

NCW seeks extension of Paternity Leave

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[GS Paper 2 - Govt Policies and Interventions]

Context - Extending paternity leaves to reduce the burden of raising children on mothers, incentivising employers and sensitisation of the corporate sector to employ more women workers were among the recommendations made by experts at the Final Law Review Consultation on the Maternity Benefit Act.

Key Highlights

- The National Commission for Women (NCW) organized the final Law review consultation on the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and the 2017 Amendment.
- The meeting was aimed at reviewing and analyzing the legislation affecting women and recommending amendments to meet any lacunae, inadequacies and shortcomings.
- NCW has conducted one preliminary consultation and five regional-level consultations to relook at the Act in order to formulate specific recommendations for amendments and enhance the outreach of the legislation.

- Some of the important suggestions made by the panelists were to extend the paternity leaves so that the burden of raising the child is shared equally between both the parents, incentivise employers and sensitization of the corporate sector to employ more women workers.
- The experts also discussed the issue of women working in the unorganized sector, the provision of creche facilities on a case-to-case basis rather than a number of employees, the scope of incentives for employers, etc.

About NCW

- The Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) recommended nearly five decades ago, the setting up of a NCW to fulfill the surveillance functions to facilitate redressal of grievances and to accelerate the socio-economic development of women.
- Under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, the NCW was set up as a statutory body in January 1992. The commission consists of a chairperson, a member secretary and five other members. The chairperson of the NCW is nominated by the Central Government.
- Its mission is to strive towards enabling women to achieve equality and equal participation in all spheres of life by securing her due rights and entitlements through suitable policy formulation, legislative measures, etc.