

**16 – 12 – 2021**

**News: UNCLOS**

- Recently, India reiterated its support to UNCLOS

**United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Seas**

**(UNCLOS)**

- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international treaty which was adopted and signed in **1982 in Montego Bay (Jamaica)**.
- The Law of the Sea Convention **defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans.**
- It **establishes guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.**
- The Convention has become the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
- UNCLOS came into **force in 1994.**
- The convention has been ratified by 168 parties, which includes 167 states (164 member states of the United Nations plus the UN Observer state Palestine, as well as the Cook Islands, Niue and the European Union.

- **India is a member. USA is the most important non-subscriber** to the UNCLOS.
- UNCLOS divides the marine areas into Internal Waters, Territorial Seas, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone and High Seas (Open Oceans).
- **Internal waters:** Waters on the landward side of the baseline. Each **state has full sovereignty** over the Internal Waters.
- **Territorial seas:** Extends from **12 nautical miles from the baseline**. (1 nm = 1.85km). States have sovereignty and jurisdiction over surface, seabed, subsoil and even airspace.
- **Contiguous Zone:** Extends from **24 nautical miles from baseline**. Jurisdiction of state over contiguous zone is limited to ocean surface and sea floor but not airspace.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone:** Extends from **200 nautical miles from baseline**. Rights to explore and exploit natural resources and rights to carry out activities like energy-production can be done by the state. However, it is not exclusive.
- **High-Seas:** **Ocean Surface over the EEZ** is termed as High-Seas. It is considered as common heritage of mankind. It is **beyond any national jurisdiction**.
- **Protection of seas until 5 nautical miles is vested with coastal police and Coast guard and till 30 miles is vested with Coast Guard and rest is with Indian Navy.**

## News: SMILE Scheme

- Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise.

## **SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has formulated a scheme “SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise”, which includes sub scheme - ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’.
- This scheme covers several comprehensive measures including **welfare measures for persons who are engaged in the act of begging.**
- The focus of the scheme is extensively on **rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages** and so on.
- The scheme would be implemented with the **support of State/UT Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) , institutions** and others.

- Scheme provides for the use of the existing shelter homes available with the State/UT Governments and Urban local bodies for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of Begging.
- In case of non-availability of existing shelter homes, new dedicated shelter homes are to be set up by the implementing agencies.
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has also initiated pilot projects on Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons engaged in the act of Begging in seven cities namely Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Indore, Lucknow, Nagpur and Patna.
- These pilots are being implemented in these cities by State Governments/UTs/Local Urban Bodies and Voluntary Organizations.
- Several comprehensive measures including survey and identification, mobilization, basic hygiene and medical facilities, providing basic documentation, counselling, rehabilitation, education, skill development and sustainable settlement of persons engaged in begging are undertaken under these pilots.