Draft National Science Technology and Innovation Policy, 2020

Why in News

Recently, the draft of the **5th National Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP)** has been uploaded by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** on its website.

- This Policy will replace the **[Science Technology and Innovation Policy of 2013](#)**.

Key Points

- **Aim:**

    - To bring about **profound changes through short, medium and long-term mission mode projects** by building a nurtured **ecosystem that promotes research and innovation** on the part of both individuals and organizations.
    - To **identify and address strengths and weaknesses of the Indian Science Technology and Innovation (STI) ecosystem** to catalyse socio-economic development of the country and also make the Indian STI ecosystem globally competitive.
- **Important Provisions:**

    - **Related to Equity and Inclusion:**

        - **Gender Equality:**

            - It proposes that at least **30% representation be ensured for women** in all decision-making bodies, as well as **"spousal benefits" be provided to partners of scientists** belonging to the [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) community.](#)
            - The **LGBTQ+ community** should be **included in all conversations** related to **gender equity,** and provisions be made to **safeguard their rights** and promote their representation and retention in the science and technology sector.
        - **Child and Elderly Care:**

            - **Child-care benefits are proposed to be made gender-neutral,** and **flexible work timings and adequate parental leave** are to be offered to cater to maternity, childbirth and child care.
            - All publicly-funded research institutions and universities will be asked to provide **day-care centres for children of employees, and also have a provision for elderly care.**
        - **For Disabled:**

            - For the **benefit of** [people with disabilities](#), the policy asks all publicly-funded scientific institutions to make **"structural and cultural changes" to support their inclusion.**

- **Other Related Provisions:**

  - For age-related cut-offs in matters relating to selection, promotion, awards or grants, **the "academic age" and not the biological age would be considered.**
  - **Removal of bars on married couples** being employed in the same department or laboratory.

    - As of now, married couples are not posted in the same department, leading to cases of loss of employment or forced transfers when colleagues decide to get married.

- **Open Science Policy (One Nation, One Subscription):** To make scientific knowledge and data available to all, the government has proposed:

  - To **buy bulk subscriptions of all important scientific journals across the world, and provide everyone in India free access to them.**
  - To set up a **Science, Technology and Innovation Observatory** that will serve as the central repository of all kinds of data generated from scientific research in the country.

- **Research and Education:**

  - It proposes to establish **Education Research Centres (ERCs)** and **Collaborative Research Centres (CRCs)** to provide research inputs to policymakers and bring together stakeholders.
  - **Research and Innovation Excellence Frameworks (RIEF)** will be developed to enhance the quality of research along with the promotion of engagements with the relevant stakeholders.
  - A dedicated portal to provide access to the outputs of such publicly-funded research will be created through the **Indian Science and Technology Archive of Research (INDSTA).**
  - To set up Infrastructure to **boost local Research and Development capabilities** and **reduce large scale import** in selected sectors of domestic importance such as electronic hardware for home appliances, railways, intelligent transport, clean tech, defence, etc.

- **For Strengthening India's Strategic Position:**

  - To achieve **technological self-reliance** and **position India among the top three scientific superpowers** in the decade to come.
  - To **double the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) researchers, Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D (GERD)** and private sector contribution to the GERD every 5 years.
  - Establishment of a **Strategic Technology Board** that will **bridge all strategic government departments,** and monitor and recommend technologies to be bought or indigenously made.

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