

SosinClasses

INSTITUTE FOR IAS EXAMINATION

(IAS, IFS, IPS, IRS, IRMS, IFoS & Other Civil Services)

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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.

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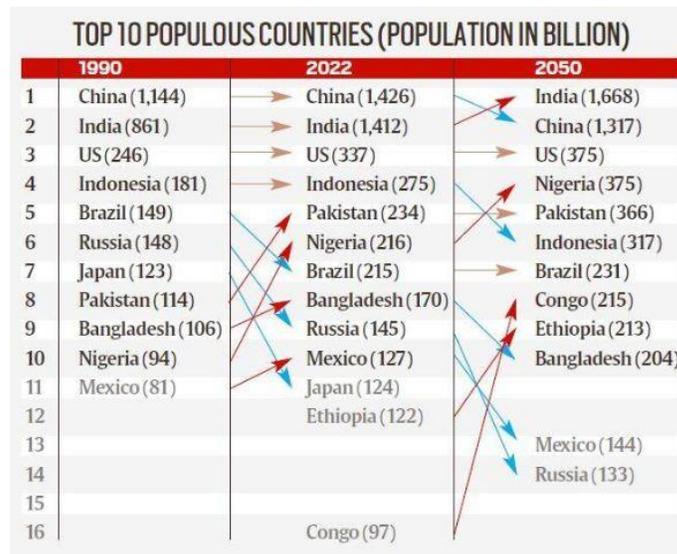
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GS 1**❖ SOCIAL ISSUES**

Q) Analyse the global population trends based on the United Nations' World Population Prospects.

Context:

The 2022 edition of the United Nations' World Population Prospects (WPP) was released. India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country in 2023.

**World Population Prospects:**

- The Population Division of the UN has been publishing the WPP in a biennial cycle since 1951.
- Each revision of the WPP provides a historical time series of population indicators starting in 1950.
- It does so by taking into account newly released national data to revise estimates of past trends in fertility, mortality or international migration.

Main takeaways for the global population:

1. Slow pace of growth
 - The world's population continues to grow, but the pace of growth is slowing down.
 - The global population is expected to grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.4 billion in 2100.
 - In 2020, the global growth rate fell under 1% per year for the first time since 1950.
2. Region-wise differential
 - Rates of population growth vary significantly across countries and regions.
 - More than half of the projected increase in global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries- Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Tanzania.

- Disparate growth rates among the world's largest countries will re-order their ranking by size.
3. Ageing population
 - The population of older persons is increasing both in numbers and as a share of the total.
 - The share of the global population aged 65 years or above is projected to rise from 10% in 2022 to 16% in 2050.
 - The report suggests measures for ageing population by improving the sustainability of social security and pension systems and by establishing universal health care and long-term care systems.
 4. Decline in fertility rate
 - A sustained drop in fertility has led to an increased concentration of the population at working ages (between 25 and 64 years), creating an opportunity for accelerated economic growth per capita.
 - This shift in the age distribution provides a time-bound opportunity for accelerated economic growth known as the "demographic dividend".
 5. International migration
 - This is having important impacts on population trends for some countries.
 - For high-income countries between 2000 and 2020, the contribution of international migration to population growth (net inflow of 80.5 million) exceeded the balance of births over deaths (66.2 million).
 - Over the next few decades, migration will be the sole driver of population growth in high-income countries.
 - In many of these countries, the outflows were due to temporary labour movements, such as for Pakistan (net flow of -16.5 million), India (-3.5 million), Bangladesh (-2.9 million), Nepal (-1.6 million) etc.

How reliable is the UN projection, and how do they compare with India's Census?

In India, of course, the Registrar General comes out with a population projection based on the Census. The last such projection was released in 2019 and it was based on Census 2011. The Census projection is slightly lower than the UN projection. Still UN projection is widely acknowledged across the world

Significance of India overtaking China:

- ✓ That India would overtake China has been known for a while.
- ✓ Moreover, in the past, when the world population was still at 5-billion or 6-billion levels, there was a concern about overcrowding.
- ✓ Those concerns no longer exist because the global population is already 8 billion and several countries (including India) have achieved a replacement rate of fertility.
- ✓ The concern now is not about the absolute numbers — India's population is already 1.4 billion and may go up to 1.6 billion before declining.

Source: India Express

GS 2

❖ POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Q) Explain the important features of the Mediation Bill, 2021 and issues associated with the bill.

Context:

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law and Justice has recommended substantial changes to the Mediation Bill.

