

AIR Spotlight - Empowering Women, Empowering Nation

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation. In this article, a discussion on the new education policy is featured.

Participants:

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Context:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 21st December 2021 launched women-centric initiatives in the Prayagraj district of Uttar Pradesh. The article will discuss the key highlights of the initiatives.

Introduction:

- Prime Minister Modi launched several initiatives for the benefit of women in Prayagraj. After this, he began addressing a program for which over two lakh women had gathered at the Parade Ground.
- He transferred ₹1000 crore in bank accounts of various [Self Help Groups \(SHGs\)](#). He also transferred money to over one lakh beneficiaries of the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme, which provides assistance to the girl child.

Significance of Women Empowerment:

- Women's empowerment lies at the core of Modern Society. It all started in the late 18th century when people started realizing the importance of women in politics and society. Since then, country after country started focusing on women's empowerment.
- In India, during our nationalist struggle, [Raja Ram Mohan Roy](#) was one of the first to emphasize providing equitable status to women.
- Post-independence, continuous efforts have been made to ensure that women in India enjoy fair and equitable status.
- In the last five years, various projects have been introduced to provide benefits to women especially to those belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the society so that they can become dignified and self-reliant citizens of the society.
- Women empowerment is the key to social stability, political growth, economic prosperity, and sustainable development.
- Realizing the importance of women's empowerment, the government has launched several initiatives that focused on the welfare of women.

- Due to the pandemic, everyone has suffered a lot. But, the most severe impact was seen in the case of women. Providing them opportunities will increase the labour force participation rate of women and also boost the economy as women constitute approximately 50 percent of the population of India.

What are Self Help Groups?

- Self Help Groups (SHGs) are defined as small, voluntary groups of 10–20 women, formed by people related by an affinity for a specific purpose, who provide support for each other.
- Numerous types of SHGs exist in developing countries, with women coming together for objectives that include economic, legal, health-related, and cultural reasons.

Role of Self Help Groups in Women Empowerment:

- SHGs are an innovative organizational setup in India for the welfare and empowerment of women and it is promoted by the government.
- The SHG plays a major role in sensitizing more women to form SHGs and in making them realize its importance in their empowerment. This helps in women's collective decision-making and also enhances the confidence and capabilities of the women.
- SHGs have changed the gender dynamics of power within a family and ultimately the society at large. Women now have greater say in family matters and also are seen as stakeholders and partners in taking the community forward.
- Financial independence with the help of SHGs has eventually paved the way for the social upliftment of women and their voices.
- A self-help group is a useful platform to enhance women's health through increased knowledge and awareness on health issues, and financial security during health emergencies, etc.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme:

- To ensure survival, protection, and empowerment of the girl child, the Government has announced the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative.
- The [Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao \(BBBP\)](#) scheme was launched in January 2015 by Mr Modi.
- This is being implemented through a national campaign and focussed multi-sectoral action in 100 selected districts low in CSR, covering all States and UTs.
- This is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The objectives of this initiative are:

- Prevention of gender-biased sex selective elimination.
- Ensuring survival & protection of the girl child.

- Ensuring education and participation of the girl child.

Achievements of the scheme:

- This scheme's aim was to make girls independent, both monetarily as well as socially.
- With the help of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, the government is trying to spread awareness among people towards women's issues.
- This scheme helps to improve the effectiveness of the delivery of safety services meant for women.
- The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme has put an impact just 2 years from its launch date. The [sex ratio](#) has improved in the country.
- There are a lot of women now who are joining fields and careers of their own choice. These careers are armed forces, science, journalism, sports, wrestling, engineering as well as many others.
- Under this scheme, the government is trying to motivate the parents of the girl children to send them to school.

Measures to be taken:

- Inheritance of the property on equitable terms should be protected.
- At the workplace, the dignity of women should be respected and recognized.
- Certain measures have been taken to protect the rights of women and they should be monitored.
- Emphasis should be on the safety of women.

Conclusion:

The government is making continuous efforts to empower women so that they can contribute to political, economic, and social development.
