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DAILY NEWS DIARY

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FOR PRELIMS AND MAINS

Warm Greetings.

- DnD aims to provide every day news analysis in sync with the UPSC pattern.
- It is targeted at UPSC – Prelims & Mains.
- Daily articles are provided in the form of Question and Answers
- To have a bank of mains questions.
- And interesting to read.
- Providing precise information that can be carried straight to the exam, rather than over dumping.

Enjoy reading.

THE HINDU - TH
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ESSAY PAPER

Editorial

Q) Explain the relevance of Gandhi's principles in present day politics.

Background: The article talks about Gandhi's appeal to conscientious politics and nobility of spirit that holds relevance in today's world.

Ethics in Politics:

- What distinguishes the Mahatma from all politicians in today's world is his simplicity and honesty.
- Gandhi believed in no divorce between politics and ethics. Politics was essentially an ethical mode of conduct for him.
- His belief in the moral growth of humanity is a rarity in present-day politicians.
- In a world such as ours which suffers from an immaturity of politics and politicians, either in tyrannical situations such as Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria, etc. or in democracies such as the United States, Spain, Poland, India, etc. reading Gandhi as a lesson of political maturity is important.

Gandhi's Culture of Patience:

- As a practitioner of empathetic humanism and a pluralist thinker, Gandhi was an exemplar of a lifelong process of listening and learning.
- He played the role of an exemplar in prescribing "patience" as a means to understand and approach the other.
- The dialogical nature of Gandhi's culture of patience finds its roots in the idea of epistemic humility as a necessary methodology in approaching and understanding other cultures and religions.
 - Epistemic humility is an intellectual virtue.
 - It is grounded in the realization that our knowledge is always provisional and incomplete and that it might require revision in light of new evidence.
- The entire Gandhian thought in the realm of religion and politics revolves around this concept of epistemic humility.
- That is why Gandhi had a profoundly ethical view of religions.
- There has never been a better time to practice the virtue of epistemic humility.

Swaraj:

- The capacity to engage constructively with conflicting values was an essential component of Mahatma Gandhi's practical wisdom.
- Gandhi believed that all individuals irrespective of their religion, race and culture had the right to self-governance.
- Swaraj as a space of self-realisation was where the ethical and the political joined in the Gandhian political philosophy.
- On account of his overriding concern for the self-respect of individuals and nations, Gandhi joined the two notions of truth and non-violence to that of the term Swaraj.

A self-transcendence:

- Gandhi did not consider freedom as a mere political act, but he defined it primarily as an ethical enterprise.
- He applied the process of individual self-transcendence to the idea of civilisation, since he considered civilisation as an exercise of human maturity.
- He firmly believed that the anthropological and ethical origins of such a state of maturity resided in the spiritual capacity of human beings.
- He also underlined this move towards maturity as a process of learning to be responsible towards oneself and others.
- As a result, everything he did and wrote during his lifetime was an attempt to bring into the open his own journey of intellectual and political maturity.
- According to Gandhi, character-building was an art of developing a sense of autonomy and having authority over oneself.

Gandhi, therefore, approached pragmatic politics as a form of character-building and not necessarily a struggle for getting elected or grasping power.

A continuing relevance:

Mahatma Gandhi argued, "Where there is egotism, we shall find incivility and arrogance. Where it is absent, we shall find a sense of self-respect together with civility... He who holds his self-respect dear acts towards everyone in a spirit of friendship, for he values others' self-respect as much as he values his own. He sees himself in all and everyone else in himself, puts himself in line with others. The egotist keeps aloof from others and, believing himself superior to the rest of the world, he takes [it] upon himself to judge everyone and in the result enables the world to have the measure of his smallness."

Despite all his shortcomings, Gandhi's appeal to mature and conscientious politics and nobility of spirit continues to be a strong ethical response to the political issues and challenges of our time. That is why, Gandhi remains our contemporary, while he belongs to our future.

Q) Asses the implementation of second phase of SBM-U and AMRUT.

Context:

The Prime Minister of India has announced the second phase of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), with a fresh promise to make India's cities clean.

Issues:

- The goal of scientific waste management and full sanitation that Mahatma Gandhi emphasised even a century ago remains largely aspirational today.
- It is evident from the recent regret of the Principal Economic Adviser on dirty, dysfunctional cities.
- According to him, urban India is unable to match cities in Vietnam that has a comparable per capita income.
- The current model of issuing mega contracts to big corporations has left segregation of waste at source a non-starter.
- On sanitation, the impressive claim of exceeding the targets for household, community and public toilets thus far conceals the reality that without water connections, many of them are unusable.
- He spoke about the lack of urban management capacities in India in spite of the Swachh Bharat programme enjoying tremendous support.

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) 2.0:

- SBM-U 2.0, with a ₹1.41-lakh crore outlay, aims to focus on garbage-free cities.
- It ventures into urban grey and black water management in places not covered by AMRUT.
- In its first phase, the Mission had an outstanding balance of ₹3,532 crore, since the total allocation was ₹14,622 crore while cumulative releases came to ₹11,090 crore.

Way Forward:

- India aims to address two main challenges through SBM 2.0.
 - Being able to process 1.4 lakh tonnes of solid waste generated per day. (At present, only about 1 lakh tonnes is processed.)

