

AUKUS

- There will be three phases in the agreement in the Indo-Pacific region, first announced in September 2021.
- Beginning this year, the U.S. and the U.K. navies will embed Australian personnel, and increase port visits to Australia to train together.
- In the second phase, U.S. and U.K. nuclear submarines will travel rotationally to Australia, and the U.S. will sell Australia up to five nuclear-powered Virginia class submarines.
- Subsequently, a new submarine called the SSN-AUKUS will be built and used by all three navies, with interoperable workings.
- The deal, the biggest for Australia, using British design and U.S. technology, is expected to cost \$368 billion.
- In his speech, U.K. leader Rishi Sunak said that the most recent challenges to the world have come from “Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, China’s growing assertiveness [and] the destabilizing behavior of Iran and North Korea”.
- The new alliance is seen as a counter to China exerting its claims on Taiwan, with the idea that a naval fleet including nuclear-powered submarines based in Australia would be able to reach the South China Sea quickly.
- Russia has raised questions over nuclear proliferation, as Australia would join a group of countries that use nuclear-powered submarines.
- While U.S. President Joe Biden insisted the submarines would be nuclear-powered, but not nuclear-armed, Russia and China are expected to raise concerns over any violation of the Non-Proliferation regime.
- For New Delhi, which has always seemed hesitant to explore more strategic and defence aspects in the Quad, AUKUS gives it a breather in the Indo-Pacific military calculus.
- India, as a voice for the global south, must do what it can to ensure that the announcement does not exacerbate already sharp divides between U.S.-led alliances and Russia China combine, and proves to be a deterrent rather than accelerating global conflict instead.



THE HINDU

Women leadership

- To unleash the gender dividend and create conditions for female leadership to flourish, women at all levels of society must have inclusion in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT), bodily autonomy and safety, shared responsibility within the household, and equal participation in decision-making spaces.

Scaling EdTech solutions

- As the access to digital technology increasingly becomes an arena of opportunity and basic service for children and young people, EdTech gives us tools to bridge part of the accessibility gap in education through hybrid learning models, even where girls' access to schooling is restricted by harmful norms.
- The World Bank notes that over 43% of Indian STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) graduates are women.
- However, not all of them are represented in the workforce, and tech leadership
- Introducing elements such as Olympiads, innovation labs, boot camps, and competitions can expose girls to practical applications and

inspire them to build solutions to challenges in their ecosystem.



- Sporting activities are synonymous with promoting leadership, self-sufficiency, and teamwork.
- The inclusion of adolescent girls and young women in sports can go a long way in building their self-confidence, strengthening self-belief, and imparting the nuances of teamwork.
- It is crucial for us to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, so that women may enjoy economic opportunities and outcomes on an equal footing to men.
- A multi-pronged approach across enhancing employability, sport for leadership, digital innovations and learning, and bodily autonomy is the key to strengthening leadership abilities among adolescent girls and young women.
- Nurturing girls' leadership abilities is our collective first step towards breaking down restrictive gender norms and barriers for truly gender-transformative growth and

accelerating girl-and-women-led progress across the Sustainable Development Goals for India and the world.



THE HINDU

Women reservation bill

What is the Women's, Reservation Bill?

- After local bodies, the next step was to ensure reservation in Parliament, but this has been a difficult fight.
- The Women's Reservation Bill proposes to reserve 33% of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women.
- It was first introduced in the Lok Sabha as the 81st Amendment Bill in September 1996 by the Deve Gowda-led United Front government.
- The Bill failed to get the approval of the House and was referred to a joint parliamentary committee that submitted its report to the Lok Sabha in December 1996. But the Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.
- In 1998, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government reintroduced the Bill in the 12th Lok Sabha
- The Bill was reintroduced in 1999, 2002, and 2003. Even though there was support for it within Congress, the BJP, and the Left parties, the Bill failed to receive majority votes.
- In 2008, the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance government tabled the Bill in the Rajya Sabha and it was passed with 186-1 votes on March 9, 2010.
- However, the Bill was never taken up for consideration in the Lok Sabha and lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha.
- What are the arguments for the Bill? Proponents of the Bill argue that affirmative action is imperative to better the condition of women since political parties are inherently patriarchal.
- Second, despite the hopes of the leaders of the national movement, women are still under-represented in Parliament



- Today, India has a high percentage of crimes against women, low participation of women in the workforce, low nutrition levels, and a skewed sex ratio.
- To address all these challenges, it is argued, we need more women in decision-making.

What are arguments against the Bill?

- Opponents of reservation for women argue that the idea runs counter to the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution.
- They say that women will not be competing on merit if there is the reservation, which could lower their status in society.
- Second, women are unlike, say, a caste group, which means that they are not a homogenous community.
- In Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, ERCs have set up facilitation centers across the States for public participation.
- Therefore, the same arguments made for caste-based reservation cannot be made for women.

- Third, women's interests cannot be isolated from other social, economic, and, political strata.
- Fourth, some argue that the reservation of seats in Parliament would restrict the choice of voters to women candidates.

THE HINDU

Eurasian Otter

- Apart from putting an end to doubts about the animal's presence in the upper Chenab catchment, their findings have confirmed that some stretches of the Neeru remain unpolluted.
- The Neeru is a tributary of the Chenab River. "These stretches are away from human habitations and comprise stony beds and narrow valleys that are virtually unsuitable for sand and gravel mining, providing some hope for the otter's survival.
- The Eurasian otter classified as 'near threatened' on the IUCN Red List is regarded as a flagship species and indicator of high-quality aquatic habitats, its presence is encouraging for the health of the Neeru stream.
- Neeru, a 30-km perennial stream that originates in the Kailash Lake at 3,900 meters above mean sea level and drains into the Chenab at Pul-Doda.



THE HINDU

Governor cannot precipitate the fall of Elected Govt

- The Supreme Court said that Governors seriously undermine democracy if they use their constitutional office to call for a trust vote, citing dissension within a ruling political party, and precipitate the fall of a legitimately established and functioning government.
- “A Governor must be aware of the fact that his very calling for a trust vote may precipitate the loss of majority for a government. Government.
- Calling for a trust vote may itself lead to the toppling of a government. Governors must not lend their offices for effectuating a particular result.
- The Governor cannot enter into any area by which his action would precipitate the fall of a government.

THE HINDU

