

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**Necessity for a new national policy for persons with disabilities**

CONTEXT: Recently, The Department of Empowerment of Person with Disabilities (DoEPwD) released the draft of the national policy for persons with disabilities (“Policy”).

Need

- The necessity for a new policy was felt because of multiple factors such as
 - India’s signing of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
 - Enactment of a new disability legislation (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016) which increased the number of disabilities from seven conditions to 21 and
 - Being a party to the Incheon Strategy for Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 (“Incheon commitment”).
- These commitments have changed the discourse around disability by shifting the focus from the individual to society, i.e., from a medical model of disability to a social or human rights model of disability.

About the policy

- It replaces the 2006 policy .
- The policy document highlights a detailed commitment to education, health, skill development and employment, sports and culture, social security, accessibility and other institutional mechanisms.

Objectives

- It aims to showcase the Government’s commitment to the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities by providing a mechanism that ensures their full participation in society.

Challenges faced by persons with disabilities

- Political empowerment and the inclusion of the disabled are an issue that has not found traction in India’s democratic discussion.
- India does not have any policy commitment that is aimed at enhancing the political participation of disabled people.
- The exclusion of disabled people from the political space happens at all levels of the political process in the country, and in different ways.
- Political parties in India still do not find the disabled as the large electorate to specifically address their needs.
- The lack of live aggregate data on the exact number of the disabled people in every constituency only furthers their marginalisation.
- Inadequate representation
 - Representation plays an imperative role in furthering the interests of the marginalised community.
 - Disabled people are not represented enough at all three levels of governance.

Way Forward

- The goal of the policy document — of inclusiveness and empowerment — cannot be achieved without political inclusion.
- The policy can follow a four-pronged approach:
 - Building the capacity of disabled people’s organisations and ‘empowering their members through training in the electoral system, government structure, and basic organisational and advocacy skills’
 - The creation, amendment or removal of legal and regulatory frameworks by lawmakers and election bodies to encourage the political participation of the disabled;
 - inclusion of civil societies to ‘conduct domestic election observation or voter education campaigns’ and
 - a framework for political parties to ‘conduct a meaningful outreach to persons with disabilities when creating election campaign strategies and developing policy positions’.
- Central and State governments must work together with other stakeholders to “make the right real”.
 - A few States have begun the initiative at local levels to increase participation.
 - For instance, Chhattisgarh started the initiative of nominating at least one disabled person in each panchayat.

PRELIMS**1. Global Minimum Tax Deal**

CONTEXT: Recently the ‘G20 Ministerial Symposium on Tax and Development’ was held in Bali, Indonesia.

More about the news

- **Suggestions by India around tax deal:**

- The Indian Finance Minister called on G20 countries to ensure that developing nations do not face any “unintended consequences” and earn “meaningful revenues” from the proposed global minimum tax deal.
 - The concerns of developing nations should also be addressed while formulating rules for the proposed two-pillar tax deal to ensure a fairer and more inclusive tax system.
- The Indian Finance Minister called on the G20 inclusive framework to support the active participation of all members in the finalisation of the technical aspects of the two-pillar solution.
- **The proposed two-pillar solution consists of the following components:**
 - **Pillar One:**
 - It is about reallocation of an additional share of profit to the market jurisdictions.
 - **Pillar Two:**
 - It consists of minimum tax and is subject to tax rules.

Global minimum tax deal

- **Meaning:**
 - It is a global deal to ensure big companies pay a minimum tax rate of 15% and make it harder for them to avoid taxation
- **Negotiation by OECD:**
 - **The two-pillar package –**
 - The outcome of negotiations coordinated by the OECD for much of the last decade aims to ensure that large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) pay tax where they operate and earn profits while adding much-needed certainty and stability to the international tax system.

How would a deal work?

- The global minimum tax rate would apply to overseas profits of multinational firms with 750 million euros (\$868 million) in sales globally.
- Governments could still set whatever local corporate tax rate they want, but if companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments could “top up” their taxes to the 15% minimum, eliminating the advantage of shifting profits.
- A second track of the overhaul would allow countries where revenues are earned to tax 25% of the largest multinationals’ so-called excess profit – defined as profit in excess of 10% of revenue.

2. I2U2 Summit

CONTEXT: The first-ever I2U2 Virtual Summit was held comprising India, Israel, the UAE, and the US.

