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### Category: **POLITY**

1. [SC gives BCCI some flexibility to implement Lodha reforms](#)

### Context

- **July 18, 2016 ruling by Supreme Court** : ordered for full implementation of Lodha panel's recommendations.

### In news

- The Supreme Court indicated that it was **open to relaxing its order** directing the Indian cricket board (BCCI) to accept the **Justice Lodha panel's recommendations** in full.
- Areas to be rethought:
  - Reduction in the number of national selectors to three from five.
  - Restricting the appointment of selectors to players who have played Tests.
  - The one-state one-vote norm
  - The associate membership criteria.

**BCCI stance:** BCCI had opposed the panel's recommendations, including sweeping changes in administration, virtually marginalising the board.

## BASIC INFORMATION

### Lodha Committee:

**The Lodha committee was formed in January, 2015 by the Supreme Court after the Mudgal committee report on IPL.**

### Structural Reforms:

- The committee recommended that a 9-member apex council replace the 14-member BCCI working committee.
- Each of these office-bearers has a three-year term and can contest for a maximum three terms.
- The Lodha Committee also calls for dividing the governance into two parts: cricketing and non-cricketing.
- The non-cricketing management will be handled by 6 professional managers headed by a CEO, and the cricket matters like selection, coaching and performance evaluation should be left to the players

### Organisation & Office-bearers: Restrictions imposed

- Each of these office-bearers has a 3-year term and can contest for a maximum three terms.
- There will be a mandatory cooling off period after each term. Therefore, no office-bearer can hold office consecutively in a row.
- No BCCI office-bearer can be Minister or government servant.

## **State Cricket Associations: One Vote/State**

- The Committee recommended that one association should represent an entire state and only one vote per state

## **Indian Premier League: Maintain distance**

- It recommends separate governing bodies for the IPL and BCCI.
- There should be a 15-day gap between IPL season and national calendar.

## **Betting: Legalize it**

- It made a strong recommendation to lawmakers to legalise betting in cricket for all except cricket players, officials and administrators.
- The players and others banned officials should disclose their assets to BCCI in a measure to ensure that they do not bet.
- Betting is a \$ 400 billion phenomenon practised across the globe and lawmakers in India should enact laws to legalise it.

## **Fixing: Criminalize it**

- The committee said that match-and spot-fixing should be made a criminal offence.

## **Conflict of Interest & Corruption**

- One individual hold only one post in cricket administration. The office-bearers would have to choose between positions in respective state associations and the parent body.
- A former High Court judge should be appointed as ethics officer by the BCCI to administer issues relating to conflict of interest, misdemeanour and corruption.
- A former Supreme Court judge should be appointed ombudsman to resolve internal disputes.

## **Transparency: Bringing RTI to BCCI**

- It recommended that the Legislature must seriously consider bringing BCCI within the purview of the RTI Act

## **Securing players' interest**

- It recommended the setting up of a Players' Association to safeguard the interests of the cricketers.
- The report said players that are the driving force of the game, but they had been reduced to the status of employees and subordinates of those governing the game.
- The idea is to give players voice, use their expertise and skills for the development and betterment of the game

## **Women Cricket: Often ignored by BCCI**

The Women's Cricket Committee to be formed to exclusively pay attention to this much ignored department, along with Women's Selection Committee.

## **2. [To widen SC scholarship net, govt for raising income criteria](#)**

- **Widening the Scope:**
  - According to the current eligibility criteria, the annual income of parents of the SC students seeking scholarships shouldn't exceed Rs 4.5 lakh
  - This figure is now proposed to be revised to Rs 6 lakh per annum
  - The funding, available in 175 notified top institutes, covers much of the expenses incurred towards fees, living expenses, books and computer

### **Other proposals**

- For pre-matric scholarships for SC students, the annual income is proposed to be revised from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh
- The ministry is also looking at revising the varying income criteria for other schemes for students from SC, OBC, and economically backward communities

### **Objective behind the move :**

This is a part of the plans for "rationalisation of all scholarship schemes", to correct the wide variation in income criteria

## **3. [Govt mulls LPG-like subsidy transfer for PDS foodgrain](#)**

### **In news**

- Food ministry is working on a pilot to emulate the direct cooking gas subsidy transfer scheme model for public distribution system (PDS) of subsidised foodgrains.

**Modus operandi:** The beneficiaries will get the subsidy amount in advance in their bank accounts and they will have to buy the foodgrains from any ration shop, which has got the electronic point of sale (e-PoS) devices.

### **Advantages**

- This initiative will ensure zero leakage of the subsidy and foodgrain as well.
- The beneficiaries' failure to buy the foodgrains from the e-PoS enabled ration shop would result in no transfer of the subsidy for the next month. This will also ensure that beneficiaries under National Food Security Act don't use the subsidy amount for anything else.

**Elsewhere: Union Territories of Chandigarh, Puducherry and Dadra & Nagar Haveli-** the entire subsidy amount is transferred to the beneficiaries' account and they are free to buy the grains from anywhere.

