Merger of Film Bodies under National Film Development Corporation

For Prelims: NFDC, Public Sector Undertaking, Central Board of Film Certification.

For Mains: Issues with the merger of the Film Bodies under National Film Development Corporation.

Why in News?

Recently, the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** announced the **merger of four film media units**, including the Films Division, Directorate of Film Festivals, National Film Archive of India, and Children's Film Society of India **with the National Film Development Corporation.**

- The decision is in line with **Bimal Julka-led expert committee's (2020) report** on rationalisation, closure and merger of film media units.

What are the Key Points?

- **About the Four Film Media Units**:
  - **Films Division:**
    - It was **established in 1948** and is the **oldest of the four units.**
    - It was **created primarily to produce documentaries and news magazines** as publicity for government programmes and to keep a cinematic record of Indian history.
  - **Directorate of Film Festivals:**
    - Set up under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in 1973 by the Government of India, it is entrusted with the **objective of promoting Indian films.**
    - DFF also strives to promote inter-cultural understanding through film-based cultural exchanges.
  - **National Film Archives of India:**
    - The National Film Archives of India was established in 1964 with the primary objective of acquiring and preserving Indian cinematic heritage.
  - **Children's Film Society of India:**
    - CFSI started functioning in 1955 as an **autonomous body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.**
    - CFSI **promotes films that provide healthy and wholesome entertainment** for children to broaden their perspective and encourage them to reflect on the world around.
- **About NFDC:**
  - **National Film Development Corporation (NFDC)** is a **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** working under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** which was **established in 1975 with a view to promote and organize an integrated development** of the Indian Film Industry and to foster excellence in cinema.
  - It is currently headed by **Ravinder Bhakar,** who is also the chief executive officer of the **Central Board of Film Certification.**

What will be the Significance of the Merger?

- **Better Coordination:**
  - Bringing all these activities under a single management will **reduce the overlap of various activities and ensure better utilisation of public resources.**
- **Give Strong Impetus to the Production of Films:**
  - It will give a **strong impetus to the production of films** of all genres including feature films, documentaries, children films and animation films, promotion of films through participation in different international festivals and organizing various domestic festivals, preservation of filmic content, digitization and restoration of films, and distribution and outreach activities.
    - The **ownership of the assets available** with these units will, however, remain with the Government of India.

What are the issues with the Merger?

- **National Film Development Corporation is a loss Making Corporation:**
  - The four public-funded bodies are being merged with a loss-making corporation.
- **No Concrete Plan on Merging:**
  - There is **no concrete plan on how the transfer of archives will be carried out** as celluloid ('used for cinematographic film) is fragile and inflammable material.
  - There may be a case of **disinvestment** if NFDC will not generate profit. In that case if our archives do not remain autonomous public institutions, they will undoubtedly be tampered with, damaged, or destroyed forever.

What is the State of India's Film Industry?

- India is the **largest producer of movies** globally with an industry that is led by the private sector and produces more than 3000 films in a year.
- The **value of the film industry in India in the financial year 2020** was about 183 billion Indian rupees.

Source: IE

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