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Editorial Discussion & Analysis (EDA)

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Note -

- **The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.**
- **Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .**

Click [here](#) to watch the following topics on YouTube

1. Indian Economy

1.1. On Assets, A Narrower View (Indian Express)

Author - Vikram Singh Mehta

- Context- Private public investment must be modelled to generate social value

Concerns

- Undoubtedly, the private sector will unlock greater financial value from these assets.
- **However, that can't be the only yardstick as NMP lacks "Social Value" criteria. Government needs to ensure that the social value of these public assets is also realised.**
- NMP is designed to attract deep-pocketed financial institutions. This will result in deepening of the concentration of capital and existing inequalities.
- **The fundamental reason behind low productivity of the public sector asset at the first place was poor leadership or lack of talent.**
- Institutional & Structural issues impeded the growth of the Public Sector assets. Government needs to address this issue while leasing out to the assets on one hand.

Way Forward

- **Lack of transparency in governance, pricing distortions and intrusive bureaucratic intervention** are dominant reasons behind the inefficiency of Public assets.
- **Private sector will find it difficult to harness the full value of these assets** and the transfer of operatorship to them will only be a short term remedy.
- Structural issues faced by the PSU's need to be resolved efficiently.
- **The world is in the crosshairs of critical challenges such as global warming, pandemics, geopolitical chaos.** Amidst all this, the Private- public investment must be modeled to generate social value.

1.2. National Monetisation Pipeline & Infrastructure Deficit (The Hindu)

- Context- Infrastructure Deficit & NMP

Concern

- **India's experience with PPP in infrastructure**, enthusiastically pursued in the past has not been impressive as it has contributed to the mounting of the public sector banks with non-performing assets.

- India's infrastructure has **not expanded precisely because the assets generate too little revenue** for even their maintenance, leave alone upgradation.
- The important consideration in an evaluation of the NMP would be the volume of funds expected to be generated.

Apprehensions not justified

- **Transfer of Assets would end up creating monopolies, leading to a rise in price.**
- However, possibility that the price may rise after a transfer of public infrastructure to the private sector is not a good reason to oppose NMP.

Conclusion

- **6 Lakh crore which is expected to be monetised in the next 4 years is quite less as compared to the figure of ₹100 lakh crore estimated as the infrastructural investment India needs.**
- India's Infrastructure Deficit needs to be addressed and those opposing NMP must give it a chance.
- Let us see how interested the private sector would be in accepting the government's proposal under NMP.

1.3. The Long & Short on NMP (The Hindu)

Author - Bishwajit Dhar

- Context- Impact of Asset Monetization on Public

What are the Impacts of NMP on Public?

- **Assets that are being offered for leasing or divestment have all been created through substantial contribution by the tax-payers.**
- Until now, these assets have been managed by the Government and its agencies, which operate in public interest and are not driven by the profit.
- With private companies getting the sole responsibility of running all these assets (**power, telecom and gas**), the **citizens of this country would be double-taxed.** (First on Asset Creation and Now on higher usage charges)
- **It is not social benefit, but higher private returns that drives the corporates.**
- Only if the Government can curb profit maximising tendencies of the companies through regulators, can the consumer interest be protected.

Past experiences

- Instead of effective regulation, there have been instances of regulatory capture instead, resulting in the exploitation of consumers.

- **Ex; Privatisation of the power distribution system in Delhi. This resulted in a steep increase in power charges impacting the poor and middle class alike.**
- Providing subsidies to bear the brunt of privatization is not a sustainable solution as the subsidy is also coming from tax payer.

Conclusion

- India's large companies have been exploiting the loopholes for reporting lower profits and to escape the tax net.
- Government need to ensure that these companies are fully tax compliant and transparent n the profits they are earning.
- As per NITI Aayog **objective of the Asset Monetisation programme is to unlock the value of investments in public sector assets by tapping private sector capital and efficiencies.**
- **This leads to a disappointing conclusion that all these years our PSU's have been inefficient despite attracting the best talent through competitive examinations.**

2. Healthcare

2.1. The Nutrition- Hygiene Link (Indian Express)

Author - B Sesikeran

- Context- To tackle Malnutrition, Sanitation needs to be Addressed.

