, and farmers survive.

Body

From grain stocks to nutrition

- India can hold buffer stocks and still house hungry poor, a class imbalance A. R. Desai's uneven path already implied.
- The Commission tied production, procurement, and nutrition rather than treating PDS as an afterthought.

Key recommendations that serve the masses

- MSP around a cost-plus formula, so farmers do not go bankrupt producing food.
- Credit, insurance, and irrigation that cut the suicide-debt trap in commercial belts.
- A nutrition-centred PDS and attention to protein, micronutrients, and women, not only cereal tonnes.
- Land and water care, so Green Revolution yield does not collapse through soil and aquifer damage.

- Special focus on rainfed, tribal, and smallholder zones that the first Green Revolution skipped.

How this 'ensures' security

- It ensures only if the state implements. Recommendations are a map, not a machine.
- Women as farmers and nutrition managers must get title and wages, against Seed-and-Earth invisibility.
- Without procurement in eastern and dryland India, MSP remains a Punjab-Haryana privilege.

Sociological reading

- Food security is a social relation of class, region, and gender, not a seed miracle alone.

Flow diagram

Swaminathan 2004-2006 -> Farmer income MSP credit
Swaminathan 2004-2006 -> Nutrition PDS women
Swaminathan 2004-2006 -> Rainfed ecology smallholders
Farmer income MSP credit -> Food nutrition security
Nutrition PDS women -> Food nutrition security
Rainfed ecology smallholders -> Food nutrition security

Conclusion

Swaminathan's commission tried to ensure mass food and nutrition security by raising farmer livelihood, widening procurement, protecting ecology, and shifting from cereal stocks to nourishment. The design is sociological. Delivery still depends on class power in the state.

Facts & figures

National Commission on Farmers

Swaminathan-led reports of 2004-2006 on farmer distress and food policy.

Cost-plus MSP idea

A price floor meant to make food production livable for smallholders.

Nutrition, not tonnes

Shift from cereal stocks toward diet quality and access.

Rainfed focus

Recognition that the first Green Revolution did not feed all regions.