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1) District Mineral Foundation (DMF), instituted to work for the interest of persons affected by mining-related operations has largely failed to accomplish its goals. Critically examine what hampers DMFs from fulfilling its objectives and suggest measures to improve the situation.

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District Mineral Foundation:- The fact that India's richest mining districts are inhabited by some of country's poorest and most deprived population, prompted the government to set up DMF in 2015 under the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957. as a non profit trust in the mining districts of the country to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas affected by Mining related operations.

Factors hampering the DMF's:- The DMF was supposed to be a people centric institution. It was never conceptualised as a govt department or a government programme, But this is exactly what it has become.

Some of the factors hampering the DMF's are:-

- 1) Gram Sabha:- As per law investments should be decided based on the recommendations of the gram sabha. But none of the DMF's have engaged with them.
- 2) Planning:- Improper Planning is leading to inappropriate investments. High mortality and malnutrition among children are ~~now~~ high in the mining affected areas particularly with large tribal population.
- 3) Funds:- Too much state govt intervention in deciding how DMF funds will be used is leading to diversion of funds for other government priorities and programmes.

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हार्गिए में नहीं  
लिखना चाहिए

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4) Administration:- Heavily dominated by bureaucrats and political representatives leaving no space for the representatives of the mining-affected people. There is no performance evaluation and social audit to check whether the real sense of establishing DMF is reached.

#### Measures to Improve:

- 1) State Govts must provide districts the flexibility to plan and invest on the needs of the community affected by mining operations. Autonomy of DMF trusts should be maintained.
- 2) Gram Sabhas should have representation in the DMF as per DMF rules
- 3) Districts must identify and focus <sup>on</sup> DMF beneficiaries which will help in targeted investments
- 4) All DMF's must have an office comprising of officials, Independent organisations / planning experts for effective planning.
- 5) Public Disclosure of Information should be made available <sup>about</sup> all DMF's through a website. To ensure access, Information should be shared by using panchayat level platforms.

#### WAY Forward:-

DMF provides a great opportunity to overturn the decades of injustice meted out to millions of people living in mining affected areas. But DMF can only deliver if it is implemented in the letter and spirit of the DMF rules under MMDR Act, 2015.

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