



Current Affairs of the Day

GS Paper II

- Surveys on learning losses by month-end, panel told
- Myanmar's Suu Kyi thanks supporters for flower protests

GS Paper III

- Centre moots ban on 'flash sales' on e-com sites
- Corpses did not add to Ganga pollution: Centre



Surveys on learning losses by month-end, panel told

Highlights:

1. The Centre is assessing how badly school students have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and will collect States' surveys on digital education access and learning losses by the end of this month.
2. The panel asked the Centre to also assess the impact of its own guidelines and interventions, as well as the impact of schools that were reopened in some States during the lull between the two waves of the pandemic.
3. A survey of Classes 8-12 in centrally-run schools last August showed that 80-90% of students were dependent on mobiles rather than laptops for digital schooling, while 30% were affected by electricity supply disruptions. States were then asked to do a similar mapping of access.

Myanmar's Suu Kyi thanks supporters for flower protests

1. Deposed Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi thanked her supporters for defying the junta to celebrate her 76th birthday with flower protests, as her trial on a raft of criminal charges resumed.
2. A mass uprising in Myanmar against a February military coup has been met with a brutal crackdown that has killed more than 870 civilians, according to a local monitoring group.
3. Protesters across the country donned flowers in their hair — long a signature Suu Kyi look — to mark the birthday of the democracy icon. Many replicated the floral hairstyle and uploaded pictures onto social media.

Centre moots ban on 'flash sales' on e-com sites

Highlights:

1. To monitor deep discounts offered on e-commerce websites, the government proposed changes to the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules 2020, banning all "flash sales".
2. The proposed changes have been put up on the website of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs calling for public comments.



3. The Ministry clarified that the 'conventional' flash sale had not been banned, but that only 'predatory' ones would be banned.
4. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said in a statement it had been receiving several complaints against widespread cheating and unfair trade practices being observed in the e-commerce ecosystem.

Flash sales limit customer choice

Conventional flash sales by third-party sellers are not banned on the e-commerce platform. But certain e-commerce entities are engaging in limiting consumer choice by indulging in 'back-to-back' or 'flash' sales wherein one seller on a platform does not carry any inventory or order fulfilment capability but merely places a 'flash or back-to-back' order with another seller controlled by the platform. This prevents a level playing field and ultimately limits customer choice and increases prices. It was not clear if this meant the suspension of the big festival sales on the sites.

Corpses did not add to Ganga pollution: Centre

The dumping of bodies in the Ganga, allegedly of those who died of COVID-19, did not increase pollution in the river, the Jal Shakti Ministry has said.

Highlights:

1. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) had solicited reports from the Centre, the State Pollution Control Boards of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and the Central Water Commission on whether the disposal of corpses in the river had affected water quality.
2. Data suggested that the water quality in terms of pH, DO (dissolved oxygen), BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) conformed with the bathing water quality criteria except "marginal deviations at few locations" and these were not dissimilar from the water quality observed in previous years.
3. They may not be attributed to incidents of floating bodies, the NMCG said in a report based on responses from these departments.
4. Previous studies from the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad have shown that the coronavirus can be found in sewage and wastewater, and these have been used to estimate the prevalence of the infection in other urban locations.