

CENTRE EXTENDS ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT IN NAGALAND AND ARUNACHAL PRADESH FOR 6 MONTHS

Why in news

Recently, Central government has increased the AFSPA act for another 6 month in Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The act empowers the state and central government to declare the disturb area under the AFSPA Act, 1958.

About AFSPA Act, 1958

- The AFSPA was enacted 1958 to deal with Naga uprising. Later it was used for counter the north east insurgency in all state.
- The Act gives unbridled powers to the armed forces to kill anyone acting in contravention of law, arrest and search any premises without a warrant and protection from prosecution and legal suits without the Central government's sanction.
- Currently AFSPA is applicable in some parts of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Under Section 3 of the Act, the State governments and the MHA have concurrent powers to notify areas under the AFSPA.

Why AFSPA Act was retained

- The uncertainty around the culmination of the Naga peace process is the main reason behinds retain in AFSPA in Nagaland.
- AFSPA was required in border areas of the States to curtail the movement of the underground groups.
- International border of Arunachal Pradesh is also one of the reason behind AFSPA in Arunachal Pradesh.

What is Naga Issue?

Centre is engaged in discussions with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) and seven Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) to find a solution to the Naga political issue. The Isak-Muivah faction, the key player in the Naga peace talks, has been demanding a separate constitution and a separate flag for the Nagas and the creation of 'Greater Nagaland' or Nagalim by integrating Naga-dominated areas in neighbouring Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh to unite 1.2 million Nagas. Unfortunately central government is not keen to interest to creation of greater Nagaland.

Issues with AFSPA

- Misuse of provisions of Acts like fake encounters, extrajudicial killings etc.
- AFSPA has been described as a harsh, oppressive, colonial and archaic law in Indian democracy.
- AFSPA can be seen as a violation of all other constitutional rights like prevention against arrest and detention, privacy etc.
- Violation of constitutional values, human rights and natural justice.
- Lack of credibility of democracy - People's disenchantment with the democratic system is exploited by separatists and sympathizers of terrorism, creating a vicious cycle of more violence and more violence.

- Critics argue that the Act has failed in its objective of restoring normalcy in disturbed areas despite being in existence for almost 60 years.

Conclusion

All four states where AFSPA were applicable have different ground for imposition. Thus AFSPA should remove from state where condition has improved. At the same time government and the security forces should also abide by the guidelines set out by the Supreme Court, Jeevan Reddy Commission, and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

herSTART', A PLATFORM THAT EMPOWER THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Why in news

President Draupadi Murmu launches 'herSTART' - a start-up platform of Gujarat University for women entrepreneurs. Besides encouraging the entrepreneurial endeavours of women, the 'HerStart' initiative will also link the women entrepreneurs with various private and government platforms.

Benefit of herSTART'

- This platform will encourage women-led development in the Indian economy.
- This platform will connect women to industry and government. Thus they can diversify their activity.
- This platform will help women to gain new knowledge.
- The platform will provide various support services such as incubation, training, marketing, mentoring, etc.

Role of women in India's economy

Women own 20.37 percent of MSMEs in India, constituting 23.3% of the labour force. According to McKinsey Global, India could potentially add US\$700 billion to global GDP by increasing the participation of women in the labour force. The percentage of women working in agricultural sectors is higher than that of men. These areas are usually credited with helping families lift themselves out of poverty and contribute to higher household incomes. Moreover, the literacy rate among women rose by 8.8% in FY 2011, further highlighting the bright prospects of the country.

Government initiatives to encourage women's participation

Women Entrepreneurship Forum

It is a major platform launched by NITI Aayog to promote women entrepreneurship. The platform hosts various workshops and educational programs to motivate women to start their own business.

Prime Minister's Mudra Yojana

Even though the scheme was launched to help anyone wishing to set up a micro/small enterprise gets an institutional loan of up to Rs 10 lakh. But most of the loan avails by women.

BhartiyaMahila Bank Business Loan

This type of business loan was established in 2017 to help women to access affordable credit and dream big despite lack of resources. A collateral-free loan can also be availed for loans below Rs 1 crore.

Dena Shakti Yojana

This scheme was launched for women entrepreneurs wanting to start their business in certain sectors like agriculture, retail and manufacturing. The scheme provides loans at an interest rate of 0.25% lower than the base rate. Maximum loan application is Rs. 2 million.

Udyogini Yojana

This scheme is for women with an annual income of Rs 1.5 lakh. It provides loans up to Rs 3 lakh for women who want to start a business but do not have the capital.

Conclusion

There are over 15.7 million women-owned enterprises in India, with women leading the start-up ecosystem. This change clearly underlines the potential and determination of Indian women. In the coming decades, India is set to witness a major transformation, with women dominating the workforce as well as shaping and enhancing the future of the country. It is estimated that by 2030 more than 30 million women-owned businesses are expected to provide 150-170 million jobs.