



## SMILE Scheme

**For Prelims:** SMILE Scheme, Central Sector Schemes, National Institute of Social Defence, National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation

**For Mains:** SMILE Scheme for beggars and its significance in enhancing their livelihood, Decriminalization of begging, status of beggars in India.

### Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme **SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**.

- It includes a sub-scheme - '**Central Sector Scheme**' for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging.
- Currently, a pilot project of it is ongoing in 7 cities namely Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Indore, Lucknow, Nagpur and Patna.

### Key Points

- **About:**
  - It is a new Scheme after the **merger of existing Schemes for Beggars and Transgenders**.
  - Scheme provides for the **use of the existing shelter homes** available with the State/UT Governments and Urban local bodies for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of Begging.
    - In case of non-availability of existing shelter homes, **new dedicated shelter homes** are to be set up by the implementing agencies.
- **Focus:**
  - The focus of the scheme is extensively on **rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counseling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages** and so on.
  - It is estimated that an approximate **60,000 poorest persons would be benefited** under this scheme for leading a life of dignity.
- **Implementation:**
  - It will be implemented with the support of State/UT Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), institutions and others.
- **Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Beggars:**
  - It will be a **comprehensive scheme for persons engaged in the act of begging**.
  - The scheme has been implemented **in the selected cities on pilot basis having large concentrations** of the Beggar community.
  - During the year 2019-20, this Ministry had released an amount of Rs. **1 Crore to National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)** and Rs. 70 Lakh to **National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)** for skill development programmes for beggars.

### ▪ **Status of Beggars In India:**

- According to the [Census 2011](#), the **total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670** (including 2,21,673 males and 1,91,997 females) and the number has increased from the last census.
- **West Bengal tops the chart followed by Uttar Pradesh and Bihar** at number two and three respectively. Lakshadweep merely has two vagrants according to the 2011 census.
- Among the union territories, **New Delhi had the largest number of beggars 2,187** followed by 121 in Chandigarh.
- Among the northeastern states, **Asam topped the chart** with 22,116 beggars, while Mizoram ranked low with 53 beggars.
- Recently, the [Supreme Court](#) has agreed to examine a plea for [decriminalising begging](#) which has been made an offense in various states under Prevention of Begging Act.

### **National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation**

- It is a **Government of India Undertaking** under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It was incorporated **under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956** on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1992 as a Company not for profit.
- Its objective is **to promote economic and developmental activities** for the benefit of Backward Classes and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures.

### **National Institute of Social Defence**

- The NISD is an [Autonomous Body](#) and is registered under **Societies Act XXI of 1860** with the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), Delhi.
- It is a **central advisory body** for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It is the **nodal training and research institute** in the field of social defence.
- The institute currently **focuses on human resource development** in the areas of drug abuse prevention, welfare of senior citizens, beggary prevention, transgender and other social defence issues.
- The **mandate of the institute is to provide inputs for the social defence programmes** of the Government of India through training, research & documentation.

[Source: PIB](#)

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