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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS



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RISE IN INDIA'S IMPORTS FROM CHINA

TAG: GS Paper II- **International Relations**, GS-III- **Indian Economy – Effects of Liberalisation on the Economy.**

Why in the News?

- ❖ India's imports from China surged to over \$101 billion in 2023-24, escalating concerns regarding economic dependency and national security implications.

Additional Information:

- ❖ China's share of India's industrial goods imports rose from 21% to 30% over 15 years.
- ❖ Chinese imports increased 2.3 times faster than India's total imports, affecting sectors like machinery, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and textiles.
- ❖ The trade deficit with China exceeded \$387 billion over six years, with India's exports to China remaining stagnant.
- ❖ Despite an increase in India's exports to China in 90 principal commodities, the trade deficit persists.
- ❖ China is the top supplier in eight major industrial sectors in India, raising concerns over economic and national security.
- ❖ Strategies are suggested to mitigate risks, strengthen domestic industries, and reduce dependency on single-country imports, particularly from geopolitical competitors like China.

Implications of Imbalance in India-China Trade Relations:

- ❖ **Trade Deficit:** India's significant trade deficit with China leads to economic imbalance and reliance on Chinese imports.
- ❖ **Loss of Domestic Industries:** Chinese imports undermine domestic industries in India, especially in electronics, manufacturing, and pharmaceuticals.
- ❖ **Strategic Concerns:** Trade imbalance raises strategic concerns, increasing dependency on China for critical goods and technologies.
- ❖ **Security Risks:** Overreliance on Chinese imports poses security risks, exposing India to supply chain disruptions during geopolitical tensions.
- ❖ **Market Access Issues:** India faces barriers to market access in China due to non-tariff barriers, regulatory hurdles, and unfair trade practices.
- ❖ **Geopolitical Tensions:** Trade imbalances worsen geopolitical tensions between India and China, affecting bilateral relations and regional stability.



Way Forward:

- ❖ **Diversification of Trade Partners:** India should explore new markets and strengthen ties with other countries to reduce dependency on China.
- ❖ **Promotion of Domestic Industries:** Encourage domestic manufacturing through incentives and policy support to reduce reliance on Chinese imports.
- ❖ **Addressing Market Access Issues:** Negotiate with China to reduce trade barriers and promote fair trade practices.
- ❖ **Enhancing Competitiveness:** Invest in infrastructure, technology, R&D, and skill development to improve the competitiveness of Indian industries.
- ❖ **Bilateral Dialogue:** Engage in bilateral dialogues with China to address trade imbalances and enhance cooperation.
- ❖ **Strengthening Regional Cooperation:** Enhance regional economic cooperation to diversify trade and reduce dependency on any single partner.





RAVI VARMA'S INDULEKHA

TAG: GS Paper I- **Indian Culture.**

Why in the News?

- ❖ The first true copy of Raja Ravi Varma's painting "Indulekha" will be unveiled at Kilimanoor Palace, sparking excitement in the art community.

Additional Information:

- ❖ "Indulekha" is based on the protagonist of the first modern Malayalam novel, written by O. Chandu Menon in 1889.
- ❖ The painting entered the public domain in 2022, generating enthusiasm among art enthusiasts.
- ❖ Originally planned for unveiling on Raja Ravi Varma's 176th birth anniversary, security concerns led to the unveiling of the lone true copy instead.
- ❖ Sasikala Parakkal, the painting's owner, will unveil it at the palace.
- ❖ The painting depicts Indulekha holding a letter to her lover Madhavan, showcasing Raja Ravi Varma's characteristic oil painting style.
- ❖ Restoration of the painting was done by Madhan S. of the Heritage Conservation and Research Academy.

More about Raja Ravi Varma:

- ❖ **Early Life:** Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906) hailed from the princely state of Travancore (now Kerala), born into a family of artists and nobility.
- ❖ **Style:** He merged Indian traditions with European academic realism, revolutionizing Indian art.
- ❖ **Mythological Paintings:** Renowned for his depictions of Hindu mythological figures, his works from epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata are iconic.
- ❖ **Portraiture:** His portraits of Indian royalty and personalities garnered widespread acclaim for their essence and elegance.
- ❖ **Printmaking:** Pioneering lithography, he made his art accessible to a wider audience, influencing generations.
- ❖ **Legacy:** Establishing the Ravi Varma Press in 1894, his works continue to influence Indian art.
- ❖ **Recognition:** Exhibited globally, his paintings adorn prestigious museums worldwide.