- To transition to a circular economy that treats solid and liquid waste as a resource.
- Capability and governance play a major role in this regard.
- Raising community involvement in resource recovery calls for a partnership that gives a tangible incentive to households.
- Decentralised community-level operations could be considered for the segregation of waste.
- In the absence of a scaling up of operations, which can provide large-scale employment and the creation of matching facilities for material recovery, SBM-U 2.0 cannot keep pace with the tide of waste in a growing economy.
- State and municipal governments, which do the heavy lifting on waste and sanitation issues, should work to increase community ownership of the system.
- It is a long road to Open Defecation Free plus (ODF+) status for urban India, since that requires no recorded case of open defecation and for all public toilets to be maintained and functioning.
- The high ambition of achieving 100% tap water supply in about 4,700 urban local bodies and sewerage and septage in 500 AMRUT cities depends crucially on making at least good public rental housing accessible to millions of people.

GS-2

❖ Polity and Governance

Q) CJI for forming special panels to probe 'atrocities' by police. Explain.

Context:

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana has expressed his strong reservations about the conduct of police officers and bureaucracy in the country.

Details:

- Chief Justice of India has said that he is in favour of forming standing committees headed by the Chief Justices of the High Courts to investigate complaints received from the common man of atrocities committed by the bureaucracy, especially police officers.
- Some police officers are in the spotlight for committing serious crimes.
 - Recently, police officers in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, have been accused of causing the death of a businessman during a raid in a hotel.

- In Tamil Nadu, the CBI chargesheeted nine policemen for the custodial deaths of father-son duo P. Jayaraj and J. Benicks.
- There have been instances of district administration officers caught on video manhandling citizens during the lockdown.
- The Supreme Court had raised the issue of nexus between politicians in power and police officers.
- Also, earlier, the Supreme Court had orally referred to a disturbing trend, where police officials, who had sided with the party in power, are later targeted when another political dispensation comes to power.

❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Q) Shringla begins four-day visit to Sri Lanka today. Comment.

Context: Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla is in Colombo for a four-day visit to Sri Lanka.

Details:

- The visit of the Foreign Secretary will provide an opportunity to:
 - review the bilateral ties
 - review the progress of ongoing bilateral projects
 - build on the ongoing cooperation to tackle COVID-related disruptions.
- The visit is being seen as an attempt to reset ties that have been under a strain over:
 - The Sri Lankan decision to cancel an MoU with India and Japan for Colombo's East Container Terminal.
- Slow progress in a number of other proposals, including the Trincomalee oil farms, the Sampur power project (which is being converted to a solar project), and the development of the northern part of the island nation.
- In particular, India has been concerned by the perception that while Indian projects have taken inordinately long to be cleared, projects by China have been cleared even during the pandemic.
 - Example: The Sri Lankan government's Parliament vote to facilitate the \$1.4 billion China-backed Colombo Port City development.
 - The ruling Rajapaksa administration passed a Bill, titled 'Colombo Port City Economic Commission', in Parliament, outlining proposed laws for the \$1.4 billion Port City being built on reclaimed land at Colombo's seafront.
 - It is touted by the government as an investment hub for foreign capital.

Agenda:

- Assessing progress on a number of infrastructure and energy projects, and Sri Lanka's need for economic assistance will be at the top of the agenda.
- He is expected to raise concerns about the reconciliation process and promises of devolution of power to northern Sri Lanka, which have remained unfulfilled more than a decade after the end of the war on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009.

Q) India, U.S. to set up working group on defence industrial security. Elaborate.

Context: India and the United States have agreed in principle to establish a Indo-U.S. Industrial Security Joint Working Group.

Details:

- This was agreed during the Industrial Security Agreement summit held between the two sides.
- This group will meet periodically to align the policies and procedures expeditiously that will allow the defence industries to collaborate on cutting edge defence technologies.
- Under ISA, the US side is expected to help in providing the necessary framework which will be useful in pursuing the co-development and co-production in the defence production centre.
- Both countries recently decided to work on co-developing air-launched unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). This project is being done under the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI).



Q) Consider the following statements about National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC):

1. It is India's largest iron ore producer and exporter.
2. It is a Navratna Company under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both
- d. None



Q) The recently launched DigiSaksham is:

- a. A digital skills programme to enhance the employability of youth by imparting digital skills.
- b. A Scheme aimed at providing encouragement and support to specially abled children to pursue Technical Education.
- c. A scheme aimed at making people in rural areas, across States/UTs, digitally literate.
- d. A digital wallet that enables storage and access to educational documents, health records, certificates electronically.

Answer: a

Explanation:

- Under the DigiSaksham initiative, free of cost training will be provided to more than 3 lakh youth, in digital skills including basic skills & advance computing, in the first year.

This training programme can be accessed through the National Career Service (NCS) Portal.

- This digital skills programme was launched with the objective of enhancing the employability of youth by improving their digital skills which have become an essential thing in an increasingly technology-driven era.
- Digi Saksham is a joint initiative of Microsoft India and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Context:

- On September 30, 2021, Digi Saksham Programme was launched by the Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav.

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