Syllabus subtopic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the step taken by the GST Council and its significance; structure and mandate of GST Council

News: The GST Council will set up a grievance redressal mechanism for taxpayers. The decision was taken at the 38th meeting of the GST Council on December 18.

Details of the decision taken in the GST Council meeting

- It has decided that a structured grievance redressal mechanism should be established for the taxpayers under GST to tackle grievances on GST-related issues.
- The Council will set up the Grievance Redressal Committee at zonal and state levels comprising central tax and state tax officers, representatives of industry and GST stakeholders.
- The panel will be constituted for two years and the term of each member will be for likewise.
- If any member of the panel would be absent for three consecutive meetings, without adequate reasons, the member will be replaced with a fresh nomination by the principal chief commissioner/chief commissioner of central tax in consultation with the chief commissioner/commissioner of state tax.

About GST Council

- It is a constitutional body for making recommendations to the Union and State Government on issues related to Goods and Service Tax.
- It is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and other members are the Union State Minister of Revenue or Finance and Ministers in-charge of Finance or Taxation of all the States.

Composition

As per Article 279A of the amended Constitution, the GST Council which will be a joint forum of the Centre and the States, shall consist of the following members: -
Mandate of GST Council

It shall make recommendations to the Union and the States on—

- the taxes, cesses and surcharges levied by the Union, the States and the local bodies which may be subsumed in the goods and services tax;
- the goods and services that may be subjected to, or exempted from the goods and services tax;
- model Goods and Services Tax Laws, principles of levy, apportionment of Goods and Services Tax levied on supplies in the course of inter-State trade or commerce under article 269A and the principles that govern the place of supply;
- the threshold limit of turnover below which goods and services may be exempted from goods and services tax;
- the rates including floor rates with bands of goods and services tax;
- any special rate or rates for a specified period, to raise additional resources during any natural calamity or disaster;
- special provision with respect to the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand; and any other matter relating to the goods and services tax, as the Council may decide.
- It shall recommend the date on which the goods and services tax be levied on petroleum crude, high speed diesel, motor spirit (commonly known as petrol), natural gas and aviation turbine fuel.
- While discharging the functions conferred by this article, the Goods and Services Tax Council shall be guided by the need for a harmonized structure of goods and services tax and for the development of a harmonized national market for goods and services.

One-half of the total number of Members of the Goods and Services Tax Council shall constitute the quorum at its meetings.

The Goods and Services Tax Council shall determine the procedure in the performance of its functions.