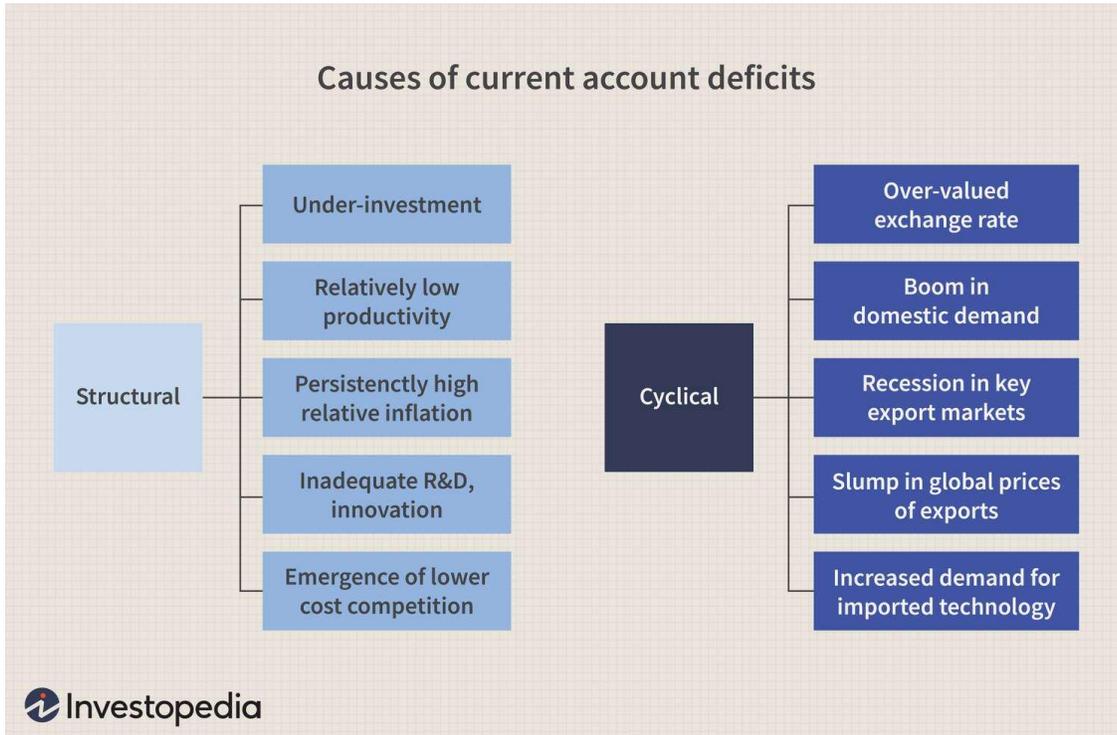


1. Current Account Deficit



Topic: Economy

In News: According to SBI report India's current account deficit CAD limited to 3 per cent against the consensus of 3.5%.

More on the Topic

- Rising software exports, remittances and a likely \$5 billion jump in forex via swap deals are the cited reasons for the reduction in the current account deficit.
- The current account can be expressed as **the difference between the value of exports of goods and services and the value of imports of goods and services.**
- A deficit then means that **the country is importing more goods and services than it is exporting**—although the current account also includes net income (such as interest and dividends) and transfers from abroad (such as foreign aid), which are usually a small fraction of the total.

Cons od CAD:

- A large CAD will result in **demand for foreign currency rising, thus leading to depreciation of the home currency.**
- Nations balance CAD by attracting capital inflows and running a surplus in capital accounts through increased foreign direct investments.

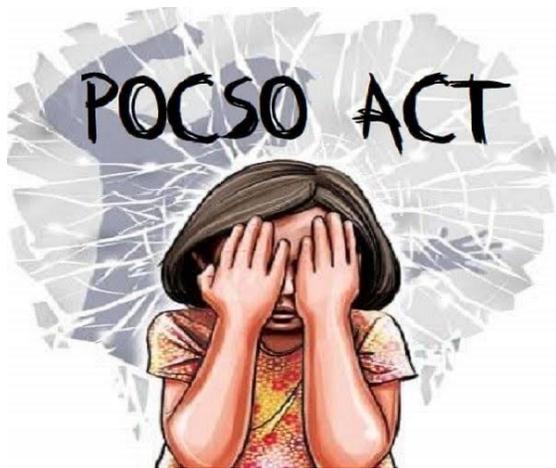
- A weaker Indian currency **will drive inflation up**, which is already a grave concern due to high commodity prices.

