The National Air Sports Policy 2022

Why in news?

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched a national sports policy to promote sports like aerobatics, hot-air ballooning, and paragliding.

What is the potential of air sports ecosystem in India?

> *Air sports are managed by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) around the world. Headquartered in Switzerland, the FAI is recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).*

- The air sports ecosystem in India holds the potential to generate over 1 lakh direct jobs and generate annual revenue of Rs 10,000 crore.
- Besides economic benefits, the sector is expected to boost tourism, travel, infrastructure and employment, especially in hilly areas.
- The main intention is to promote the sector by providing a safe, affordable, accessible, enjoyable and sustainable air sports ecosystem.
- The idea behind NASP 2022 is to engage migratory air sports professionals who move away from prominent air sports locations during the winter season.

What are the key features of the National Air Sports Policy?

- **Aim**- The NASP 2022, aims to make India one of the top air sports nations by 2030.
- **Definition**- The policy document defines air sports as sports activities involving the medium of air.
    - Examples include air-racing, aerobatics, hang gliding, paragliding and skydiving.
- **Governing body**- Afour-tier structure will be established to govern aero sports, with the Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI) as the apex body.
- The ASFI will be an autonomous body under the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).
- **Airsports included**- The National Air Sport Policy (NASP), 2022, lists 11 games under this category.
- These include aerobatics, aero modelling and rocketry, ballooning, amateur-built and experimental aircraft, drones, gliding and power gliding, hand gliding and power hand gliding, parachuting, paragliding and paramotoring, powered aircraft and rotor aircraft.
- **Safety**- Air sports associations will lay down the safety standards for equipment, infrastructure, personnel and training as per global best practices for the respective sport.
- An accident related to air sports has to be reported to the concerned air sports association in writing along with a copy to the ASFI within 48 hours.
- **Registration for air sports-** All persons and organisations engaged in air sports or providing related services have to compulsorily register as members of air sports associations.
- Key equipment will also have to be registered with the air sports association.

- **Equipments**- To promote air sports, the Centre is likely to advocate for 5% or less of GST on equipment.
- Presently, the GST on air sports equipment is 18 to 28%.
- **Authorisation of sports flights-** Since air sports activities will share space with the manned and unmanned aircraft already in operation, they will be conducted in coordination with the ATC.
- Every national air sports association will rely on airspace data published by the aeronautical information publication as well as notice to airmen (NOTAM).
- All necessary clearances need to be obtained from authorities at least 24 hours in advance.
- **Segregated Airspaces**- In areas where air sports are frequently conducted, air sports associations have to apply to the MoCA for the establishment of 'Segregated Airspaces'.
- The details of approval will be published in the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP)-India.
- **Violation of air sports rules-** Violation of the rules laid out by the policy will attract penalties up to a maximum of Rs. 50,000.

What is unique about the newly established policy framework for aero sports?

- A four-tier structure will be established to govern aero sports.

TIER	BODIES/ORGANISATIONS
First	Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI)
Second	National associations for individual air sports
Third	Regional units and their state affiliates
Fourth	District-level air sports associations

- **ASFI-** The apex body will govern aspects of regulation, certification, competitions, awards and penalties.
- It will be responsible for organising promotional events, and competitions with the help of national air sports associations.
- The ASFI will have the Ministry of Civil Aviation Secretary as its head while the Ministry Joint Secretary will be appointed as the Member Secretary.
- Its governing council will have representatives from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Airports Authority of India (AAI) among others.
- A secretariat will also be set up in the ASFI.
- ASFI will publish its draft guidelines within six months.
- **National air sports associations-** These associations will
    - Handle the regulatory issues related to safety, training, licensing and airworthiness
    - Coordinate with Air Traffic Control (ATC) to ensure safe operations alongside manned and unmanned flights
    - Organise competitions at the national level and collaborate with international organisations
    - Maintain all flight records and other data from these competitions
    - Frame rules for insurance and compensation in case of accidents

References

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