Some of his renowned paintings:

- ❖ **Shakuntala:** Capturing the beauty of the Mahabharata character, Shakuntala, it reflects his mastery.
- ❖ **Damayanti Talking to a Swan:** This painting from the Nala-Damayanti tale showcases emotion and narrative skillfully.
- ❖ **The Maharashtrian Lady:** Portraying Indian women with elegance, it highlights his attention to detail.
- ❖ **Lady Giving Alms at the Temple:** Reflecting his religious themes, it captures a spiritual moment.
- ❖ **The Milkmaid:** Inspired by European realism, it showcases everyday scenes with precision.
- ❖ **Galaxy of Musicians:** Capturing Indian cultural richness, it showcases traditional musicians.
- ❖ **The Mysore Lady in Traditional Attire:** Capturing regional aesthetics, it exemplifies his regional portrayal.
- ❖ **The Maharashtrian Lady with Fruit Basket:** Another portrayal of Indian beauty and grace in traditional attire.



ANTICYCLONES

TAG: GS Paper I- **Geography.**

Why in the News?

- ❖ The news delves into the correlation between global warming, local weather patterns, and its impact on heat waves in India, stressing the need for enhanced prediction systems.

Analysis of this News:

- ❖ Global warming's influence on local weather highlights the necessity of global modeling for local predictions.
- ❖ The weakening El Niño of 2023 led to anticipated warm temperatures globally but brought cooler temperatures across Pakistan to West Bengal in India.
- ❖ Concerns arise over heat waves in India during elections, influenced by persistent circulation patterns and anticyclonic circulations over the North Indian Ocean.
- ❖ The Indian Easterly Jet (IEJ) and westerly jet contribute to anticyclonic patterns over the Indian Ocean and the Indian subcontinent, affecting weather dynamics.
- ❖ Anticyclone strength impacts the duration, intensity, and frequency of heat waves, compounded by the effects of global warming.
- ❖ Early-warning systems for extreme weather events adopt a 'ready-set-go' approach, integrating seasonal outlooks and subseasonal predictions to guide disaster management.
- ❖ India's prediction and early warning systems are advancing, focusing on enhancing resilience and forecasting weather trajectories across different timeframes.
- ❖ Challenges persist in coordinating predictions from national to local levels and training stakeholders for sustained success in disaster preparedness and economic development.

Key differences between cyclones and anticyclones:

- ❖ **Cyclones:**
 - ☛ **Formation:** Cyclones originate from low-pressure systems with converging winds rotating counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.
 - ☛ **Characteristics:** Intense upward air movement leads to cloud formation, precipitation, and stormy weather conditions with strong winds spiraling inward.
 - ☛ **Effects on Weather Patterns:** Cyclones bring heavy rainfall, storm surges, and high winds causing damage to infrastructure and vegetation.
- ❖ **Anticyclones:**
 - ☛ **Formation:** Anticyclones form from high-pressure systems with diverging winds rotating clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and counterclockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.
 - ☛ **Characteristics:** Air descends, leading to clear skies, stable atmospheric conditions, and dry weather with minimal cloud cover and precipitation.
 - ☛ **Effects on Weather Patterns:** Anticyclones result in dry weather conditions, temperature extremes, and air pollution buildup due to temperature inversions.



❖ **Key Differences:**

- Cyclones are associated with low-pressure systems and stormy weather, while anticyclones are linked with high-pressure systems and fair weather.
- Cyclones bring heavy rainfall and strong winds, whereas anticyclones lead to dry conditions and calm winds.
- Cyclones cause flooding and storm surges, while anticyclones contribute to temperature extremes and air pollution buildup.





ELECTRIC PROPULSION SYSTEM FOR WARSHIPS

TAG: GS Paper II- **International Relations.**

Why in the News?

