

## **National Policy on Domestic Workers**

### **Why in news?**

\n\n

The labour and employment ministry is set to formulate a national policy on domestic workers.

\n\n

### **What is the need?**

\n\n

\n

- India's domestic workers numbers around 5 million domestic workers of which around 3.5 million are women.

\n

- They perform tasks that are not recognised as “work”.

\n

- The absence of legislation in this area led to a thriving industry of illegal private placement agencies.

\n

- These agencies lure women from rural areas to cities promising them lucrative salary, lifestyle and benefits.

\n

- Many of the victims are of tribal origin from poor areas and are often subjected to abuses.

\n

- It includes working around the clock, physical violence, sexual assaults and even threat to their lives.

\n

\n\n

### **What will be the highlights of the policy?**

\n\n

\n

- The policy proposes legal status to domestic workers.

\n

- It would facilitate recognition of part-time and full-time domestic help as

“workers”.

\n

- It would enable them with the right to register with the state labour department.

\n

- It also plans to ensure minimum wages and equal remuneration to the domestic workers.

\n

\n\n

## **Will a “national policy” help?**

\n\n

\n

- **Implementation** - There is no shortage of existing legislation in this matter.
- \n
- Unorganized Social Security Act (USSA), 2008, and Sexual Harassment against Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, are some examples.
- \n
- USSA recognised domestic work as “work” and mandated the formation of a state social security board to recommend, advise, and monitor social welfare schemes for unorganised workers.
- \n
- None of this has been implemented in a large number of states yet.
- \n
- **Complexity** - According to UN, unlike other forms of labour market activity, domestic work takes place in an unconventional place of work, i.e. the household.
- \n
- Implementations of labour laws such as minimum wages and regularised work hours also remain a challenge.
- \n
- Such regulation is complex because the nature of domestic work is unique compared to other forms of work.
- \n
- The sector lacks effective means to regulate working conditions, for example, through streamlined job descriptions which could be offered through standard contracts.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Business Standard**

\n

