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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) Analyse the consequences of growing digital divide.

Context:

The Supreme Court has flagged the consequences of growing digital divide. It observed, the digital divide caused by online classes will defeat the fundamental right of every child to education.



How have online classes impacted children?

- Little children whose parents are too poor to afford laptops, tablets or an “optimum” Internet package at home for online classes during the pandemic have dropped out of school and even run the danger of being drawn into child labour or worse, child trafficking.
- Even, the right to education has now hinged on who could afford “gadgets” for online classes and who could not.

What’s the issue?

The court was hearing a petition filed by private school managements challenging a Delhi High Court order of September 2020, directing them to provide their 25% quota EWS/DG students online facilities free of cost.

- The High Court had said the schools could get reimbursement from the government.
- The Delhi government had said it had no resources to reimburse the schools for the online gadgets.

Though the Supreme Court had stayed the High Court order in February 2021, the court said both the Centre and States such as Delhi could not bow out of their responsibilities towards children.

What next?

The Court asked the Delhi government to come out with a plan to effectuate the 'salutary object' upheld in the High Court decision. The court said the Centre should join in the consultation.

What is digital divide?

It means discrepancy between people who have access to and the resources to use new information and communication tools, such as the Internet, and people who do not have the resources and access to the technology.

- It also means discrepancy between those who have the skills, knowledge and abilities to use the technologies and those who do not.

Where does it exist?

The digital divide can exist between those living in rural areas and those living in urban areas, between genders, between the educated and uneducated, between economic classes, and on a global scale between more and less industrially developed nations.

Status in India:

1. Although India has 220 million smartphone users and is the second largest smartphone market in the world, the overall penetration is still just about 30 per cent of the population.
2. There is a huge rural- urban and inter-state digital divide in India.
3. according to statistics, more than 75 per cent of the broadband connections in the country are in the top 30 cities.
4. Similarly, many states like north-eastern states, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Assam lag behind other states in the use and development of ICTs.
5. Globally 12 percent more men used the internet than women in 2017, while in India only 29% of total internet users are females.
6. Another important reason of digital divide in India is knowledge divide. Knowledge divide is directly related with digital divide.

Impact of Digital Divide:

1. **Low female representation:** Due to huge digital divide in gender, thousands of Indian girls in these far-flung areas are refused access to Information and Communications Technology (ICTs), which is a primary cause of low female representation in jobs.
2. **Denial to information/knowledge:** This lack of equal opportunities to access online services and information deprive people of higher/quality education and skill training that could help them contribute to the economy and become leaders on a global level.
3. **Non delivery of welfare schemes:** As many schemes have started using ICT in their delivery, at the same time due to digital divide it will create more problem.

GS-2**❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS****Q) Government pushes for a reset of India-ASEAN FTA. Explain.**

Background: The Commerce and Industry Minister has called for a renegotiation of the India-ASEAN free trade agreement (FTA).

Why such move?

- The MCI aims to prevent its misuse by 'third parties' and remove trade restrictions as well as non-tariff barriers that he said had hurt Indian exports disproportionately since the pact was operationalized in 2010.
- The focus needed to be on new rules to eliminate misuse 'by third parties outside ASEAN', the minister said, hinting at China.
- India had to deal with several restrictive barriers on exports in the ASEAN region, particularly in the agriculture and auto sectors.



India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement

- The initial framework agreement for ASEAN–India Free Trade Area (AIFTA) was signed on 8 October 2003 in Bali, Indonesia.
- The FTA came into effect on 1 January 2010.
- The FTA had emerged from a mutual interest of both parties to expand their economic ties in the Asia-Pacific region.

GS-3

❖ ECONOMY

Q) RBI suspends G-Sec Acquisition Programme (GSAP). Comment.

Background: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to halt its bond-buying under the G-Sec Acquisition Programme (GSAP).

Why such move?

- The GSAP had succeeded in ensuring adequate liquidity and stabilising financial markets.
- Coupled with other liquidity measures, it facilitated congenial and orderly financing conditions and a conducive environment for the recovery.

What is GSAP?

- The G-Sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP) is basically an unconditional and a structured Open Market Operation (OMO), of a much larger scale and size.
- G-SAP is an OMO with a 'distinct character'.
- The word 'unconditional' here connotes that RBI has committed upfront that it will buy G-Secs irrespective of the market sentiment.

What are Government Securities?

