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Private Member Bill for Two-Child Policy Norm

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Why in News

Recently, a **Private Member's Constitution Amendment Bill** has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha **proposing incentives in taxation, education and employment for people who limit their family size to two children.**

The Bill is likely to be discussed when Parliament meets for the second half of the Budget session.

Key Features of the Bill

- The Bill proposes for the incorporation of a **new provision — Article 47A (Duty of the State to promote small family norm) — in Part IV of the Constitution.**
Part IV of the Indian Constitution deals with **the Directive Principles of the State Policy.**
- The proposed insertion of **Article 47A** intends **to withdraw all concessions** from people who fail to adhere to the **'small-family-norm'.**
- The Bill also intends **to offer incentives** in taxes, employment, education and priority in social benefit schemes and school admissions etc to its people who keep their family limited to two children.

NOTE:

- **Entry 20-A in List III (Concurrent List) of the 7th Schedule** deals with population control and family planning. This provision was added through the **42nd Constitutional Amendment 1976.**
- The **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution**, headed by **M.N. Venkatachaliah** had also recommended in 2002, that **Article 47A** to be inserted into the Constitution to **control population explosion.**

Current Status

- Presently, **six states including Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh** have made the **two-child norm mandatory** for all panchayat members.
In 2018, **412 panchayat members in Rajasthan** had been **removed** from their posts because they failed to comply with the two-child norm.
- The Supreme Court has **upheld the provision** in several states that **debars members with more than two children** from **contesting and holding** panchayat posts.

Need for Two-Child Policy Norm

- India's population has already **crossed 125 crores** and India is **expected to surpass the world's most populous nation-China** in the next couple of decades.
- Despite having the **National Population Control Policy (2000)**, India is the **second-most populous country in the world**.
- Thus, India's natural resources are extremely **over-burdened** and facing **over-exploitation**.

Criticism of the Two-Child Policy

- The restricted child policy will create a shortage of educated young people needed to carry on India's technological revolution.
- The problems like gender imbalance, undocumented children, etc. faced by China (as a result of the one-child policy) might be experienced by India.
- India's **birthrate is slowing down to sustainable levels**. In **2000**, the fertility rate was still relatively high at **3.2** children per woman. By **2016**, that number had already fallen to **2.3** children.

Private Member's Bill

- Any Member of Parliament (MP) who is **not a minister** is referred to as a private member.
- The purpose of the private member's bill is to draw the government's attention to what individual MPs see as issues and gaps in the existing legal framework, which require legislative intervention. Thus it **reflects the stand of the opposition party** on public matters.
- Its introduction in the House requires **one month's notice**.
- Its rejection by the House has **no implication on the parliamentary confidence** in the government or its resignation.
- The **last time** a private member's bill was passed by both Houses was in **1970**.
It was the Supreme Court (Enlargement of Criminal Appellate Jurisdiction) Bill, 1968.
- **14** private member's bills have **become law so far**.

Source: IE