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The rationalization of food policy needs to come up high in priority, with changed policy instruments to ensure food security in the country. Discuss

The food security policy of India needs an urgent paradigm shift at both the producer & consumer level to ensure better human capital formation & sustainability.

Limitations of the current food policy:

- ① Food subsidy accounts for 31% of Government revenues & is a direct cause of fiscal deficit.
- ② Despite achieving high food production after the Green revolution - India still provides subsidised food grains to ~800 million people.
- ③ The food procurement, stocking & distribution apparatus is rife with inefficiencies leading to post harvest losses to the tune of ~90,000 crore per year.
- ④ The skewed MSP regime has led to monoculture of water guzzling crops like rice & wheat rendering agriculture highly unsustainable.

This situation calls for newer policy instruments for ensuring food security.

- ① Capacity building should be the key-
Better educational opportunities especially in government schools can bring millions out of poverty traps.
- ② conditional cash transfers & food voucher schemes eg. ^{like} Bolsa Familia of Brazil can help reduce need for stocking, food wastage & high fiscal deficit.
- ③ A push towards crop diversification would not just ease environmental debilitation but would also reduce malnutrition rampant in the country
eg by • increasing cultivation of pulses & millets.

These tools would not only ensure food security for the vulnerable but would also help our farmers get good returns on their produce
