DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

08 AUGUST 2023

1 – Restriction on the import of Personal Computers/Laptops

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- Personal computers, laptops, palmtops, automatic data processing devices, microcomputers/processors, and large/mainframe computers are now prohibited from entering India.

- **Important details:**

- **Why is there a cap?**

- Laptop and personal computer imports have been prohibited in order to boost domestic manufacture and minimize the majority of these devices' imports from China.
- If they had a valid limited import license, their import would be approved.

- **Exemptions:**

- **Import licence is not required for the following items:**

- laptop
- tablet
- ultra-small form factor computer or all-in-one computer
- Those obtained through e-commerce portals via post or courier.
- If appropriate, imports will be subject to duty.
- Furthermore, if such products are an essential component of capital goods, they are excluded from import licensing processes.
- The government has waived the requirement for an import license for imports of up to 20 commodities per consignment for R&D (research and development), testing, benchmarking and evaluation, repair and re-export, and product development purposes.
- The restriction would be that these imports could only be utilized for the purposes mentioned and could not be sold.
- The goods would either be destroyed or re-exported when they served their purpose.
- The limited import permit is not necessary for the repair and re-importation of products repaired in another country.

- **Implications:**
- **The PLI system is being expanded:**
- The action is seen as a direct benefit to the Centre's recently reintroduced production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware.
- **Increased domestic manufacturing:**
- The project aims to encourage enterprises to manufacture in India as the country attempts to boost its domestic manufacturing capabilities in the electronics sector.
- **Reduce your reliance on Chinese imports:**
- The effort is aimed at laptop, server, and personal computer makers, among others, because China accounts for the majority of imports in these categories.
- Imports of electronic devices and laptops/computers have increased in recent years in India.
- The majority of imports into India's seven restricted categories come from China.
- China accounts for roughly 70-80% of India's personal computer and laptop imports.
- India's imports of personal computers and laptop PCs from China declined by 23.1% year on year in 2022-23.
- ***Source → The Hindu***

2 - Ji-Van Yojana:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The PM Ji-VAN Yojana was announced in the Lok Sabha by the Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- **About the Plan:**

- The Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan - Vatavaran Anukool Fasal Awashesh Nivaran) Yojana aims to encourage Integrated Bio-ethanol Projects that make use of lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable resources.
- It would help to address environmental concerns caused by the use of fossil fuels, provide financial assistance to farmers, subsidize crude imports, and conserve foreign currency.
- By 2022, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas intends to achieve 10% ethanol blending.
- The ethanol produced by the collaborating firms will be sold to Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).
- The system will be implemented and regulated by the Centre for High Technology (CHT), which is administered by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

- **Benefits:**

- GHG emissions can be reduced by gradually blending or substituting fossil fuels.
- Among other things, it addresses environmental issues created by crop residue burning.
- These ethanol initiatives will provide jobs both in rural and urban areas.
- Farmers' income can be increased by paying them for agricultural residues that would otherwise go to waste.
- Ethanol technologies should be able to use second-generation biomass.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

3 - Money Bills vs Finance Bills:

GS III

Indian Economy

- **Context:**

- According to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) law is not a spending law.

- **What is a Finance Bill, exactly?**

- A finance bill deals with revenue or expenditure.
- A money Bill is a type of finance bill that must only address the topics listed in Article 110 (1) (a) to (g).
- Article 117 of the Constitution addresses the specific issues relating to Finance Bills.

- **There are two kinds of financial bills:**

- A Bill that provides provision for any of the matters listed in Article 110 (1) can only be brought or moved on the President's advice and cannot be tabled in the Rajya Sabha, according to Article 117 (1).
- This first category of financial Bills includes money bills and other financial bills that originate entirely in the Lok Sabha.
- The second type of finance Bills is addressed in Article 117 (3) of the Constitution.
- These Bills are more traditional in nature.

- **The following is the distinction between a finance bill and a regular bill:**

- A financial Bill differs from an ordinary Bill in that if it is passed, it will involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India and cannot be passed by either House unless the President has recommended it.
- In every other aspect, such financial Bills are the same as ordinary Bills, and they can even be introduced in the Rajya Sabha, altered by it, or debated jointly by both Houses.
- A financial Bill becomes a money Bill when it exclusively falls under one of the seven heads listed in Article 110(1), which defines money Bills.
- A monetary Bill is one that has been validated by the Speaker.