#### 4. [Reporting sexual harassment at workplace now a mouse click away on the SHe-Box](#)

##### In news:

- On the lines of the POCSO e-box for children, the Central government has now launched an online complaint management system called the **Sexual Harassment electronic-Box (SHe-Box)** for registering complaints related to **sexual harassment at workplace**.
- Currently applicable only for women working in or visiting central government departments, the ministry of women and child development plans to extend to cover private workplaces too.
- **Modus operandi:**
  - This portal will provide a platform to women working or visiting any office of Central Government (Central Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous Bodies and Institutions etc.) to file complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace under the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**.
  - Those who have already filed a written complaint with the concerned Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) constituted under the SH Act are also eligible to file their complaint through this portal.
  - Once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will be directly sent to the ICC of the concerned Ministry or department.
  - Through this portal, WCD as well as complainant can monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICC.

#### BASIC INFORMATION Vishaka case guideline- Key features

- It mentioned that it is the duty of the employer or other responsible persons in work places or other institutions to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide the procedure for the resolution, settlement or prosecution of acts of sexual harassment by taking all steps required.
- It also provided with the range to behaviour that would be termed as sexual harassment, which includes such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or implication) as :-
  - physical contact and advances;
  - a demand or request for sexual favours;
  - sexually coloured remarks;
  - showing pornography;
  - any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.
- It also provided with Complaints mechanism by stating that-
- All workplaces should have an appropriate complaints mechanism with a complaints committee, special counsellor or other support services.
- A woman must head the complaints committee and no less than half its members should be women.
- The committee should include an NGO/individual familiar with the issue of sexual harassment.
- The complaints procedure must be time-bound.
- Confidentiality must be maintained.
- Complainants/witnesses should not experience victimization/discrimination during the process.

#### Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013

This act was enacted in April 2013 as India's first law dealing with the protection of women against sexual harassment at workplace. Some important feature of this act are as follows:

- This Act aimed to provide every woman, irrespective of her age or employment status, a safe and secure working environment free from all forms of harassment.
- This Act covered both the organized and unorganized sectors in India. The statute applied to all government bodies, private and public sector organizations, non-governmental organizations, organizations carrying out commercial, vocational, educational, entertainment, industrial, financial activities, hospitals etc.
- This Act defined 'sexual harassment' in line with the Supreme Court's definition in the Vishaka Judgment.
- The Act extended the meaning of the word sexual harassment to include 'presence or occurrence of circumstances of implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment, threat of detrimental treatment in employment, threat about present or future employment, interference with work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment, or humiliating treatment likely to affect the lady employee's health or safety could also amount to sexual harassment'.
- The Act also introduced the concept of **extended workplace** since sexual harassment is not always confined to the primary place of employment. Therefore, the Act defined 'workplace' to include any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment, including transportation provided by the employer for the purpose of commuting to and from the place of employment.
- The Act provided for the establishment of **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)** at each and every office or branches of the organization employing 10 or more employees, in order to provide a forum for filing complaints to facilitate fast redressal of the grievances pertaining to sexual harassment.
- It also provided for the establishment of **local complaints committee (LCC)** at the district level by the Government to investigate and redress complaints of sexual harassment of the unorganized sector or from those establishments where the ICC has not been constituted for the reason being, it having less than 10 employees.

#### 5. [NITI Aayog: An institution to fix implementation issues](#)

**Context:** NITI Aayog's Outcome based monitoring

### Outcome based monitoring of NITI Aayog

- NITI Aayog is engaged in outcome-based monitoring with states in sectors such as healthcare, education and water supply
- It is also discussing the idea of ranking each state based on health, education and water index, and identifying states with good performance
- For example, it has developed a composite water management index, comprising several key performance indicators, with different weights assigned to indicators
- This is expected to incentivise states to collect data and analyse it to make better policies

### Possible Disadvantage of Outcome based monitoring

- Some experts suggest that owing to self-ranking by states without independent review, reforms remain mostly on paper with key concerns remaining unaddressed.
- Also, legitimate beneficiaries may get excluded.
- Consequently, such approach of self-ranking and comparing needs to be viewed with caution.

### Outcomes of efficient policy implementation by States:

- Experts suggest that significant improvement in the ability to implement policies and projects in the states, cities, and at the centre can considerably add to citizens' well-being.
- And also, could even add about 2-3% to the country's GDP, without any additional resources.

### The way forward

- Agencies struggling with implementation should not be burdened with additional responsibilities of data collection and analysis.
- NITI Aayog must create a repository of best practices (as a benchmark) for dealing with implementation challenges, based on case studies from around the world.

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#### Category: ECONOMICS

#### 1. [Enough political will to seal RCEP talks](#)

##### In news:

- India is fully committed to taking forward the negotiations for a mega Free Trade Agreement (FTA) called the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)**, to ensure that it is a balanced pact that benefits all the 16 Asia-Pacific nations including itself that are participating in the talks.
- India is pushing for liberalisation of services, including easing norms for movement of professionals across borders for short-term work. However, the slow progress of the services negotiations has been worrying India.

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) and the six states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand).
- RCEP negotiations were formally launched in November 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia.
- The agreement is scheduled to be finalized by the end of 2017.
- RCEP is viewed as an alternative to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade agreement which includes several Asian and American nations but excludes China and India.

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### G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

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1. Critically evaluate implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act?
  2. “NITI Aayog is responsible for monitoring and evaluating government schemes.” Evaluate?
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