- ❖ The Centre and the UK government are in talks regarding the potential development of an electric propulsion system in India for domestic warships, signaling a significant shift in India's naval technology.
- ❖ This shift could move from conventional diesel engines, gas turbines, or steam turbines to electric propulsion systems for larger warships.

Origin and Progress of Discussions:

- ❖ The UK government expressed interest in this capability through a letter of intent to the Indian government, initiating discussions.
- ❖ Indian officials are evaluating the formal proposal, indicating progress towards finalizing an agreement between the two nations.
- ❖ The agreement is expected to cover training, equipment, and infrastructure necessary for developing and deploying electric propulsion systems in Indian warships.

Collaborative Efforts and Memorandum of Understanding:

- ❖ Collaboration between UK's GE Power Conversion and India's Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) is anticipated, facilitated by a memorandum of understanding (MoU) they've signed.
- ❖ This collaboration aligns with broader goals of enhancing India's naval capabilities.

Application and Testing of Electric Propulsion System:

- ❖ While UK's Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers serve as models, India's initial focus may be on testing the system on landing platform docks and next-gen destroyers.
- ❖ This phased approach allows systematic testing and adaptation of the technology to suit Indian naval requirements.

Diplomatic Engagements and Joint Working Groups:

- ❖ Momentum for discussions arose during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's UK visit, followed by engagements between high-level naval officials from both countries.
- ❖ Joint working groups, meetings, and port calls have facilitated exchanges of technical expertise and experiences.

Future Prospects and Technological Exchange:

- ❖ Ongoing discussions signify a broader trend of international cooperation in defense technology.
- ❖ The exchange of technical know-how enhances India's naval capabilities and fosters closer diplomatic ties.
- ❖ Joint efforts highlight the importance of collaboration in addressing complex defense challenges.



MICROSOFT UNVEILS PHI-3-MINI

TAG: GS Paper III- **Science and Technology.**

Why in the News?

- ❖ Microsoft recently introduced the latest version of its lightweight AI model, Phi-3-mini, reportedly the first in a series of three small language models (SLMs) planned for release.
- ❖ This unveiling signifies a notable progression in artificial intelligence, particularly in the domain of compact language models (SLMs).

Addition Information about the News:

❖ **Phi-3-mini Basics: Features and Specifications:**

- ☛ Phi-3-mini boasts 3.8 billion parameters, making it a substantial AI model despite its smaller size compared to large language models (LLMs) like OpenAI's GPT-4.
- ☛ It is instruction-tuned, enabling it to follow various user instructions, enhancing its versatility across different applications.
- ☛ Notably, Phi-3-mini supports a context window of up to 128,000 tokens, facilitating information recall without compromising quality.

❖ **Differentiation from Large Language Models (LLMs):**

- ☛ SLMs like Phi-3-mini offer advantages over LLMs in terms of cost-effectiveness, performance on smaller devices, and task specialization.
- ☛ Unlike LLMs trained on vast general datasets, SLMs can be fine-tuned for specific tasks, resulting in improved accuracy and efficiency while requiring less computing power and energy.
- ☛ Additionally, SLMs exhibit lower inference latency, making them suitable for real-time applications such as virtual assistants and chatbots.

❖ **Phi-3-mini's Capabilities: Performance and Applications:**

- ☛ Phi-3-mini has demonstrated superior performance across various benchmarks, including language comprehension, reasoning, coding, and mathematics.
- ☛ Its efficient utilization of computational power and reduced latency make it suitable for processing large text content like documents, web pages, and code.
- ☛ Furthermore, its strong reasoning and logic capabilities enhance its versatility and applicability in diverse domains.

❖ **Use Cases and Deployment: Impact in India:**

- ☛ Microsoft showcased use cases from India, demonstrating how organizations like ITC utilize Phi-3-mini for applications such as Krishi Mitra, a farmer-facing app.
- ☛ This highlights the model's relevance and potential impact in addressing real-world challenges and driving innovation in specific domains.

Conclusion:

- ❖ The introduction of Phi-3-mini marks a significant milestone in compact language model development, providing users with advanced capabilities in a cost-effective and efficient manner.
- ❖ As SLMs gain traction among organizations and research groups for various applications, the deployment of Phi-3-mini holds promise for driving innovation and addressing complex challenges across different sectors.