

SosinClasses

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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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GS 2

❖ POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Q) “Denying an unmarried woman, the right to a safe abortion violates her personal autonomy and freedom”. Comment.

Context:

A woman’s right to reproductive choice is an inseparable part of her personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. She has a sacrosanct right to bodily integrity, the court quoted from precedents. The court said forcing a woman to continue with her pregnancy would not only be a violation of her bodily integrity but also aggravate her mental trauma.

Indispensable clause of safety:

The court ordered a medical board to be formed by the AIIMS to check whether it was safe to conduct an abortion on the woman and submit a report in a week.

What is the case?

- A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud was hearing the appeal of a woman who wanted to abort her 24-week pregnancy after her relationship failed and her partner left her.
- The lower court had taken an “unduly restrictive view” that her plea for a safe abortion was not covered under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act.
- This was since the pregnancy arose from a consensual relationship outside wedlock.

last amendment:

1. The court noted that an amendment to the Act in 2021 had substituted the term ‘husband’ with ‘partner’, a clear signal that the law covered unmarried women within its ambit.
2. Reiterating the live-in recognition
3. Chastising the lower court, the Bench said live-in relationships had already been recognised by the Supreme Court.
4. There were a significant number of people in social mainstream who see no wrong in engaging in pre-marital sex.
5. The law could not be used to quench “notions of social morality” and unduly interfere in their personal autonomy and bodily integrity.

Source: The Hindu

❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Q) Assess the significance of the Russia gas to Europe. Explain the implications of the Russia-Ukraine war on gas trade.

Context:

Russia restored critical gas supplies to Europe through Germany via the Nord Stream pipeline after 10 days of uncertainty in guise of maintenance.

Nord Stream Pipeline:

- It is a system of offshore natural gas pipelines running under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany.
- It includes two active pipelines running from Vyborg to Lubmin near Greifswald forming the original Nord Stream, and two further pipelines under construction running from Ust-Luga to Lubmin termed Nord Stream 2.
- In Lubmin the lines connect to the OPAL line to Olbernhau on the Czech border and to the NEL line to Rehden near Bremen.
- The first line Nord Stream-1 was laid and inaugurated in 2011 and the second line in 2012.
- At 1,222 km in length, Nord Stream is the longest sub-sea pipeline in the world, surpassing the Langede pipeline.

Present situation:

Germany, which is heavily dependent on Russian gas, had feared that Moscow would not reopen the pipeline after the scheduled work and accused Moscow of using energy as a “weapon”. The showdown came amid the worst tensions in several years over Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Germany believes Russia is squeezing supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions over the war.

Importance of Russian gas:

1. Major chunk of energy: Russia supplied some 40% of Europe’s natural gas before the war. That has dropped to around 15%, sending prices through the roof and straining energy-intensive industries.
2. Everyday use: Gas is used across a range of processes that most people never see – to forge steel to make cars, make glass bottles and pasteurise milk and cheese. Companies warn that they often can’t switch overnight to other energy sources such as fuel oil or electricity to produce heat.
3. Fuel inflation: High energy prices are already threatening to cause a recession in Europe through record inflation, with consumers having less to spend as costs rise for food, fuel and utilities. A complete cutoff could deal an even heavier blow to an already troubled economy.

What is visible in Russia’s game plan?

- Since the invasion, Russia’s revenue from exporting oil and gas to Europe has doubled over the average from recent years, to \$95 billion.
- So, Putin has cash in hand and could calculate that painful utility bills and an energy recession could undermine public support for Ukraine in Europe and increase sentiment for a negotiated settlement in his favour.
- It would be unwise to exclude the possibility that Russia could decide to forgo the revenue it gets from exporting gas to Europe in order to gain political leverage.

Alternatives to Europe:

- I. The EU has turned to more-expensive liquefied natural gas, or LNG, which comes by ship from places like the US and Qatar.
- II. Germany is fast-tracking construction of LNG import terminals on its North Sea coast, but that will take years.
- III. But LNG alone can’t make up the gap.
- IV. Conservation and other energy sources are key.

Could people freeze this winter?

