Mains Practice Question

Q. Explain the term welfare state? Discuss to what extent Indian fulfills the criteria of being a welfare state?

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Approach

- Explain the characteristics of the Welfare State precisely.
- Highlight the features of the Welfare State of India with suitable examples.
- Highlight a few challenges faced by India in becoming a Welfare State.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

The welfare state is a way of governing in which the state or an established group of social institutions provides basic economic security for its citizens.

A welfare state is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions of a good life.

Body

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.
- Legal Provisions: Cronyism, Profiteering is made subservient to common good by strict laws like Companies Act, Prevention of Corruption Act etc.

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.

Conclusion

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 Ayushmann Bharat, Bharatmala and Sagarmala project, strengthening of armed forces etc.