

GS Mains Daily Answer Writing

Week 6 Day 3

Model Structures

1. Has the conversion of the National Commission for Backward Castes into a constitutional body solved the problems faced by the backward castes in India? (10 marks)

Model Structure

Introduction

- 102nd Constitution Amendment Act, 2018 provides constitutional status to the **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**.

Main Body

- How according constitutional status solved the problems faced by backward classes
 - Now NCBC is entrusted with the additional function of grievance redress of backward classes.
 - Article 342(A) introduces greater transparency as it is made mandatory to take the concurrence of Parliament for adding or deleting any community in the backward list.
 - Now powers of NCBC are derived directly from constitution, thus providing better protection to backward castes
- How according constitutional status hasn't solved the problems-
 - Merely providing constitutional status to NCBC doesn't solve wide array of problems faced by backward castes
 - Persistent atrocities and violence faced by these communities
 - Discrimination of social, economic and political spheres
 - It is apprehended that the new version of the National Commission for Backward Classes is unlikely to provide credible and effective social justice architecture.
 - The recommendation of the NCBC is not binding on the government.
 - Since it has no responsibility to define backwardness, it cannot address the current challenge of demands of various castes to be included as BCs.

- Way forward
 - The government must put information in public domain regarding the findings of the caste census and recommendations of commission.
 - Along with better laws, government should focus on ground level implementation of these laws

Conclusion

- Mere constitutional status and more acts will not solve the problem at grass root level as recent data revealed skewed representation of SC/ST and OBC categories.

2. While celebrating ‘Aazadi ka amrut mahotsav’ on one hand, there is a serious level of hunger and food insecurity in India. In this context, it is imperative that India take holistic measures to deal with the issue of food insecurity. Discuss. (15 Marks)

Model Structure

Introduction

- India has slipped to 101st position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 of 116 countries, from its 2020 position of 94th.

Main Body

- GHI is calculated on the basis of four indicators:
 - Undernourishment: Share of the population with insufficient caloric intake.
 - Child Wasting: Share of children under age five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.
 - Child Stunting: Share of children under age five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition.
 - Child Mortality: The mortality rate of children under the age of five.
- Reasons for India’s poor performance -
 - Impact of Pandemic: food insecurity increased from about 32% in 2019 to 38.5% in 2021.
 - Less focus on Nutritional security in PDS (Hidden Hunger)

- Inadequate Distribution of Food through PDS
- Lack of access to remote areas: Tribal areas, hilly areas etc.
- Corruption: Diverting the grains to the open market to get better margin, selling poor quality grains at ration shops, irregular opening of the shops add to the issue of food insecurity.
- Way Forward
 - Ensuring Nutritional Security
 - Food Fortification
 - Encouraging cultivation of fruits and vegetables through favourable prices - making it available in adequate and cheaply
 - The PDS food basket can be enlarged to include millets, pulses and oil.
 - Regular Monitoring of Food Security
 - Enlarging the Scope of Food Security Schemes:
 - Universalising the access to the Public Distribution System and
 - One Nation One Ration Card scheme (ONORC)
 - Bringing Development and Humanitarian Policies Together

Conclusion

- Right to food is not only a statutory right but also a human right. As a state party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, India has the obligation to ensure the right to be free from hunger and the right to adequate food for all of its citizens.
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