

SosinClasses

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DAILY NEWS DIARY

Of

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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.

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GS 2

❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Q) Explain the significance of the India's engagement with the Gulf countries. Analyse the importance of West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region to India.

Context:

A controversial remark by the ruling party spokesperson against the Prophet has snowballed into a diplomatic row. Against this backdrop, New Delhi should not stop engaging the Gulf countries and strive to move beyond damage control.

International reaction against the remarks:

- The United Arab Emirates, Oman, Indonesia, Iraq, the Maldives, Jordan, Libya and Bahrain have joined the growing list of countries in the Islamic world that have condemned the remarks.
- Earlier, Kuwait, Iran and Qatar had called Indian ambassadors to register their protest, and Saudi Arabia had issued a strongly-worded statement.
- Campaigners (including a few GCC regimes) demand that Prime Minister of India should tender an apology for all that happened.
- But New Delhi's stance is categorical and legitimate insofar as the Union government has nothing to do with such unsolicited comments.

WANA and its importance:

1. Engagement with WANA: Countries in West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region do not have a fixed position vis-à-vis India. Delhi has vibrant economic and strategic ties with almost all regimes in the region. That's precisely the reason these countries are unwilling to join the Islamabad-led chorus or go beyond passing resolutions. India's signing of a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UAE and the ongoing negotiations for a wider FTA with the GCC could be an eye-opener for the country's detractors.
2. India's energy needs: As much as 40 per cent of oil and an equal share of gas requirements are met through India's strategic cooperation with the Gulf regimes.
3. Mutuality of interests: India and the WANA regimes know that there is a mutuality of interests in these transactions which cannot be substituted by any other segments of the world system.
4. Indian diaspora: Equally important is the role of the more than eight million-strong Indian diaspora in the WANA region. The "Gulf remittance" is an important part of the Indian economy, as important as the Indian investment in the GCC and GCC investment in India.

Way forward:

- ✓ India's foreign policy strategy — which includes strategic bargaining with regional and international actors — would fetch reasonable dividends.
- ✓ The response to its Ukraine war strategy has convinced South Block that it has adequate manoeuvrability in global affairs.

Conclusion:

New Delhi should not stop engaging the countries, especially the ones in the WANA region, as both have shared interests. Therefore, South Block must go beyond a mere damage-control exercise.

Source: Indian Express

GS 3**❖ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY****Q) Assess the roles and responsibilities of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe).****Context:**

The Prime Minister inaugurated the headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) at Bopal, Ahmedabad.

IN-SPACe:

- The establishment of IN-SPACe was announced in June 2020.
- It is an autonomous and single window nodal agency in the Department of Space for the promotion, encouragement and regulation of space activities of both government and private entities.
- It also facilitates the usage of ISRO facilities by private entities.
- It comprises technical experts for space activities along with safety expert, academic experts and legal and strategic experts from other departments.
- It also comprises members from PMO and MEA of Government of India.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Space activities including building of launch vehicles and satellites and providing space based services as per the definition of space activities.
- Sharing of space infrastructure and premises under the control of ISRO with due considerations to on-going activities.
- Establishment of temporary facilities within premises under ISRO control based on safety norms and feasibility assessment

How is it different from ANTRIX?

- Antrix Corporation Limited (ACL), Bengaluru is a wholly-owned Government of India Company under the administrative control of the Department of Space.
- It is as a marketing arm of ISRO for promotion and commercial exploitation of space products, technical consultancy services and transfer of technologies developed by ISRO.
- Antrix is engaged in providing Space products and services to international customers worldwide.

New Space India Limited (NSIL):

1. It functions under the administrative control of the Department of Space (DOS).
2. It aims to commercially exploit the research and development work of ISRO Centres and constituent units of DOS.
3. The NSIL would enable Indian Industries to scale up high-technology manufacturing and production base for meeting the growing needs of the Indian space program.
4. It would further spur the growth of Indian Industries in the space sector.

Source: PIB

❖ INDIAN ECONOMY

Q) “India is the fastest growing major economy in the world”. Critically analyse based on the data of the Provisional Estimates of Annual National income in 2021-22.

Context:

The Provisional Estimates of Annual National Income in 2021-22 just released show that GDP grew 8.7% in real terms and 19.5% in nominal terms (including inflation). It makes India the fastest growing major economy in the world.

Implications of the data:

- Just 1.51% larger: Provisional Estimates of Annual National Income in 2021-22 also indicate that, the real economy is 1.51% larger than it was in 2019-20, just before the novel coronavirus pandemic hit the world.
- In nominal terms it is higher by 17.9%.
- These numbers imply that the rate of inflation was 10.8% in 2021-22 and 16.4% between the two years, 2019-20 and 2021-22.
- This picture implies almost no growth and high inflation since the pre-pandemic year.
- So, the tag of the fastest growing economy means little.
- The quarter to quarter growth currently may give some indication of the present rate of growth.
- In 2020-21, the quarterly rate of growth increased through the year.
- In 2021-22, the rate of growth has been slowing down.
- Of course, in 2020-21, the COVID-19 lockdown had a severe impact in Q1 (-23.8%); after that the rate of growth picked up.
- In 2021-22, the rate of growth in Q1 had to sharply rise (20.3%).
- Ignoring the outliers in Q1, growth rates in 2021-22 have sequentially petered out in subsequent quarters: 8.4%, 5.4% and 4.1%.
- Going forward, while the lockdown in China is over, the war-related impact is likely to persist since there is no end in sight. Thus, price rise and impact on production are likely to persist.

