



Mains Marathon

Day 45: How do you define a welfare state? Is India truly a welfare state? (250 words)

24 Aug 2022 | GS Paper 2 | Social Justice

Approach / Explanation / Answer

- Start your answer by giving a brief about welfare state.
- Discuss the characteristics of the Welfare State precisely.
- Mention Welfare State nature of India with suitable examples.
- Discuss few challenges faced by India in becoming a Welfare State.
- In conclusion, be suggestive and exemplify India striving to achieve those ideals.

Answer:

A welfare state is a state that is committed to providing basic economic security for its citizens by protecting them from market risks associated with old age, unemployment, accidents, and sickness.

The Welfare State is a politico-economic setup with the following characteristics:

- It provides basic minimum services to its citizens like law and order.
- It is interventionist in nature. It does so as to further common social good.
- It has a multi-party democratic system.
- It has a mixed economy. Both the private and public sectors co-exist at the same time.

Features of welfare state in India

- **Striving to achieve social goals:** Through Directive Principles, the State strives to achieve various common social goals like conservation of the environment, gender equality, representation to depressed communities etc.
- **Ensuring Food Security:** India has achieved food security for its citizens by the Green Revolution, White Revolution and currently working on Nutritional Security by implementing the National Nutrition Mission.
- **Redistribution of wealth:** So as to reduce inequalities have been affected in the form of Land Reforms, Progressive Taxation Policy, Subsidies etc.
- Profiteering is made subservient to the common good by strict laws like the Companies Act, Prevention of Corruption Act, etc.
- Means of livelihood is provided through various **programmes like MGNREGA.**

Challenges to Indian Welfare State

- **Income inequality** in India has been rising especially after LPG reforms, as per Oxfam report.
- **Failure of policy implementation** like the Land Ceiling Act.
- **Prevalence of discrimination** - gender (Nirbhaya Case), caste (Dalit atrocities), minorities (communal violence) etc.
- **Unemployment** levels have steadily risen in the last five years.

Thus, India faces many challenges in becoming a Welfare State model in true sense. However, it continually strives to move in that direction in future too, evident in programmes like Ayushman Bharat, Bharatmala and Sagarmala project, strengthening of armed forces etc.

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