

## **1. Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019**

**Prelims Syllabus: Policies**

**Mains Syllabus: GS-II Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and Issues Arising out of their design and implementation.**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, a Bill to grant the status of Central universities to three deemed Sanskrit universities were passed by the Rajya Sabha.

### **About the bill:**

- The Bill is intended to convert India's three deemed-to-be Sanskrit universities into Central Sanskrit Universities.
  - ✓ Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi.
  - ✓ Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi.
  - ✓ Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati.
- What the universities will do?**
  - ✓ The proposed central universities will:
    - (i) disseminate and advance knowledge for the promotion of Sanskrit,
    - (ii) make special provisions for integrated courses in humanities, social sciences, and science, and
    - (iii) train manpower for the overall development and preservation of Sanskrit and allied subjects.
- Powers and functions:**

These include:

  - (i) prescribing courses of study and conducting training programmes,
  - (ii) granting degrees, diplomas, and certificates,
  - (iii) providing facilities through a distance education system,
  - (iv) conferring autonomous status on a college or an institution,
  - (v) providing instructions for education in Sanskrit and allied subjects.
- Some of the authorities that the universities will have:**
  - ✓ A court, which will review the policies of the university and suggest measures for its development. An Executive Council, which will be the principal executive body.
  - ✓ The 15-member council will include the Vice-Chancellor appointed by the Centre, who will be the chairperson.

- ✓ The council will, among other functions, create teaching and academic posts and their appointment, and manage the revenue and property of the university.
- ✓ An Academic and Activity Council, which will supervise academic policies.
- ✓ A Board of Studies, which will approve the subjects for research and recommend measures to improve standards of teaching.
- **Visitor of the universities:**
  - ✓ Like at all central universities, the President of India will be the Visitor of the central Sanskrit universities.
  - ✓ He may appoint persons to review and inspect the functioning of the University.
  - ✓ The Executive Council may take action based on the findings of the inspection.

### **What is the Issue?**

- The government has been accused of neglecting other classical languages in India.
- Currently there are six languages that enjoy the 'Classical' status in India:
  - ✓ Tamil (declared in 2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Odia (2014).
  - ✓ All the Classical Languages are listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

### **About Classical Languages:**

- The Ministry of Culture provides the guidelines regarding Classical languages.
- Guidelines for declaring a language as 'Classical' are:
  - ✓ High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years;
  - ✓ A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers;
  - ✓ The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community;
  - ✓ The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
- Once a language is notified as a Classical language, the Human Resource and Development Ministry provides certain benefits to promote it:
- Two major annual international awards for scholars of eminence in classical Indian languages. A Centre of Excellence for studies in Classical Languages is set up
- The University Grants Commission is requested to create, to start with at least in the Central Universities, a certain number of Professional Chairs for the Classical Languages so declared.