

## Strengthening PC&PNDT Act

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance*

### Why in News?

Recently, a national-level sensitization meeting convened by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) on strengthening PC&PNDT Act, 1994 implementation.

- **Aim** - To strengthen the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (**PC&PNDT Act**).
- **Focused on** - Reinforcing the effective implementation of the PC&PNDT Act in view of emerging challenges.
- Coordinated efforts to address gaps, ensure compliance, and uphold the objectives of the legislation.
- **Emphasis** - The act to be not just a legal instrument but a moral and social safeguard against gender-biased sex selection.
  - On prevention Part of the PC&PNDT Act, rather than taking action on act violation.
  - Societal views on having a healthy Child rather than Gender of the child.
  - Upon the directions of the Supreme Court of India, on compliance including the Section 22 of the PC&PNDT Act.

***Section 22 of the PC&PNDT Act explicitly prohibits advertisements and promotions related to pre-conception and pre-natal sex determination.***

- **Highlights** - The country has recorded a positive improvement in the **Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB)**.

As per the **Sample Registration System (SRS) Report 2023**, the SRB has increased by 18 points from 819 females per 1,000 males

during 2016-18 to 917 females per 1,000 males in 2021-23.

- The **National Sex Ratio at Birth** for the period 2021-23 thus stands at 917 females per 1,000 males, reflecting the strengthened implementation of the act.
- **Campaign** - The session witnessed release of a TVC Video and informative posters developed by the Ministry as part of a 360-degree communication campaign,
  - **Theme** - JAB LADKA LADKI HEI BARABAR, THO POOCHNA KYOO.

### PC&PNDT Act, 1994

- **The PC & PNDT Act, 1994** aims to prevent female foeticide and improve India's sex ratio.
- **Purpose**
  - To stop the practice of sex-selective abortion, a discriminatory and inhuman act against women.
  - To arrest the alarming decline in the sex ratio in India.
  - To prevent the misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for non-medical purposes.
- **Key Provisions and Prohibitions**
  - **Prohibition of Sex Selection** - It is illegal to determine the sex of a foetus before or after conception.
  - **Regulation of PNDT Techniques** - The Act regulates the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques to detect genetic abnormalities or sex-linked disorders, but not for determining sex.
  - **Ban on Sex Determination Tests** - Conducting or assisting in tests that determine the sex of a foetus is an offence.
  - **Penalties** - Offenders can face imprisonment and fines, with penalties increasing for subsequent offences.
    - Violations invite imprisonment up to 3 years and fine of Rs.10,000.
  - **Registration and Control** - Unregistered units conducting PNDT tests are illegal.
  - **Equipment Misuse** - Sale, distribution, or renting of ultrasound machines for sex determination is prohibited.
  - **Advertising Ban** - Advertising pre-natal or pre-conception sex determination services is also an offense.

### References

1. [PIB| Strengthening PC&PNDT Act, 1994](#)
2. [PC&PNDT portal](#)



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