Mediation Bill, 2021:

- Mediation is a voluntary dispute resolution process.
- It is an informal, confidential, flexible, and non-binding process in which an impartial person called a “mediator” helps the parties to understand the interests of everyone involved, and their practical and legal choices.
- The Bill requires persons to try to settle civil or commercial disputes through mediation before approaching any court or tribunal.
- Agreements resulting from mediation will be binding and enforceable in the same manner as court judgments.

Key features of the Bill:

1. Pre-litigation mediation: Parties must attempt to settle civil or commercial disputes by mediation before approaching any court or certain tribunals. Even if they fail to reach a settlement through pre-litigation mediation, the court or tribunal may at any stage refer the parties to mediation if they request for the same.
2. Disputes not fit for mediation: The Bill contains a list of disputes which are not fit for mediation. These include disputes:
 - (i) relating to claims against minors or persons of unsound mind
 - (ii) involving criminal prosecution
 - (iii) affecting the rights of third parties

The central government may amend this list. It will apply to mediations conducted in India: a) involving only domestic parties

b) involving at least one foreign party and relating to a commercial dispute (i.e., international mediation).

3. Mediation process: Mediation proceedings will be confidential, and must be completed within 180 days (may be extended by 180 days by the parties). A party may withdraw from mediation after two sessions. Court annexed mediation must be conducted as per the rules framed by the Supreme Court or High Courts.
4. Mediators: Mediators may be appointed by:
 - (i) the parties by agreement
 - (ii) a mediation service provider (an institution administering mediation).

They must disclose any conflict of interest that may raise doubts on their independence. Parties may then choose to replace the mediator.

5. Mediation Council of India: The central government will establish the Mediation Council of India. The Council will consist of a chairperson, two full-time members (with experience in mediation or ADR), three ex-officio members (including the Law Secretary, and the Expenditure Secretary), and a part-time member from an industry body. Functions of the Council include:
 - (i) registration of mediators
 - (ii) recognising mediation service providers and mediation institutes (which train, educate, and certify mediators).
6. Mediated settlement agreement: Agreements resulting from mediation (other than community mediation) will be final, binding, and enforceable in the same manner as court judgments. They may be challenged on grounds of:
 - (i) fraud
 - (ii) corruption
 - (iii) impersonation
 - (iv) relating to disputes not fit for mediation.
7. Community mediation: This may be attempted to resolve disputes likely to affect the peace and harmony amongst residents of a locality. It will be conducted by a panel of three mediators (may include persons of standing in the community, and representatives of resident welfare associations).

Issues highlighted by the Parliamentary Committee:

- Compulsion: The panel cautioned against making compulsory pre-litigation mediation.
- Scope for Delay: Making pre-litigation mediation mandatory may actually result in delaying of cases.
- Judicial intervention: The provision to give higher courts the power to frame rules for mediation was also questioned.
- Narrower scope: The members questioned the non-applicability of the provisions to non-commercial disputes involving the Government and its agencies.
- No bar of experienced professionals: The MCI, established to regulate the profession of mediators, may not have representation of practising mediators with adequate experience.
- Prior approval from centre: The MCI requires prior approval from the central government before issuing regulations related to its essential functions. It is not clear why such prior approval is required.
- Domestic conduct of mediation: The Bill applies to international mediations only if they are conducted in India and not outside.

Why need a law on Mediation?

- ✓ Fast: Because the amount of time necessary for the parties and therefore the Mediator to organize for the mediation is significantly way less as that needed for trial or arbitration, a mediation of dispute can occur relatively early.
- ✓ Flexible: There exists no set formula for mediation. Different Mediators employ different styles. Procedures are often modified to satisfy the requirements of a specific case.
- ✓ Cost Efficient: Because mediation generally requires less preparation, is very less formal than trial or arbitration, and may occur at an early stage of the dispute.

- ✓ Brings Parties Together: Parties can save and sometimes rebuild their relationship like during a family dispute or commercial dispute.
- ✓ Convenient: The parties can control the time, location, and duration of the proceedings to large extent. Scheduling isn't subject to the convenience of courts.
- ✓ Creative: Resolutions that aren't possible through arbitration or judicial determination could also be achieved.
- ✓ Confidential: What's said during mediation are often kept confidential. Parties wishing to avoid the glare of publicity can use mediation to stay their disputes low-key and personal
- ✓ Control: The parties control the result of the mediation and either party has the advantage of terminating the mediation, if it's felt that it's not within the interest of the said party.

Source: The Hindu

GS 3

❖ ECONOMY

Q) Assess the impact of the rupee settlement system for International Trade on India's economy.

Context:

RBI has decided to put in place an additional arrangement of international trade for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports / imports in INR.