- These are debt instruments issued by the government to borrow money.
- The two key categories are:
 1. Treasury bills (T-Bills) – short-term instruments which mature in 91 days, 182 days, or 364 days, and
 2. Dated securities – long-term instruments, which mature anywhere between 5 years and 40 years

Other decisions

- The RBI, however, remained ready to undertake G-SAP as and when warranted by liquidity conditions.
- It would also continue to flexibly conduct other liquidity management operations including Operation Twist (OT) and regular open market operations (OMOs).

Q) What is Palk Bay Scheme?

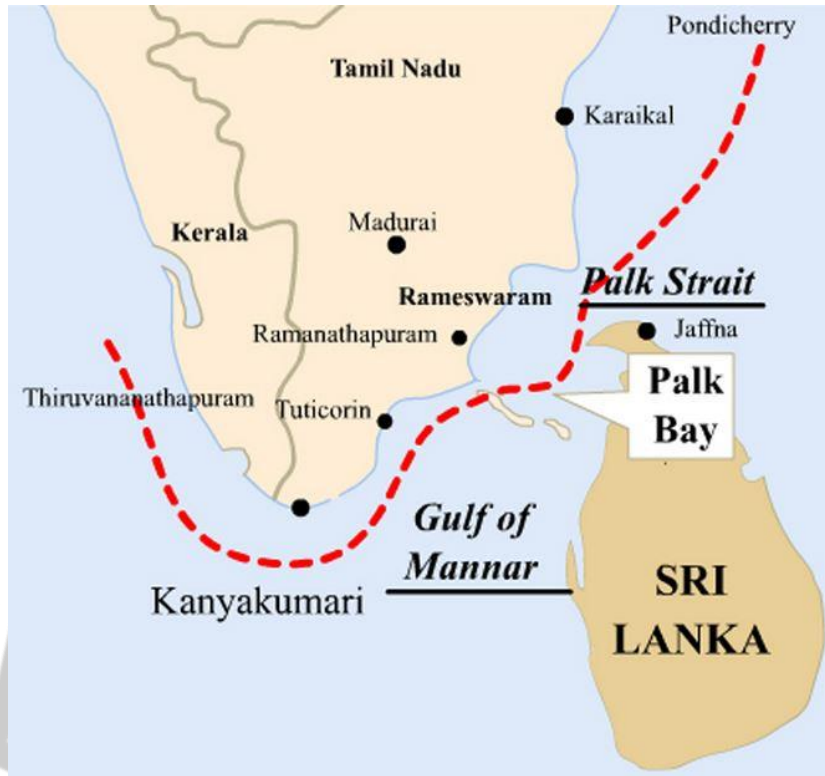
Background: The Union Government is considering increasing the unit cost of deep-sea fishing vessels under the Palk Bay scheme to make it more attractive to fisherfolk.

Palk Bay Scheme

- The Palk Bay Scheme is the official scheme for diversification of trawl fishing boats from Palk Strait into deep sea fishing boats.
- It is aimed at encouraging fishermen to take up deep-sea fishing and put an end to disputes arising between the India and Sri Lanka.

- The project helps fishermen in the Palk Straits, who are not exposed to deep-sea fishing, to venture deep into the Indian Ocean, Arabian sea and other deep-sea areas to look for fish like tuna that are in high demand.

Why need such scheme?



- Bottom trawling, an ecologically destructive practice, involves trawlers dragging weighted nets along the sea-floor, causing great depletion of aquatic resources.

Key components of the scheme

- The project aims to replace all trawler boats and introduce over 2,000 deep sea fishing boats in a course of five years.
- The scheme, under the aegis of Blue Revolution scheme – is funded by the Centre – 50 per cent and state government – 20 per cent for a boat costing Rs 80 lakh.
- Of the balance 30 per cent, 10 per cent is contributed by the beneficiary (fisherman), and the remaining 20 per cent is funded by banks.



Q) Which of the following security forces is responsible for securing the India's border with Nepal?

- a. Indo Tibetan Border Police
- b. Sashastra Seema Bal
- c. Border Security Force
- d. Assam Rifles



Q) The 2021 Nobel prize for Physiology or Medicine was awarded to researchers David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian for their work on how human body perceives temperature and pressure. In their research, they found out that the body's receptor for heat only gets activated at:

- a. Above 40 degrees C
- b. Above 28 degrees C
- c. Above 35 degrees C
- d. Above 45 degrees C

Answer: a

Explanation:

The 2021 Nobel prize for Physiology or Medicine was awarded to researchers David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian for their work on how the human body perceives temperature and pressure. In their research, they found out that the body's receptor for heat only gets activated above 40 °C.

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