Interim Budget 2019: Constitutional Provisions and Social Sector

Constitutional Provisions

- According to **Article 266** of the Constitution, **Parliamentary approval** is required to draw money from the **Consolidated Fund of India.**
- Besides, **Article 114 (3) of the Constitution** stipulates that **no amount can be withdrawn** from the Consolidated Fund without the **enactment of a law (i.e. Appropriation bill).**
- The passing of Appropriation bill **takes time** and usually goes on till the end of April. But the government needs money to carry on its **normal activities after 31st March (the end of the financial year).**
- To overcome this functional difficulty, the **Article 116 of the Constitution** has authorised the Lok Sabha to make any grant in advance in respect to the estimated expenditure for a part of the financial year, pending the completion of the voting of the demands for grants and the enactment of the appropriation bill. This provision is **known as the 'vote on account'.**
- Vote on Account was frequently used until 2016 when the Budget was presented on the last working day of February.
- However, **since 2017,** the budget presentation date was **advanced to February 1.** This helped the government to use almost 2 months time to get the full-budget passed in the same financial year.
- Since 2017, Vote on Account is **not usually used** as part of the government budgeting process, unless in **special cases** like an **election year.**
- An outgoing government presents only an interim Budget or seeks a vote on account.
- An **Interim Budget is not the same as a 'Vote on Account'.** While a 'Vote on Account' deals **only with the expenditure side** of the government's budget, an Interim Budget is a **complete set of accounts, including both expenditure and receipts.**
- However, the estimates are presented for the entire year, as is the case with the regular Budget. Having said this, the **incoming government** has full freedom to

change the estimates completely when the final Budget is presented.

Social Sector

- **Health**
  - For the government's ambitious flagship scheme for universal health insurance, **Ayushman Bharat,** the government has **increased** the allocation by **166% over past year (Rs 6,400 crore from Rs 2,400 crore).**
  - An additional allocation of Rs 250 crore is provided under the **National Urban Health Mission** for building **wellness centres.**
  - Allocation to the **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna**, which provides health insurance to families below the poverty line, **increased by 142%.**
  - Setting up of a new - the **22nd AIIMS in Haryana announced.**
  - Allocation for **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)** is being increased from Rs.23,357 crore in 2018-19 to Rs.27,584 crore in 2019-20.
  - The allocations for **National Health Mission** that covers various health services such immunization, neonatal care, ASHA workers, Vector Borne Diseases, TB, Leprosy and communicable disease **grew 3.46%.**
  - Swachh Bharat Mission's allocation **decreased** to Rs 12,750 crore from Rs 16,978 crore last year.
- **Poor, Backward and Vulnerable Sections**
  - **25% additional seats in educational institutions** to meet the 10% reservation for the poor.
  - Targeted expenditure to bridge urban-rural divide & to improve quality of life in villages. The Government to make 1 lakh villages into **Digital Villages** over next five years.
  - All willing households to be provided electricity connections by March 2019
  - A **new committee under NITI Ayog** to identify all the **remaining De-notified nomadic and semi-Nomadic tribes.**
  - **New Welfare development Board under Ministry of social justice** and empowerment for development and welfare of De-notified nomadic and semi nomadic tribes.
- **Education**
  - The fund allocation for the **National Education Mission has been increased by about 20%.** The four prominent schemes under National Education Mission are: **Sakshar Bharat, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha and Teacher training programs.**
  - National programme on **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** has been envisaged by the government, which also includes education and training of youths for AI-related jobs.