- ✓ Its unlikely homes, schools and hospitals will lose heat because governments are required to impose rationing first on businesses.
- ✓ The German government also could allow gas suppliers to immediately pass on increases to customers.
- ✓ The choices could include torpedoing industry and/or socking consumers with even higher bills.
- ✓ The IEA recommends that European countries step up campaigns for people to conserve at home and plan to share gas in an emergency.

Source: The Hindu

GS 3**❖ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY****Q) Explain the features of the Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022.****Context:**

The Lok Sabha deferred the consideration and passing of the Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022 as the Opposition benches were empty due to the ongoing protests outside of Parliament.

Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022:**Aims and objectives:**

1. To provide for national measures to protect the Antarctic environment and associated ecosystems and to give effect to the Antarctic Treaty
2. To provide a harmonious policy framework for India's Antarctic activities through a well-established legal mechanism
3. Facilitate activities of the Indian Antarctic programme, including management of Antarctic tourism and sustainable development of fisheries
4. To prohibit carrying of certain activities without a permit or the written authorisation of another party to the protocol
5. To provide for inspection in India by an officer designated by the Central government as an Inspector and to constitute an inspection team to carry out inspections in Antarctica
6. To prohibit drilling, dredging, excavation or collection of mineral resources or even doing anything to identify where such mineral deposits occur.

Key feature:

- a. It will empower the government to establish a committee on Antarctic governance and environmental protection to monitor, implement and ensure compliance with the relevant international laws, emissions standards and rules of protection.
- b. The panel is to be headed by the secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, as ex officio chairperson.
- c. Among other roles, he/she has also been the vice-president of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research of the International Science Council since 2018.

- d. The committee will have ten members from various ministries, departments and organizations of the Union government, plus two experts on the Antarctic environment or other relevant areas.

Prohibited activities

The Bill prohibits certain activities in Antarctica including:

- i. Nuclear explosion or disposal of radioactive wastes
- ii. Introduction of non-sterile soil
- iii. Discharge of garbage, plastic or other substance into the sea which is harmful to the marine environment

Source: The Hindu

SNIPPETS

❖ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Q) Explain the significance of the India Innovation Index, 2022.

Context:

Karnataka has bagged the top rank in NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index, 2022, which determines innovation capacities and ecosystems at the sub-national level.

India Innovation Index (III):

The release of the second edition of the index—the first was launched in October 2019—demonstrates the Government's continued commitment to transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy. The index attempts to create an extensive framework for the continual evaluation of the innovation environment of 29 states and seven UTs in India.

It intends to perform the following three functions-

1. Ranking of states and UTs based on their index scores
2. Recognizing opportunities and challenges, and
3. Assisting in tailoring governmental policies to foster innovation

The states have been bifurcated into three categories: major states, northeast and hill states, and union territories/city-states/small states.

Significance:

The study examines the innovation ecosystem of Indian states and union territories. The aim is to create a holistic tool that can be used by policymakers across the country to identify the challenges to be addressed and strengths to build on when designing policies.

Highlights of the 2022 index:

- ✓ Karnataka has held this position, under the Major States category, in all three editions of the Index so far.
- ✓ It was followed by Telangana, Haryana, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Bihar and Gujarat were at the bottom of the index.
- ✓ In the Index, Manipur secured the lead in the Northeast and Hill States category, while Chandigarh was the top performer in the Union Territories and City States category.

Source: The Hindu

Q) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to XPOsat?

1. It is a planned space observatory which would study the polarization of cosmic x-rays.
2. When launched, it would be India's first astronomical observatory in space.

Options:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

 **Hey from Yesterday –**

Q) Which of the following best describes the NAMASTE scheme?

- a) It aims to optimize the efficiency of road traffic.
- b) It aims to achieve outcomes like zero fatalities in sanitation work in India.
- c) It aims at boosting the usage of indigenous technology in the Indian Navy.
- d) It provides end-to-end waste management services for corporates.

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Govt. has formulated the NAMASTE scheme (national action for mechanized sanitation ecosystem) for cleaning sewers, and septic tanks (to be implemented from 2022 to 2026)
- Aim: It aims to achieve outcomes like zero fatalities in sanitation work in India, no sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter and all Sewer and Septic tank sanitation workers have access to alternative livelihoods.
- Nodal Ministries: Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- It will replace the previous scheme: Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers.
- Skill Development and training of Safai Mitras are being taken up with the support of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment through the National Safai Karamchari Finance Development Corporation.

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