Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India)

Why in news?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call in 2020 for an Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) highlighted the reality that in a post-COVID-19 world, India cannot exist in isolation.

How does the world influence the domestic aspects of a nation?

- The pandemic has shown us that whether it is the stressed economy or human rights, rural development or climate change, defence or foreign policy, we need to re-imagine the way forward for India and its relationship with the world.
- The ripple effects of the war in Ukraine on our economy and democracy make it imperative for us to continuously engage with the world around us.
- As Rabindranath Tagore said, it is not possible to remain behind "narrow domestic walls".

What is Atmanirbhar Bharat?

- Atmanirbhar Bharat refers to a self-reliant India dealing with the world on its own terms.
- It is is neither protectionist nor isolationist.
- In 2020, the Government announced the Special comprehensive package of Rs 20 lakh crores (10% of India's GDP) to kick start the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan (Self-reliant India campaign).
- The five pillars of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat are
    1. Economy
    2. Infrastructure
    3. System
    4. Vibrant Demography
    5. Demand

What is the relevance of the ideational foundation of this concept?

- Mahatma Gandhi's call for Swadeshi galvanised our nation. Likewise, Atmanirbhar Bharat is Swadeshi tailored to India in 2022.
- Within the country it is important that the conflicting aspirations and expectations of States are managed and harmonised to present a united, confident and self-reliant India.
    - For example, the aspirations of the Dravidian model of development and other regional-specific aspirations should synchronise with the holistic concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- National identity is essential for modern states, especially when states are built around liberal democratic political values and the shared experiences of diverse communities.

- Former Tamil Nadu Chief Ministers C.N. Annadurai and M. Karunanidhi ensured that their politics were regionally distinct while staying uncompromisingly nationalistic.
- In 1967 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, Dravidian icon Periyar supported the Congress party and not the DMK, while C. Rajagopalachari supported the DMK.

How should be the model of self-reliant India?

- **Contributor rather than a consumer**- Atmanirbharta model for a rising India should be based on civilisational pride, experience and a self-belief that will help India be a contributor to the world rather than only a consumer.
- **Tailoring to suit the needs**- No one-size-fits-all Western model can work for a country as diverse as India, as evidenced by the catastrophic financial crisis of 2008.
- Defence, human rights, climate change, agriculture, the rural-urban divide, economy, governance and federalism are all addressed in the five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- **Human-centric model**- Social capital, family and communities are now at the centre of a development model.
- Atmanirbhar Bharat is a human-centric way forward based on our own civilisational ethos and values.
- It envisages a self-reliant India working for Vasudaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family).

References

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