

Telangana's Dalit Bandhu scheme

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In news- Telangana has proposed to launch the **country's biggest direct benefit transfer scheme** called 'Dalit Bandhu', to empower Dalits across the state.

About the scheme-

- It is envisioned as a welfare scheme for empowering Dalit families and enable entrepreneurship among them.
- A Dalit empowerment programme on these lines was first announced in the state budget earlier this year.
- It has been decided that 11,900 Dalit families, 100 each from 119 Assembly constituencies in the state, would be selected for **cash assistance of Rs 10 lakh each without any bank guarantee to start their businesses.**
- This **will not be a loan and there will be no need to repay it.**
- An initial outlay of Rs 1,200 crore has been sanctioned.
- The funds allocated for the scheme would be over and above the funds earmarked for the SC Sub Plan.
- It would be first implemented on a pilot basis in **Huzurabad Assembly Constituency.**
- Based on the experiences of implementation in Huzurabad, the scheme will be rolled out across the state in a phased manner.
- The pilot project will focus on monitoring the implementation of the scheme, evaluating the results, and also creating a safety fund for the beneficiaries with the government's participation.

- To promote Dalit entrepreneurship, the government has decided to start a system of reservation for Dalits in sectors where the government issues licences like wine shops, medical shops, fertiliser shops, rice mills, etc.
- Apart from monetary assistance, the government plans to create a **corpus called the Dalit Security Fund** permanently to support the beneficiary in the event of any adversities.
- This fund will be managed by the district collector concerned, along with a committee of beneficiaries.
- A minimum amount will be deposited by the beneficiary towards this fund.
- The beneficiary would be issued an identity card with an electronic chip, which will help the government monitor the progress of the scheme.