Excellence in Diversity

Why in news?

IIT's are facing shortage of qualified faculty members.

Why there is shortage of faculties in IIT's?

- Last year, IIT Delhi had 30% deficit in its teacher ranks & currently in India 23 such institutes faces the same issue.
- The number of students rose significantly after reservation was extended to students belonging to Other Backward Classes.
- But recruiting the faculties should meet quota norms as mentioned in **Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019**.
- The act aims to fulfil the goal of affirmative action while making appointments.

What are the steps taken to address this issue?

- A committee was formed by the Education Ministry to suggest effective implementation of reservation in central institutions.
- It suggested that IITs should be exempted from the quota list.
- Reservation should be provided to specified grades of assistant professors by taking the institution as a whole.
- If suitable candidates are not available, the posts can be de-reserved in the subsequent year.

What is the way forward?

- Compensatory discrimination in favour of some classes of citizens is necessary to correct historical distortions.
- Massive investments should be in the education system & at all levels to raise the capability of students.
- Government should sponsor a preparatory programme at the IITs for the eligible reserved candidates to get acquainted with high quality academic work.
- They can optionally prepare for a PhD if they aspire to be teachers.
- This will not only help to fill vacancies in the IITs but also aid the institutions to achieve research excellence.

- To achieve progressive redistribution, equal opportunity & strong, liberal public school system should be provided.
- This will strengthen diversity and lay the foundation for the kind of scholarship that institutions of excellence need.
- An early decision must be taken by the government without sacrificing equity principles to address this issue.

Source: The Hindu

