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NGOs to Update on Covid-19 Fight Every Month

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Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has **asked all Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with foreign contribution licences** to update the government on their efforts towards containing the **Covid-19** outbreak every month.

Key Points

- NGOs receiving funds from overseas **under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010**, have to report their Covid-19 related activities by the 15th of every month.
- This was the MHA's second request to NGOs in controlling the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Earlier **MHA had requested NGOs to aid and supplement** the efforts of the government and local administration in fighting the spread of Covid-19.

The MHA had indicated the broad areas in which the NGOs could offer support, which included **setting up community kitchens** for migrants and the homeless, and **providing shelter to homeless** daily wage workers and the unemployed poor.

- The request for assistance from NGOs comes after a **concerted government crackdown on the social sector**, which led to **significant fall in overseas funding for NGOs**.
 - Over the last five years, the MHA has deregistered as many as 14,500 NGOs, and has, over the last three years, cancelled the foreign contribution licences of over 6,600 nonprofits for violations of the provisions of the FCRA.
 - According to the government, FCRA-registered NGOs had received a total Rs 2,244.77 crore in 2018-19 (as on November 28) as compared to Rs 16,902.41 crore in 2017-18.

Non-Governmental Organisations

- Worldwide, the term ‘NGO’ is used to describe a body that **is neither part of a government nor a conventional for-profit business organisation.**
- NGOs are groups of ordinary citizens that are involved in a wide range of activities that may have **charitable, social, political, religious or other interests.**
- NGOs are helpful in implementing **government schemes at the grassroots.**
- In India, **NGOs can be registered** under a plethora of Acts such as the **Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860, Religious Endowments Act, 1863, Indian Trusts Act,** etc.
- India has possibly **the largest number of active NGOs** in the world, a study commissioned by the government put the number of NGOs in 2009 at 33 lakh.
That was one **NGO for less than 400 Indians,** and many times the number of primary schools and primary health centres.
- Ministries such as Health and Family Welfare, Human Resource Department, etc provide funding to a handful of NGOs.
- NGOs also receive funds from abroad, if they are registered with the Home Ministry under the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).**
Without this, no NGO can receive cash or anything of value **higher than Rs 25,000.**

Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010

- Foreign funding of voluntary organizations in India is regulated under FCRA act and is implemented by the **Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- The Acts ensures that the recipients of foreign contributions adhere to the stated **purpose for which such contribution has been obtained.**
- Under the Act, organisations are required to **register themselves every five years.**

Source: IE