When CAD is not Bad?

- If an increase in the import bill is because of imports for technological upgradation it would help in long-term development.
- If increasing imports is accompanied by an **expansion in industrial production**, it is a sign of economic development.

Source: Indian Express

2. POCSO Act



Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: Parliament passed the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, which came into force on November 14 of the same year. 2022 is the 10th year of POCSO Act.

More on the Topic:

- In order to effectively address the heinous crimes of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children through less ambiguous and more stringent legal provisions, the Ministry of Women and Child Development championed the introduction of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.
- The Act has been enacted **to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography** and provide for establishment of Special Courts for trial of such offences and related matters and incidents.
- The Act was amended in 2019, **to make provisions for enhancement of punishments for various offences so as to deter the perpetrators and ensure safety, security and dignified childhood for a child.**

Salient features of the Act and its amendment:



- The Act is **gender neutral and regards the best interests and welfare of the child as a matter of paramount importance at every stage** so as to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and regards the best interests and well-being of the child as being of paramount importance at every stage, to **ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.**
- It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems **a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.**
- People who traffic children for sexual purposes are also punishable under the provisions relating to abetment in the Act.
- The Act **prescribes stringent punishment graded as per the gravity of the offence, with a maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for life, and fine.**
- It defines "child pornography" as any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a child which include photograph, video, digital or computer generated image indistinguishable from an actual child, and image created, adapted, or modified, but appear to depict a child;'

Ten Decade of the Act: Analysis

- There is improvement in the overall scenario of dealing with POCSO act.
- There is reported **high pendency of cases.** Conviction rate also been reported less. (18%)
- There is **lack of victim support and protection.**
- High courts are raising the concern of high age of consent under the act which criminalise consensual sex of the minors.
- There are procedural and investigation delays as well.

Source: PIB

3. The draft Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022



Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: The draft Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022 has been released by the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY).

More on the Topic:

- **Objective of the Bill:** The bill is supposed to outline the rights and duties of ‘digital nagriks’ or citizens while laying out the process and rules for data collection.
- **Penalties:** The bill also imposes heavy penalties for violations of any provisions of the legislation which will be decided by the Data Protection Board of India– as established by the new law. However, orders of the board can be challenged in a High Court.
- Entities that fail to take “reasonable security safeguards” to prevent personal data breaches will be fined as high as Rs 250 crore.
- **Mandatory Consent:** The bill also makes it clear that individual needs to give consent before their data is processed and that “every individual should know what items of personal data a Data Fiduciary wants to collect and the purpose of such collection and further processing.”
- **Notice of Data:** The notice of data collection needs to be in clear and easy-to-understand language. Individuals also have the right to withdraw consent from a Data Fiduciary. Individuals should be able to “access basic information” in languages specified in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- **Cross-border data transfer:** The bill allows for cross-border storage and transfer of data to “certain notified countries and territories.” However, “an assessment of relevant factors by the Central Government would precede such a notification.”

Seven Principles the data bill is based on:



- According to an explanatory note for the bill, it is based on seven principles.
- 1.The first is that “usage of personal data by organisations must be **done in a manner that is lawful, fair to the individuals** concerned and transparent to individuals.”
- 2.Personal data must **only be used for the purposes for which it was collected.**
- 3&4. This third principle talks of **data minimisation**, while the fourth puts an emphasis on **data accuracy** when it comes to collection.
- 5.How personal data that is collected cannot be “stored perpetually by default,” and storage should be limited to a fixed duration.
- 6.There should be **reasonable safeguards** to ensure there is “no unauthorised collection or processing of personal data.”
- 7. The person who decides the purpose and means of the processing of personal data should be **accountable for such processing.**”

Important Terminologies from the Bill:

