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 move and its objective; about TRAI and its mandate

News: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is planning to set up the post of a Telecom Ombudsman to deal with consumer complaints and grievances on poor quality telephony services.

Background

The concept of a telecom ombudsman was first floated by TRAI in late 2017, after which the Telecom Commission had cleared the proposal in 2018. However, there have been no developments on that front after that, despite repeated reminders sent to the DoT from TRAI.

Objective of the move

- The ombudsman will be the third level of authority which users can approach, if their complaints on poor quality service is not heard by the telecom services providers.

- The first level is the complaint centre of the respective telcos, whereas the second level is the appellate authority, which decides on the users’ complaints within 39 days.

- In case a grievance is not redressed even after exhausting the two tier procedure as prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the complainant may approach Public Grievance wing of Department of Telecommunications (DoT), along with all documentary evidence(s) for non-redressal of grievance at concerned service provider level.

About Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)
• TRAI is a **statutory body** set up by the Government of India under **section 3** of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.

• It is the **regulator** of the **telecommunications sector** in India.

• It **consists of a Chairperson** and **not more than two full-time members** and **not more than two part-time members**.

• The TRAI Act was amended by an ordinance, effective from 24 January 2000, establishing a **Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)** to take over the **adjudicatory and disputes functions from TRAI**.