Issues with the data:

1. The issue is about correctness of data. The annual estimates given now are provisional since complete data are not available for 2021-22.

2. There is a greater problem with quarterly estimates since very limited data are available for estimating it.
3. The first issue is that during 2020-21, due to the pandemic, full data could not be collected for Q1.
4. Further, for agriculture, quarterly data assumes that the targets are achieved. Agriculture is a part of the unorganised sector. Very little data are available for it but for agriculture — neither for the quarter nor for the year.
5. It is simply assumed that the limited data available for the organised sector can be used to act as a proxy. The non-agriculture unorganised sector is represented by the organised sector.
6. Changes in non-agriculture unorganised: The method using the organised sector to proxy the unorganised non-agriculture sector may have been acceptable before demonetisation (2016) but is not correct since then.
7. The reason is that the unorganised non-agriculture sector suffered far more than the organised sector and more so during the waves of the pandemic.
8. Large parts of the unorganised non-agriculture sector have experienced a shift in demand to the organised sector since they produce similar things. This introduces large errors in GDP estimates since official agencies do not estimate this shift.
9. All that is known is that the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector has faced closures and failures. If GDP data are incorrect, data on its components — private consumption and investment — must also be incorrect.
10. Further, the ratios themselves would have been impacted by the shock of the lockdown and the decline of the unorganised sectors.
11. Private consumption data is suspect since according to the data given by the Reserve Bank of India which largely captures the organised sector, consumer confidence throughout 2021-22 was way below its pre-pandemic level of 104 achieved in January 2020. In brief, neither the total nor the ratios are correct.

Possible corrections:

- ✓ In the best possible scenario, assume that the organised sector (55% of GDP) and agriculture (14% of GDP) are growing at the official rate of growth of 8.2% and 3%, respectively.
- ✓ Then, they would contribute 4.93% to GDP growth.
- ✓ The non-agriculture unorganised component is declining for two reasons: first, the closure of units and the second the shift in demand to the organised sector.
- ✓ Even if 5% of the units have closed down this year and 5% of the demand has shifted to the organised sector, the unorganised sector would have declined by about 10%; the contribution of this component to GDP growth would be -3.1%.

Source: The Hindu

SNIPPETS

GS 3

❖ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Q) Explain the benefits of TVS-2M Nuclear Fuel.

Context:

Russia has supplied the first batches of more reliable and cost-efficient nuclear fuel over the existing one, the TVS-2M nuclear fuel, to India for the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP).

TVS-2M Nuclear Fuel:

The TVS-2M FAs contain gadolinium-oxide which is mixed with U-235 enrichments. The core does not contain BARs (Burnable Absorbers Rods).

How are they prepared?

- Once the uranium is enriched, it is ready to be converted into nuclear fuel.
- At a nuclear fuel fabrication facility, the UF₆, in solid form, is heated to gaseous form, and then the UF₆ gas is chemically processed to form uranium dioxide (UO₂) powder.
- The powder is then compressed and formed into small ceramic fuel pellets.
- The pellets are stacked and sealed into long metal tubes that are about 1 centimetre in diameter to form fuel rods.
- The fuel rods are then bundled together to make up a fuel assembly.
- Depending on the reactor type, each fuel assembly has about 179 to 264 fuel rods.
- A typical reactor core holds 121 to 193 fuel assemblies.

Benefits offered:

- ✓ TVS-2M fuel assemblies have a number of advantages making them more reliable and cost-efficient.
- ✓ The new fuel has increased uranium capacity – one TVS-2M assembly contains 7.6% more fuel material as compared to UTVS.
- ✓ Besides, the special feature of the Kudankulam fuel in particular is the new generation anti-debris filter ADF-2, efficiently protecting fuel assemblies.
- ✓ Once the new TVS-2 M fuel is used in the next refuelling, the reactor will start operations with an 18-month fuel cycle.
- ✓ It means the reactor, which has to be stopped for every 12 months for removing the spent fuel and inserting the fresh fuel bundles and allied maintenance, will have to be stopped for every 18 months.

Source: The Hindu

Q) Which of the following statements about Sant Tukaram is/are correct?

1. He was a contemporary of Maratha ruler Shivaji Maharaj
2. He pointed out the evil of wrongdoings of social system by his kirtans and abhangs.

Options:

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

 **Hey from Yesterday –**

Q) Which of the following Ministry launched “Sagarmala Young Professional Scheme”?

- a. Ministry of External Affairs
- b. Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
- c. Ministry of Education
- d. Ministry of Social Welfare

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has launched a scheme called “Sagarmala Young Professional Scheme”, in a bid to engage talented, dynamic and forward-thinking young professionals in different divisions of the Ministry.
- Sagarmala Young Professional scheme focuses on active on-the-ground learning for young professionals.
- Through this scheme, these professionals will gain the opportunity to learn about functioning of government and developmental policy concerns.
- However, to meet Ministry’s need, professionals are required to deliver high-quality inputs in areas like data analysis, infrastructure, project management, skill development, start-up, innovation, digital transformation and environment.
- This scheme will provide for active participation of young people in decision-making. It will thus contribute to social wellness at an individual level, by encouraging self-esteem and a sense of empowerment.
- It will also help in enhancing awareness for common concerns and joint resolve for identifying solutions in the long term.

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