- The bill uses the term “**Data Principal**” to denote the individual whose data is being collected.
- **The term “Data Fiduciary” the entity** (can be an individual, company, firm, state etc), **which decides the “purpose and means of the processing of an individual’s personal data.”**
- The law also makes a recognition that in the case of children –defined as all users under the age of 18— their parents or lawful guardians will be considered their ‘Data Principals.’
- Under the law, **personal data is “any data by which or in relation to which an individual can be identified.”**
- **Processing means** “the entire cycle of operations that can be carried out in respect of personal data.” So right from collection to storage of data would come under processing of data as per the bill.
- **‘Significant Data Fiduciaries**, who deal with a high volume of personal data. The Central government will define who is designated under this category.

Source: Hindu

4. Mission Prarambh



Topic: Science and Technology

In News: India's first privately developed launch vehicle, Vikram-S, blasted off on its maiden flight from the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's) Sriharikota spaceport.

More on the Topic:

- The mission, named Prarambh, or 'the beginning', marks the Indian private sector's first foray into the promising space launch market.
- The rocket has been developed by **Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace**, a company that was started in 2018.
- It is called Vikram-S. It is named after Vikram Sarabhai, the founder of India's space programme.

About the Vikram Rocket:

- Mission Prarambh will see Vikram-S carry **three customer satellites in a sub-orbital flight**.
- In a sub-orbital flight, **the vehicle travels slower than the orbital velocity** which means it is fast enough to reach outer space, but not fast enough to stay in an orbit around the Earth.
- Vikram-S will carry three satellites, including one by SpaceKidz India called FunSat, parts of which were developed by school students.



- The Vikram rockets will be able to carry between 290 kg and 560 kg payloads into **sun-synchronous polar orbits**.
- The Vikram-S rocket is a **single-stage sub-orbital launch vehicle** which will carry three customer payloads and help test and validate technologies in the Vikram series space launch vehicles.
- The company is designing three Vikram rockets that will use **various solid and cryogenic fuels**.
- The Vikram series of rockets are among the few launch vehicles that have their **core structure built using carbon composites**.
- The thrusters used for spin stability in the vehicle have been 3D printed.
- The engine used in the launch vehicle is named after former president Dr A P J Abdul Kalam.
- The performance of the '**Kalam-80**' will be one of the key areas that the company will monitor during the flight of Vikram-S.

Source: Indian Express

5. Global Methane Assessment: 2030 Baseline Report

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: Climate and Clean Air Coalition and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has released The Global Methane Assessment: 2030 Baseline Report.

More on the Topic:

- The Global Methane Assessment: 2030 Baseline Report was launched at the Climate and Clean Air Ministerial Meeting at 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.



Highlights from the Report:

- Methane emissions can rise 5-13 per cent above 2020 levels by 2030 under a business-as-usual scenario.
- This represents an estimated increase of 20-50 million tonnes of methane per year above current levels.
- This greenhouse gas is responsible for nearly 45 per cent of current net warming.
- Methane levels in the atmosphere in 2021 reached a record high of 1908 parts per billion. This is 262 per cent of the preindustrial era levels.
- **Agriculture, fossil fuels as well as solid waste and wastewater** are the three major sources of methane.
- The report highlighted **substantial uncertainties in tracing emissions to specific sub-sectors such as livestock or oil.**
- But this could change with recent advances, including in airborne, ground-based and satellite-based remote sensing, as well as collecting more emissions per activity data.
- At CoP27, **UN launched the Methane Alert and Response System (MARS)** to track methane emissions.

Anthropogenic harm:

- Human activities release **350-390 million tonnes of methane annually.** Emissions from the agriculture and fossil fuel energy sectors are around 120-140 million tonnes per year, roughly twice that of the waste sector.
- Emissions are projected to rise by about 11 million tonnes annually by 2030 under a business-as-usual scenario from the agriculture sector.
- Emissions from **fossil fuels and waste are estimated to go up by 10 million tonnes and 9 million tonnes respectively by the decade's end** under the same scenario.
- The world could reduce emissions from these sectors by roughly 180 million tonnes per year (45 per cent) by 2030 using currently available measures.

