Eklavya Model Residential Schools Scheme

Why in news?

The government is vehemently pushing to set up 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for tribal students.

What are Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)?

- The EMRS model was first introduced in 1997-98 to provide quality education to tribal students with residential facilities in remote corners.
- The aim was to build schools at par with the **Jawahar Navoday Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas.**
- The schools focus not only on academic education but on the all-round development of the students.
- Each school has a capacity of 480 students, catering to students from Class VI to XII.
- Until 2018-19, the scheme was overseen by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** while maximum control of identifying new schools, recruiting, management and admissions lying with **State governments**.
- The funds for these schools were to come from the grants under **Article 275(1)** (charged on the Consolidated Fund of India in each year as grants in aid).
- The guideline only mandates the infrastructural requirements of 20-acre plots for each EMRS, leaving other criteria to the discretion of State governments.

Wherever density of ST population is 90% or more, it is proposed to set up Eklavya Model Day Boarding School (EMDBS) on an experimental basis for providing school education without residential facility.

What about the revamp of EMRS?

- **Powers to Union government** - In 2018-19, the new guidelines gave the Union government more power to sanction schools and manage them.
- **Education Society** - A National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) was set up and entrusted with the management of the State Education Society for Tribal Students (SESTS), which would run the EMRS on the ground.
- **Population criteria** - The new guidelines set a target that by the year 2022, every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons, will have an EMRS.
- **Area requirement** - It also reduced the minimum land requirement from 20 acres to 15 acres.

What are the issues with EMRS?

As of July 2022, all functional EMRS had a teaching strength of just under 4,000 against the 11,340 recommended by NESTS.

- **Teacher recruitment** - Despite the setting up of the NESTS, there is a shortage of teachers and non-uniformity in the quality of teachers.
- **Land acquisition** - The Standing Committee noted that the area and population criteria were making land acquisition difficult especially in hilly areas, leftwing extremism-affected areas and the northeast.
- **Exclusions** - The Committee noted that the population criteria deprives a scattered tribal population of the benefit of EMRS.

Quick facts

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya

- The Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti scheme has been established during the session 1986-87 based on the National Policy on Education, 1986.
- Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya are fully residential, co-educational schools affiliated to CBSE, New Delhi.
- It have classes from 6th to 12 standard.
- Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Education.
- **Salient features**
    - Children are predominantly from rural areas
    - 30% reservation for girls.
    - Quality modern education with a strong component of culture
    - Promotion of National Integration through student migration between Hindi speaking ad Non-Hindi speaking states
    - Following a three language formula with vernacular as the medium of instruction up to Class-VIII

Kendriya Vidyalayas

- The Scheme of Kendriya Vidyalayas (Central Schools) was approved in 1962 based on the recommendations of the Second Central Pay Commission.
- The Central School Organization was started as a unit of the Ministry of Education.
- The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act in 1965 to provide, establish, endow, maintain and manage the Kendriya Vidyalayas located all over India and abroad.
- The Government of India wholly finances the Sangathan.
- **Salient features**
    - Common textbooks and bilingual (English & Hindi) medium of instruction for all Kendriya Vidyalayas.
    - All Kendriya Vidyalayas are affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education

(CBSE).
    - All Kendriya Vidyalayas are co-educational, composite schools.

References

1. The Hindu | Hurdles to building schools for tribals
2. Tribal Affairs Ministry | Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)
3. Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya | Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya
4. Kendriya Vidyalayas | Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS)