Highlights of the Summit:

- The grouping focused on the food security crisis and clean energy during their meeting
- They also discussed innovative ways to ensure longer-term, more diversified food production and food delivery systems that can better manage global food shocks.
- The leaders welcomed India’s interest in joining the United States, the UAE, and Israel in the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate initiative (AIM for Climate).
- For India:
 - The grouping unveiled initiatives focused on food security and clean energy, including:
 - UAE will invest \$2-billion programme to develop a series of integrated food parks across India.
- Food parks will incorporate state-of-the-art climate-smart technologies to reduce food waste and spoilage, conserve fresh water, and employ renewable energy sources.
- The Indian government will provide appropriate land and facilitate farmers’ integration into the food parks.
I2U2 will invest in a hybrid renewable energy project in Gujarat.
- It will consist of 300 megawatts (MW) of wind and solar capacity, complemented by a battery energy storage system.

The I2U2 group:

- I2U2 stands for India, Israel, the UAE, and the US, and was also referred to as the ‘West Asian Quad’.
- The group was first conceptualised in October 2021, during a meeting of the foreign ministers of the four countries in Israel.
 - At that time, the grouping was called the ‘International Forum for Economic Cooperation’.

3. Reforms in Justice Delivery System

CONTEXT: Recently, the Chief Justice of India stated that the pendency of cases is a major issue and the problem is intensifying .

Data Analysis

- More than 40% of cases are decided after three years in India, while in many other countries less than 1% of cases are decided after three years.
 - If India does not act decisively and quickly, this percentage will keep increasing.
- The increase in corruption and crime is a direct fallout of the sluggish justice delivery system.
 - This severely impacts the poor and marginalised. For them, the judicial process itself becomes a punishment.
 - Data show that about 70% of prisoners in India are undertrials and are mostly poor citizens.

Reasons for Sluggish Justice Delivery System

- **Absence of Time Limit:** No time frame has been prescribed for the Courts for the disposal of cases.
- **Rising Backlog:** NITI Aayog in 2018 Strategy Paper (New India @75) had noted that at the current rate of disposal of cases, it will take more than 324 years to clear the backlog. The COVID-19 Pandemic has only made it worse.
- **Slow Digital Migration:** Almost the entire three-tier justice delivery system has been computerised and equipped with modern technology. However, the opposition of a section of the lawyers' fraternity has resulted in a slow paced migration to the digital format.

Recent Improvements in Judicial System

- **Virtual court system:** The regular court proceedings in our Indian courts in such unprecedented times are either being adjourned or have been carried out virtually via videoconferencing.
- **eCourts portal:** It is a one-stop solution for all stakeholders like the litigants, advocates, government agencies, police, and common citizens.
 - This portal is designed in a way that uses multiple languages.
 - This portal is a consolidation of all the portals across the country.
- **E-filing:** E-filing, also known as electronic filing, is a facility that provides filing of cases through the internet.
 - The system of e-filing has multiple advantages like:
 - It has proven to be effective in saving time, money, and travel for councils and clients.
 - Physical presence in the court is not mandatory.
 - The case files get digitised automatically.
 - It has impacted the environment positively by reducing the paper footprint.
- **ePayment of court fees and fines:**
 - Online payment can be made by the citizens using the portal. This will reduce the usage of stamps, cheques and cash. The ePayment portal is integrated with state-specific vendors like SBI ePay, GRAS, e-GRAS, JeGRAS, Himkosh, etc.
- **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG):**
 - The statistics of cases pending at the national, state, district and individual court level are now made accessible to the general public, researchers, academicians and the society at large.
 - Any individual can access this information by visiting the National Judicial Data Grid portal.
- **National Service and Tracking of Electronic Process (NSTEP):**
 - This is a mechanism that consists of a centralised process service tracking application and a mobile app for the bailiffs.
 - This is used for quick delivery of summons, notices, processes and the reduction of unreasonable delays in process serving.
- **e-Sewa Kendra:**
 - The e-Sewa Kendra is set up as a one-stop centre for accessing all the facilities provided under the eCourts Project.
 - It has been set up in high courts and one in the district court of each state on a trial basis.
 - With these centres, a litigant can acquire information on case status and get judgments and orders passed by the courts.
- **Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS):**
 - The Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) is an initiative of the e-Committee to transfer data and information between the different pillars of the criminal justice system, like courts, police, jails, juvenile homes and forensic science laboratories seamlessly, from one platform.

4. Extension of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

CONTEXT: According to the recent guidelines issued by the Women and Child Development Ministry Beti Bachao Beti Padhao will now be extended across the country.

