Society & Social Justice · GS - II

“Welfare schemes must balance social inclusion with the protection of livelihoods.” Discuss this statement in the context of Tamil Nadu’s Vettri Payanam scheme.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 18/10/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP

Answer Hint

Free student transport, educational access, inclusive development, welfare policy, informal-sector livelihoods, policy externalities, stakeholder consultation, impact assessment, alternative employment, last-mile connectivity.

Model Answer

Introduction

Welfare schemes play an important role in promoting inclusive development. Tamil Nadu’s Vettri Payanam scheme provides free bus travel to government school students, aiming to reduce transportation costs and improve access to education.

Main Body

The scheme can provide several benefits. It reduces the financial burden on families, supports students from economically weaker backgrounds and encourages the use of public transport.

However, the shift towards free state-provided transport may affect auto-rickshaw drivers and private bus operators who previously earned income by transporting students. This highlights a key challenge in public policy:

a measure designed to benefit one section of society may create economic difficulties for another.

The government should adopt a balanced approach by:

1. Assessing the scheme’s impact on affected transport workers.
2. Consulting private operators, drivers, parents and students.
3. Exploring opportunities for affected operators to provide feeder and last-mile transport services.
4. Providing suitable skill development and livelihood support where necessary.
5. Regularly reviewing the scheme’s social and economic outcomes.

Conclusion

The success of a welfare scheme should be measured not only by its immediate benefits but also by its wider social impact. A balanced approach can promote educational access while protecting vulnerable livelihoods.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP