Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Digital transformation of social security institutions can improve both the accessibility and efficiency of welfare delivery. Examine the significance of EPFO's CITES 2.0 initiative in this context, while identifying the safeguards necessary for inclusive and accountable digital service delivery.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Digital governance, social security delivery, centralised databases, automated claim processing, financial inclusion, data privacy, grievance redressal, digital divide, accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) plays a crucial role in providing retirement savings and social security to organised-sector workers. Its CITES 2.0 platform represents a shift towards centralised, technology-enabled service delivery.

Significance of CITES 2.0

1. **Faster claim settlement:** The Ministry of Labour and Employment reported that average claim settlement time declined from 11.15 days to 2.57 days after its launch in July 2026.

2. **Administrative efficiency:** Integration of previously decentralised databases reduces manual processing and delays, particularly during job changes.

3. **Greater transparency:** Automated, rules-based processing can improve predictability and reduce arbitrary administrative intervention.

4. **Reduced rejection rates:** Improved verification of KYC, bank details and service records can minimise errors and repeated claim submissions.

Necessary Safeguards

- **Data protection:** Secure sensitive financial and identity information against cyberattacks and unauthorised access.
- **Digital inclusion:** Maintain assisted and offline facilities for workers facing connectivity or digital-literacy barriers.
- **Human oversight:** Provide manual review mechanisms for exceptional cases and erroneous automated decisions.
- **Grievance redressal:** Ensure time-bound appeals and accessible complaint-resolution channels.
- **Transparency:** Publish performance indicators and clearly communicate eligibility conditions.

Conclusion

CITES 2.0 demonstrates how digital public infrastructure can strengthen social security administration. Its success, however, must be measured not merely by processing speed but also by accessibility, data security and effective grievance redressal.

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