Concerns

- A recent UNICEF report stated that nearly 12 lakh children could die in low- income countries in the next six months due to a decrease in routine health services and an increase in wasting
- **National Family Health Survey (NFHS 5) indicates that since the onset of the pandemic, acute undernourishment in children below the age of five has worsened.**
- **37.9 % of children under five are stunted, and 20.8 % are wasted.**
- Contaminated drinking water, poor sanitation, and unhygienic living conditions also impact Nutritional Outcomes.
- **50% of all mal- and under-nutrition can be traced to diarrhoea and intestinal worm infections, which are a direct result of poor water, sanitation and hygiene (Report of WHO)**

Way Forward

- **Investments in, WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene) are a sure-shot way of bolstering the country's nutritional status.**
- Safe drinking water, proper sanitation and hygiene can significantly reduce diarrhoeal and nutritional deaths.
- **WHO has estimated that access to WASH can prevent the deaths of at least 8,60,000 children a year caused by under nutrition.**
- India must use the pandemic as an opportunity to come up with long-term multi-stakeholder solutions to the problem of nutrition in the country.
- **Environmental Enteropathy** - Disorder of the intestine which prevents the proper absorption of nutrients, rendering them effectively useless. Intricately connected to the poor environmental conditions its victims lived in

3. International Relation

3.1. Reaching out to The Undesirables (The Hindu)

Author - Happymon Jacob

- Context- Peace Making does not always coexist with morality!
- What are the Choices Available for India in context of Taliban?
 - ✓ Continue to militarily fight the Taliban
 - ✓ Isolate and sanction the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.
 - ✓ Engage and socialise them!!

The 1st option have been tried & tested by US for 2 decades, while the 2nd option was exercised between 1996-2001. Both have not yielded result!

Engage or Socialise-

- Diplomacy, is all about engaging with the undesirables to try and change their positions.
- Entities, individuals and states do change as a result of sustained negotiations.
- **International politics is not a site of perfect moral choices.**
- **India, located where it is amidst a geostrategically challenging environment, her ability to make a 'morally perfect' choice vis-à-vis the Taliban is rather limited.**
- Talking to the undesirables is a time-tested phenomenon.
- **For Example; LTTE - Sri Lankan government negotiations in the 2000s, British government's secret talks with the Irish Republican Army (IRA).**

4. Polity

4.1. The Key to Revitalising India's Reservation System (The Hindu)

Author - Suoriy Ranjan

- Context- Socio economic Caste census is necessary to initiate a reform in reservations.

Justice G. Rohini Commission Report

- Report on the sub-categorisation of OBCs
- **97% of central OBC quota benefits go to just under 25% of its castes.**
- As many as 983 OBC communities, 37% of the total have zero representation in both central government jobs and admissions to central universities.
- **Assumption that the disadvantages of every sub-group within each category are the same is severely misplaced.**
- Dire need of accurate data pertaining to the socio-economic condition of different social groups.
- **We do not know how the Post LPG reforms have impacted the disadvantageous caste groups socio economically.**

Way Forward

- We Urgently need evidence-based policy options that can be tailored to meet specific requirements of specific groups.
- **Make a deprivation index correlating data from the socio-economic- based census of different communities including caste, gender, religion.**
- Socio-economic caste-based census becomes a necessary precondition to initiate any meaningful reform in the affirmative action regime in India.
- **We need an institution alike the Equal Opportunities Commission of the United States or the United Kingdom.**

Justice G. Rohini Commission

- Headed by Justice (Retd.) G Rohini, the commission was constituted under Article 340 of the Constitution with the approval of the President on 2nd October 2017.
- **It had been constituted to complete the task of sub-categorising 5000-odd castes in the central OBC list so as to ensure more equitable distribution of opportunities in central government jobs and educational institutions.**
- Work out mechanism and parameters for sub-categorisation of OBCs, to identify castes, sub-castes and communities and classify them into sub- categories.

4.2.Spirit of Federalism lies in the Constitution (The Hindu)

Author - Mukund P. Unny

- Context- Cooperative Federalism

Concerns

- Successive Governments have extended it's hands on subjects in the Concurrent List.
- **This is a cause of grave concern as the balance of the Constitution is now turned head.**
- Putting Subjects in the Concurrent list was to give the Centre & States concurrent powers.
- **The Power to legislate on these subjects was also expected to be shared.**
- **The provision of the lists was incorporated in the GOI Act 1935**
- **The controversial 3 farm laws made by the centre was also a violation of this principle as "Agriculture" (Entry 14) is a State Subject.**
- **The centre gave the justification of citing the "Trade & commerce" (Entry 33) clause under concurrent list while passing the 3 laws.**

Suggestions in the Past

- **Sarkaria Commission-** Coordination of policy and action in all areas of concurrent or overlapping jurisdiction through a process of mutual consultation is desirable.
- Union Government must keep it's focus on issues pertinent to national interest while exercising it's power under Concurrent list.
- **Venkatachaliah Commission-** individual and collective consultation with the States should be undertaken through the Inter-State Council established under Article 263.
- In **S.R. Bommai vs Union of India**, the SC made it clear that the **States are not mere appendages of the Union**. The key to public welfare lies in listening to stakeholders concerned.