Global Methane Pledge.

- The Global Methane Pledge was announced last year at CoP26. The goal is to **slash global methane emissions by at least 30 per cent from 2020 levels by 2030.**
- Achieving the pledge could eliminate over 0.2 degree Celsius of warming from 2040-2070.
- At CoP27, 150 nations joined the pledge. India and China have not made the commitment yet.
- Around **95 per cent of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) now include methane or will include it in revised versions.**
- 50 countries have developed national methane action plans.
- Cutting methane emissions in the next decade should **complement decarbonisation efforts.** This is mainly because removing carbon dioxide will also remove cooling aerosols.

Source: Business Standard



6. Press Council of India

Topic: Polity and Governance



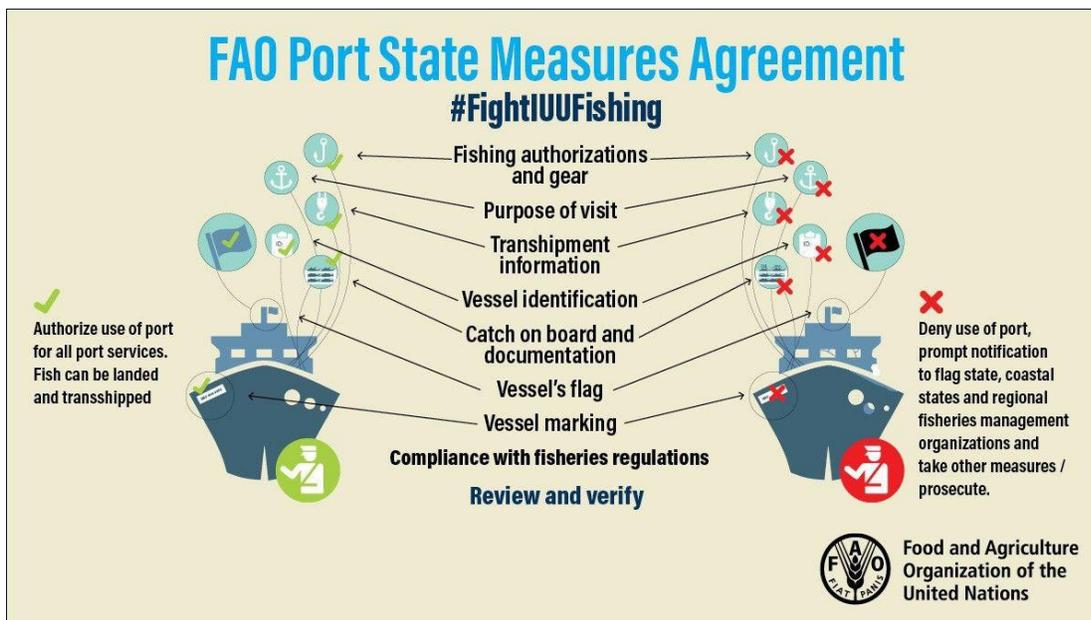
In News: The Press Council of India celebrated the National Press Day on the theme “The Media’s Role in Nation Building”.

More on the Topic:

- The Press Council of India is a statutory quasi-judicial autonomous authority re-established in the year 1979.
- It aims to preserve the freedom of the press and maintain and improve the standards of the press in India.
- **The PCI consists of a chairman and 28 other members.**
- The Chairman is selected by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and a member elected by the PCI.
- It adjudicates **the complaints against and by the press for violation of ethics and for violation of the freedom of the press**, respectively.
- Decisions of the PCI are final and cannot be appealed before a court of law.

Source: Business Standard

7. Port State Measures (PSMA)



Topic: International Affairs

In News: Angola, Eritrea, Morocco and Nigeria has signed the Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA).

More on the Topic:

- With the new signatories, the number of signatories to this global alignment against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing to 100 countries.
- India is not a signatory.
- **PSMA is the first internationally binding instrument specifically designed to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing** by denying port access to foreign vessels that engage in or support such practices.
- The PSMA entered into force in June 2016.
- One in every five fish caught around the world every year is thought to originate from IUU fishing.

Source: Hindu