Rupee Settlement System for International Trade:

- Banks acting as authorised dealers for such transactions would have to take prior approval from the regulator to facilitate this.
- All exports and imports under the invoicing arrangement may be denominated and invoiced in Rupee.
- Exchange rate between the currencies of the two trading partner countries may be market determined.
- Exporters and importers can now use a Special Vostro Account linked to the correspondent bank of the partner country for receipts and payments denominated in rupees.
- These accounts can be used for payments for projects and investments, import or export advance flow management, and investment in Treasury Bills subject to Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA).
- Also, the bank guarantee, setting-off export receivables, advance against exports, use of surplus balance, approval process, documentation, etc., related aspects would be covered under FEMA rules.

Necessity for such move:

1. The rupee is at a historic low against the dollar.
2. The mechanism is meant to facilitate trade with countries under sanction.

3. Payments had become a pain point for exporters immediately after the Russia-Ukraine war broke out, especially after Russia was cut off from the SWIFT payment gateway.
4. As a result of the trade facilitation mechanism, we see easing of payment issues with Russia.
5. The move would also reduce the risk of forex fluctuation specially looking at the Euro-rupee parity.
6. We see this as a first step towards 100% convertibility of rupee.
7. It will also help stabilize rupee.

Impact on exports:

- ✓ Several countries including Sri Lanka and some in Africa and Latin America are facing forex shortage.
- ✓ As such, the new mechanism will help India promote its exports.
- ✓ It will also help buy discounted crude oil from Russia, which now accounts for 10% of all imported crude.

Will the move help narrow trade deficit?

- The gap between India's exports and imports widened to record highs.
- This puts pressure on the current account deficit, which some economists estimate would nearly double to more than 3% of GDP in FY23.
- RBI's decision may not benefit the external account immediately, but over the medium term, demand for dollars may come down.
- This is partly because opening of new vostro accounts between banks may take some time.

Source: The Hindu

SNIPPETS**GS 2****❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Q) Explain the significance of the Nord Stream 1 Gas Link to Europe.

Context:

The Nord Stream 1, Germany's main source of gas from Russia, was recently shut down for scheduled maintenance work.

There are growing concerns in European countries that Russia would shut down its gas supplies in retaliation against the current sanctions against Moscow.



Nord Stream 1:

- It is a system of offshore natural gas pipelines running under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany.
- Nord Stream 1 is a 1,224 km underwater gas pipeline that runs from Vyborg in northwest Russia to Lubmin in northeastern Germany via the Baltic Sea.
- Two further pipelines under construction running from Ust-Luga to Lubmin termed Nord Stream 2.
- Majority owned by the Russian energy giant Gazprom, the pipeline is the primary route through which its gas enters Germany.

Worry for Europe:

- There have been growing concerns that there could be further restrictions to European gas supplies.
- European countries rely on Russian energy for their cold winters.
- But now they believe that Russia could weaponized their dependency as a response to their sanction due to the conflict in Ukraine.

Europe's alternative sources of energy:

- ✓ As an alternative source for energy, European countries have increasingly turned towards the US, from whom they purchase liquified natural gas (LNG) that comes via ships.
- ✓ Since ship-delivered gas ends up being far more expensive, there are also attempts to get non-Russian pipeline gas from Norway and Azerbaijan.
- ✓ While EU countries were earlier seeking to phase out fossil fuels and emphasize renewable forms of energy, many are now returning to coal to deal with the energy crisis.

Source: Indian Express

Q) Which amongst the following is the best description of Bishnoi Movement?

- a. Protests against construction of large dams in Uttarakhand
- b. A social movement aimed at the protection of Silent Valley, an evergreen tropical forest
- c. A movement in Rajasthan to protect Khejri trees and other wildlife such as antelope, deer, and wildfowl.
- d. An awareness campaign to show the necessity for the protection of migratory birds in Odisha

 **Hey from Yesterday –**

Q) With reference to Sannati, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is located on the banks of the Bhima River in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.
2. The only available sculpture of Emperor Ashoka, in a limestone relief along with his consort, was found here.

Options:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Sannati is an ancient Buddhist site located on the banks of the Bhima River in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.
- The only available sculpture of Emperor Ashoka, in a limestone relief along with his consort, was found in Sannati.
- Sannati is a small village on the banks of the River Bhima in Chittapur Taluka of Kalaburagi (Gulbarga).
- It came into prominence after the collapse of the roof of the Kali temple in Chandralamba temple complex in 1986.
- The collapse revealed the historically valuable Ashokan edicts written in Prakrit language and Brahmi script at the foundations of the temple, attracting historians from across India.
- While the Stupa is believed to be one of the largest of its time.
- The stone-portrait is considered to be the only surviving image of the Mauryan Emperor which had the inscription 'Raya Asoko' in Brahmi on it.

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