All-India Income Distribution Survey

Why in News?

Recently the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) will conduct India's first dedicated Household Income Survey in 2026.

- **First All-India income distribution survey** – It will be the first dedicated nationwide survey focused specifically on household income distribution and welfare.
- **Aim** – To get an accurate picture of household income levels and patterns and covers both urban and rural households.
- **Guided by Technical Expert Group (TEG)** – A Technical Expert Group (TEG) has been set up under Surjit Bhalla, former IMF Executive Director, to guide the process.
- It will finalise concepts, definitions, sampling design, methodology, etc.
- **Focus on data-driven policy making –** The data will aid in welfare policy formulation and targeted interventions.
- It helps assess income inequality and socio-economic disparities.
- **Assessment of technology impact –** Survey will explore how adoption of technology affects household income (e.g., digital platforms, remote work, gig economy).
- **Incorporating global best practices –** Methodologies will be aligned with successful surveys from countries like Australia, the USA, Canada, and South Africa.
- **Comprehensive Coverage of Income Components** – It will gather information from all sources such as wages, self-employment income, agricultural income, remittances, pensions, etc.
- **Learning from past attempts –** Earlier efforts in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1983-84 faced challenges in reliable data collection.
- The current approach is designed to overcome these limitations.
- **Emphasis on reliable and robust estimate** – The current estimates focus on ensuring income estimates are consistent with consumption and savings data.
- The use of advanced statistical tools for estimation and error minimisation.
- Adoption of advanced survey tools and modern sampling design.
- Oversight to ensure reliability, transparency, and global alignment.

Significance of the Survey

- **Reliable data on income distribution** – It provides the first authentic, large-scale dataset on household income levels, distribution patterns, and disparities across India.
- **Fills data gaps** – India lacks comprehensive, reliable income distribution data for households.
- **Supports policy making** – It will aid in evidence-based, data-driven policy decisions on welfare, taxation, and inequality.
- It helps to assess the impact of technology adoption on household incomes (wages).
- **Helps assess economic inequality** – It offers an accurate picture of income

inequality and the gap between rich and poor, aiding in framing policies for inclusive growth.
- It facilitates India's progress monitoring towards international commitments like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Strengthens economic planning –** It aids in understanding consumption, savings, and investment patterns linked to income levels.

Reference

The Times of India| All-India Income Distribution Survey