About Beti Bachao Beti Padhao

- It is a flagship scheme of the Government of India, launched by the Prime Minister in 2015 in Haryana to arrest the declining Child Sex Ratio and related issues of empowerment of Women over a lifecycle continuum.
- It's a convergent initiative of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.
- It is implemented by states with 100% central assistance.
- Under, BBBP scheme there is no provision of direct benefit transfer.
- Current coverage: The programme is operational in 405 districts at present.

New Comprehensive guidelines

- **It will aim for zero-budget advertising and encouraging greater spend on activities** that have on-ground impact for promoting sports among girls, self-defence camps, construction of girls' toilets, making available sanitary napkin vending machines and sanitary pads, especially in educational institutions, awareness about PC-PNDT Act, etc.
- **Improved targets**
 - The ministry has now targeted improvement in the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) by 2 points every year.
 - Improvement in the percentage of institutional deliveries at 95% or above
 - 1% increase in 1st Trimester ANC Registration per year
 - 1 per cent increase in enrolment at secondary education level and skilling of girls and women per year
 - To check dropout rate among girls at secondary and higher secondary levels and raise awareness about safe menstrual hygiene management.
- **Khelo India:** The scheme will also look at increasing girls' participation in sports by identifying talent and linking them with appropriate authorities under Khelo India.
- **One-Stop Centres (OSCs):** It also plans to strengthen One-Stop Centres (OSCs) set up to help women facing violence, including domestic violence and trafficking, by adding 300 OSCs in districts which either have a high rate of crimes against women or are geographically large, preferably in aspirational districts.
 - The OSCs will be the mainstay of the ministry at the district level for coordination and convergence with other initiatives under Nirbhaya Fund.
- **The toll-free:** 24-hour women's helpline, 181, will be merged with the Emergency Response Support System, and other platforms such as 1098 child line and NALSA, will also be connected to OSCs.
 - The helpline can also be accessed through text or other forms of messages for those unable to speak due to situational or physical challenges.
- **Nari Adalat:** for providing women with an alternate grievance redress mechanism to resolve cases of petty nature at gram panchayat-level, which will be implemented in a phased manner.
- **Anti-Trafficking Units:** Half-Way Homes to be set up under Anti-Trafficking Units, where a group of victims, ready for reintegration, can live and work out of.

5. UNparliamentary Words

CONTEXT: Recently, ahead of the Monsoon Session a row has erupted over a **50-page compilation** of words deemed unfit for use in Parliament.

About the recent controversy

- Coverage: The new list has words and phrases disallowed not only in the Indian Parliament, but also in various state assemblies, as well as some parliaments of other countries.
- Both the houses: It includes words that have been expunged from the records in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha over the last few years.
- There are phrases and words in thousands both in English and in Indian languages that are considered "unparliamentary".

The rules/ Constitutional provisions

- **Discretion of the Speaker:** Exactly what constitutes unparliamentary language is generally left to the discretion of the Speaker of the House.
 - The Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairperson of Rajya Sabha have the job of keeping such words out of Parliament's records.
 - The Lok Sabha Secretariat has brought out a bulky tome titled 'Unparliamentary Expressions'.
 - The last such book was published in 2009.
 - The state legislatures too are guided mainly by the same book, first compiled in 1999.

- **Source:** references were taken from debates and phrases declared unparliamentary by the pre-Independence Central Legislative Assembly, the Constituent Assembly of India, the Provisional Parliament, the first to the tenth Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, state legislatures, and Commonwealth parliaments like that of the United Kingdom.
- **Article 105(2) of the Constitution:** lays down that no Member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any committee thereof.
 - MPs do not enjoy the freedom to say whatever they want inside the House. Whatever an MP says is subject to the discipline of the Rules of Parliament.
- **Rule 380 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha says:** If the Speaker is of opinion that words have been used in debate which are defamatory or indecent or unparliamentary or undignified, the Speaker may, while exercising discretion order that such words be expunged from the proceedings of the House.
- **Rule 381 says:** The portion of the proceedings of the House so expunged shall be marked by asterisks and an explanatory footnote shall be inserted in the proceedings as follows: 'Expunged as ordered by the Chair'.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. What were the socio-economic factors responsible for emergence of the cooperative movement in post-independent India? Also, highlight the key characteristics of the movement (150 words)

Introduction

Indian Cooperative movement was essentially a child of distress. It emerged out of the turmoil and dissatisfaction which prevailed during the last quarter of the 19th Century and worked as a direct consequence of the Industrial Revolution. The Revolution led to the decay of cottage industries and growing pressure on land making agriculture an economic venture.