- **The following is the distinction between money bills and financial bills:**

- **Article 110 defines a money Bill as one that incorporates measures dealing with:**

- taxes
- control over the borrowing of cash by the government, and
- The expenditure or receipt of funds from the Consolidated Fund of India.
- Article 109 describes the procedure for passing such a Bill and grants the Lok Sabha exclusive authority over the passage of money bills.
- The fundamental difference between money bills and financial bills is that the latter incorporates Rajya Sabha (Upper House) recommendations while the former does not.
- The Lok Sabha has the right to reject the Rajya Sabha's recommendations on money legislation.
- Article 117 (1) states that whereas an ordinary Bill can be introduced in either chamber, a money Bill can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha.
- No one can introduce or move money Bills in the Lok Sabha except on the President's guidance.
- Amendments that reduce or remove any tax are exempt from the President's recommendation requirement.
- To become a money Bill, any financial Bill must meet two conditions:
- It can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha, not in the Rajya Sabha.

- These bills can be introduced only with the President's permission.

- **How are monetary and financial bills passed?**

- **Financial bill:**

- The Rajya Sabha has a limited function in passing money legislation.
- Bills of this nature can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha.
- After being passed by the Lok Sabha, Money Bills are sent to the Rajya Sabha for recommendations.
- Within 14 days, the Upper House must return the Bill to the Lower House with non-binding recommendations.
- If the Lok Sabha rejects the recommendations, the Bill is deemed to have been enacted by both Houses in the form in which it was passed by the Lok Sabha, without the Rajya Sabha's recommendations.
- If the Rajya Sabha did not respond with its ideas within 14 days, the same consequences would apply.
- As a result, when it comes to financial bills, the Rajya Sabha serves only as a consultative body.

- **Financial responsibilities:**

- Ordinary Bills and other financial Bills must still be approved by both Houses of Parliament in order to be passed.
- They, unlike money bills, can be rejected or amended by the Rajya Sabha.
- While the President has the authority to call a joint session of both Houses to break a deadlock in the passage of an ordinary Bill, there is no provision for a joint session to break a deadlock in the passage of a money Bill.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

4 - Vivad se Vishwas II scheme:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- The Centre recently introduced a mechanism for resolving contractual difficulties with government and its undertakings' vendors or suppliers.

- **Important details:**

- The scheme known as 'Vivad se Vishwas II — (Contractual Disputes)' was unveiled in this year's Union Budget.
- It is a "one-time settlement" technique that comprises drafting an agreement between the litigating parties to resolve the dispute.
- It is planned that it be made available through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) site.
- Its purpose is to resolve contractual disputes involving the government and government undertakings when an arbitral judgement is challenged in court.
- This will be accomplished by providing graded settlement terms based on the status of the dispute.
- The program will apply to any domestic contractual disputes in which the Government of India or an organization controlled by it is one of the parties.
- The settlement amount awarded to the contractor in situations involving court awards will be up to 85% of the net amount granted or upheld by the court, whilst in cases involving arbitral decisions, the same threshold will be up to 65% of the net amount.
- The measure, which will cover conflicts until September 30, 2022, is meant to boost ease of doing business.
- Eligible claims will be processed entirely through the GeM platform, streamlining the settlement procedure and ensuring a fast completion.

- **The following are the terms of the scheme's one-time settlement:**

- There is no involvement of the state government or any other private body in the lawsuit, or
- The problem is with pending cash claims, not with performance claims.

- **Vivad se Vishwas Scheme:**

- The Vivad se Vishwas Scheme is advantageous to taxpayers concerned in ongoing legal tax difficulties at whatever level.
- This plan completely waives the interest and penalties associated with the contested tax amount.
- As a result, the taxpayer is only liable to pay the tax amount that has been contested.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

5 - Jharkhand's new anti-cheating Bill:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- The Jharkhand Competitive Examination (Control and Prevention of Unfair Means in Recruitment) Bill, 2023, was passed by the Jharkhand Legislative Assembly.

- **Important details:**

- **The Bill's Objective:**

- To crack down on the use of unfair means and irregularities in examinations, as well as to examine cases of question paper 'leaks'.

- **Authority for search and seizure:**

- Any place, box, locker, safe, or other container can be searched if any individual is involved in the use of unfair means, as defined by the Bill, or is in possession of criminal proceeds, records, or property.
- Any record or item discovered as a result of the search shall be confiscated.

- **Authority to arrest:**

- If a police officer authorized by the Act has the material in his or her possession and has reason to believe that any person is guilty of an offense, the person will be arrested and the reasons for the arrest will be disclosed.
- **Other states that have passed legislation along these lines include:**

- A similar regulation was implemented in Uttarakhand.
- Rajasthan passed similar legislation in 2022.

- ***Source → The Hindu***