

HOUSEWORK AS A SALARIED PROFESSION

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS MOVE

- A salary for homemakers might devalue and disrespect the work they do out of love for the family.
- Often, homemakers don't look for monetary gain but recognition or acceptance in the family
- It may also put the additional onus on women to perform.
- There is a risk of formalising the patriarchal Indian family where the position of men stems from their being "providers" in the relationship
- Family can treat homemaker with disrespect and will expect services as a restaurant. Also, there is no guarantee that the money will reach the deserved.

WHY IN NEWS?

- A court in Beijing has ordered a man to compensate his ex-wife for the housework as "housework constitutes intangible property value".
- The Supreme Court of India held that the value of a woman's work at home was no less than that of her office-going husband.
- Recently, Actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan proposed payment for women homemakers for household works.

WAY FORWARD

- There is a need of providing visibility for this unpaid work, to free women from domestic chores and allow them to contribute in social and political responsibilities in the public domain.
- Gender-neutral solutions such as institutionalising women's right to property and co-ownership of any assets can help in recognising the value of unpaid work and gender-equal family structures
- Legal options should be considered to assure fair living wages for all work, including for domestic work

GROUND SITUATION

- Indian society has normalised household chores as the domain of women's responsibilities.
- The stressful efforts put by homemakers into household chores often attract no incentives.
- Even Government perpetuate gender bias by not measuring women's role in making up the gross domestic product (GDP) of the country

CONCLUSION

- Ideally, household duties should be shared among the members of a family.
- Providing an income to the homemakers is significantly more sensitive and involves regulation and effective implementation.
- Deciding how much funds to allocate, different categories and pay scales etc. required proper studies and surveys.
- Framing and implementation of compensation of housework law will be a challenging task for the government, if such a law were to be implemented.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THIS MOVE

- Economic empowerment: In a country where women are more prone to getting treated as housemaids than homemakers, it is not a bad idea to give them financial support and social security.
- Bring Gender parity: A report published by the International Labour Organisation in 2018 shows that globally, women perform 76.2 percent of total hours of unpaid care work — more than three times as men.
- Encourage efforts: Asking men to pay for wives' domestic work could further boost their sense of entitlement.