

1. Do you think that rationalization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and simply transferring of fund to state without central monitoring may bring people at the verge of mercy of state government? Discuss the steps needed for improving CSS. (150 Words)

**Answer:**

Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) are schemes that are implemented by State governments of India, but are largely funded by the Central Government with a defined State Government share.

- Since the implementation of recommendations of the 14th finance commission, which increased the share of states in taxes to 42% from 32%, Centre has closed many CSS and also there have been proposal that central monitoring of funds dispersed under CSS should be done away with.
- There have been concerns raised by many experts that in many states specially in North India state government has been spending more money on populist schemes like free electricity, free laptop, free water, etc. instead of focusing on more important areas like Health and education, sanitation, etc. Therefore if central monitoring would be done away with it would adversely affect the progress achieved in health, education and mal-nutrition in last few decades.
- However, if we take objective analysis we will find that in long run, it would not be electorally feasible to neglect important social sector areas like health and education and we have seen an increasing trend in last few years where bad governance is usually penalized in the elections by the electorates of the state and this phenomenon could also be seen in BIMARU states. Thus the fear of experts that it would put people at mercy of state government is uncalled for, in fact freedom to spend money would improve the outcomes of the CSS as each state has its peculiar problem which need a peculiar solution and which only the local government knows the best.

**Steps needed for improving CSS**

- We need to implement BK chaturvedi committee recommendation and increase the flexifund component from 10 to 20%. Flexi funds are those funds which state government could increase without any conditions attached.
- CSS should be reviewed every two years. And those schemes which are not achieving its objective should either be revamped or closed down.
- Schemes dealing with similar objective or which are closely related should be merged together.
- Centrally Sponsored Schemes should be divided into core scheme and optional scheme, While core scheme should be implemented in each state, in optional schemes state should be given choice whether they want to implement the scheme or use the money allocated for that scheme for implementing some other scheme, For example Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao has a lot of relevance in Haryana and Punjab, but Kerala does not require that scheme, instead it should be allowed to utilize the money for some other scheme.

- CSS in areas of state list should be avoided, as it is an encroachment on the Power of the states or if it is brought, Freedom should be given to each state to mould its certain features so that the scheme is implemented according to the needs of the states
- CSS should be introduced as pilot projects in certain small areas and if they are successful in that small area only than it should be expanded and brought at national level.
- Social audit should be made mandatory for all CSS and focus should be on measurable outputs and outcomes.
- Each Ministry of the Government of India should undertake activity mapping with regard to its CSSs and identify the levels where activities need to be located; at the ministry level, at the State Government level or at the Panchayat level. Sector specific works planned under CSS need to find place in the overall development plan prepared by the Panchayat. Enough scope should be given to the Panchayats so that they could integrate such schemes within the framework of their areas' holistic development plans.
- Panchayats should have an important role in implementation. Parallel bodies should be wound up and merged with standing committees of the PRIs. Some of them may need to have organic linkage with the PRIs.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

### **Answer the following Questions**

1. Highlight the characteristics and applications of Cyber Physical systems. Also, enumerate the various objectives of the Cyber Physical Systems programme recently launched by the government. (150 words)
2. Explaining the rationale behind Geographical Indication (GI) protection, highlight the issues in harnessing the potential commercial benefits of GI in India. (150 words)