Body

The reasons responsible for the emergence of the cooperative movement were:

- The illiteracy and poverty of the Indian people, the evil of poverty resulted in indebtedness to the money lenders who exploited them.
- Excessive sub-division and fragmentation of holdings, absence of alternative employment, loss of cattle through famine, disease, and flood, love of litigation ancestral debts was all responsible for the growing indebtedness.
- The situation was such that the farmers were forced to sell their belongings to repay the debts. In some parts of the country especially in Poona and Ahmednagar, the farmers spearheaded an agitation against the moneylenders.
- Despite cooperative credit societies being in existence for close to 50 years, the share of formal credit institutions to the rural credit needs was less than 9 percent, and within that, the share of cooperatives was below 5 percent.
- The lending by traders and rich landlords accounted for more than 75 percent of rural credit.
- India witnessed the unique phenomenon of wide-ranging reforms being implemented within a modern democratic structure without any violence or use of authoritarian force.

The key features of the movements were:

- Basing itself on the heritage of long, powerful national and peasant movements, independent India successfully transformed the colonial agricultural structure which it had inherited.
- The legacy of nearly half a century of agrarian stagnation was reversed. Institutional and infrastructural changes were put in place, which was to enable the bringing in of modern, progressive or 'capitalist' farming in more and more parts of the country.
- Large, semi-feudal, rapacious landlords rack-renting the peasantry as well as extracting illegal cesses in cash, kind or labor became a thing of the past.

Conclusion

The stranglehold of the moneylender over the peasantry was also considerably weakened with the growing availability of cooperative and institutional credit. Loans advanced by such institutions increased significantly. Credit became increasingly available to the poorer sections. The resources available to the peasantry as a whole for agricultural improvement thus increased significantly.

MCQs

- 1) Which among the following nation is not a part of the I2U2 group?

a. India	b. Israel	c. Australia	d. USA
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- 2) Consider the following statements regarding Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme:
 1. It was launched by the Prime Minister in 2015 in Haryana.
 2. It is implemented by states with 100% central assistance.

- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 only b. 2 only **c. Both 1 and 2** d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 3) Consider the following statements regarding Unparliamentarily words:
1. Exactly what constitutes unparliamentarily language is generally left to the discretion of the Speaker of the House.
2. Recently, ahead of the Monsoon Session a row has erupted over a 50-page compilation of words deemed unfit for use in Parliament.
3. The last such book was published in 2020.
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 and 2 only b. 2 and 3 only c. 1 and 3 only d. 1, 2 and 3
- 4) Consider the following statements about Monkey Pox:
1. Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic disease that occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa and is occasionally exported to other regions.
2. Monkeypox is caused by monkeypox virus, a member of the Orthopoxvirus genus in the family Poxviridae.
3. It is mostly transmitted to people from wild animals such as rodents and primates, but human-to-human transmission also occurs.
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 and 2 only b. 1 and 3 only c. 3 only **d. All are correct.**
- 5) Consider the following statements about National Agricultural Market (e-NAM)?
1. It is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
2. Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM.
3. Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 only b. 2 only **c. Both 1 and 2** d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 6) Consider the following statements about Natural Resources Accounts:
1. The asset accounts capture details of 34 major minerals, 58 minor minerals, and all four fossil fuels.
2. The Government Accounting Standards Advisory Board (GASAB) publishes Asset Accounts for Mineral and Energy Resources across 28 States and one Union Territory.
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 only b. 2 only **c. Both 1 and 2** d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 7) Consider the following statements about Spanish flu:
1. Influenza-A H1N1 virus was responsible for the Spanish influenza pandemic outbreak.
2. The Influenza-A Virus genome shows a unique capability of gene re-assortment that can rearrange the order in which the genes appear.
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 only b. 2 only **c. Both 1 and 2** d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 8) The Incheon commitment/strategy 2013-2022 refers to which of the following statements?
a. Better relationship of India with South Korea.
b. Empowerment of disabled persons.
c. Sustainable Development of Indian Ocean region.
d. Higher education development in India.
- 9) Match the following correctly
- | Cultivation | State |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Vevar and Dahiyar | Madhya Pradesh |
| Batra | Bihar |
| Kumari | Tamil Nadu |
| Deepa | Karnataka |
- How many of the above pairs are matched correctly?
a. Only one pair b. Only two pairs c. Only three pairs d. All four pairs
- 10) Consider the following statements:
1. The tropical ozone hole is larger than the size of Antarctica and it appears across all seasons.
2. The Antarctic ozone hole layer is in the stratosphere and is visible only in the spring.
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
a. 1 only b. 2 only **c. Both 1 and 2** d. Neither 1 nor 2