

PERFECT 7

A New Initiative of Dhyeya IAS

**Weekly
Current Affairs**



1 Financial Architecture of Green Buildings

In India

- 2 COVID-19 and Transformation of Global Manufacturing
- 3 USA's Suspension of WHO Fund and Its Impact
- 4 Ways and Means Advances : RBI's Tool to Manage Cash Flow
- 5 The Feasibility of Emergency Basic Income in India
- 6 Sanitation Workers : Frontline Warriors Against COVID-19
- 7 Coronavirus Pandemic vs Sustainability of SDGs



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Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India



Help us to
help you

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Protect yourself and others!

Follow these **Do's** and **Don'ts**

Do's ✓



Practice frequent hand washing. Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol based hand rub. Wash hands even if they are visibly clean



Cover your nose and mouth with handkerchief/tissue while sneezing and coughing



Throw used tissues into closed bins immediately after use



See a doctor if you feel unwell (fever, difficult breathing and cough). While visiting doctor wear a mask/cloth to cover your mouth and nose



If you have these signs/symptoms please call State helpline number or Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's 24X7 helpline at 011-23978046



Avoid participating in large gatherings



Have a close contact with anyone, if you're experiencing cough and fever



Touch your eyes, nose and mouth



Spit in public

Don'ts ✗

Together we can fight Coronavirus

For further information :

Call at Ministry of Health, Govt. of India's 24X7 control room number

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**Vinay Kumar Singh****CEO and Founder
DHYEYA IAS**

The guiding philosophy of the institute, throughout, has been creation of knowledge base. Dhyeya IAS inculcates human values and professional ethics in the students, which help them make decisions and create path that are good not only for them, but also for the society, for the nation, and for the world as whole. To fulfill its mission in new and powerful ways, each student is motivated to strive towards achieving excellence in every endeavor. It is done by making continuous improvements in curricula and pedagogical tools. The rigorous syllabi not only instills in them, a passion for knowledge but also attempts to teach them how to apply that knowledge in real-life situations. The programmes lay emphasis on well-rounded personality development of the students and also in inculcating the values of honesty and integrity in them.

**Q H Khan****Managing Director
DHYEYA IAS**

Dhyeya IAS is an institution that aims at the complete development of the student. Our faculty are hand-picked and highly qualified to ensure that the students are given every possible support in all their academic endeavors. It is a multi-disciplinary institution which ensures that the students have ready access to a wide range of academic material.

Our brand of education has broad horizons as we believe in exposure. Our students are encouraged to widen their knowledge base and study beyond the confinements of the syllabus. We aim to lend a gentle guiding hand to make our students recognize their inner potential and grow on their own accord into stalwarts of tomorrow's society.

Perfect 7

AN INTRODUCTION



Qurban Ali

Chief Editor
DHYEYA IAS

(Ex Editor- Rajya Sabha TV)

With immense pleasure I would like to inform you that the new version of '**Perfect 7**', from the Dhyeya IAS, is coming with more information in a very attractive manner. Heartily congratulations to the editorial team. The '**Perfect 7**' invites a wider readership in the Institute. The name and fame of an institute depends on the caliber and achievements of the students and teachers. The role of the teacher is to nurture the skills and talents of the students as a facilitator. This magazine is going to showcase the strength of our Institute. Let this be a forum to exhibit the potential of faculties, eminent writers, authors and students with their literary skills and innovative ideas.

Please do visit our website www.dhyeyaias.com and our youtube channel for regular and updated information on current affairs.



Ashutosh Singh

Managing Editor
DHYEYA IAS

We have not only given the name '**Perfect 7**' to our magazine, but also left no stone unturned to keep it 'near to perfect'. We all know that beginning of a task is most challenging as well as most important thing. So we met the same fate.

Publishing '**Perfect 7**' provided us various challenges because from the beginning itself we kept our bar too high to ensure the quality. Right from the very first issue we had a daunting task to save aspirants from the 'overdose of information'. Focusing on civil services exams '**Perfect 7**' embodies in itself rightful friend and guide in your preparation. This weapon is built to be precise yet comprehensive. It is not about bombardment of mindless facts rather an analysis of various facets of the issues, selected in a systematic manner. We adopted the 'Multi Filter' and 'Six Sigma' approach, in which a subject or an issue is selected after diligent discussion on various levels so that the questions in the examination could be covered with high probability.

Being a weekly magazine there is a constant challenge to provide qualitative study material in a time bound approach. It is our humble achievement that we feel proud to make delivered our promise of quality consistently without missing any issue since its inception.

Your suggestions and popular demands have inspired us to come up with a coloured edition of '**Perfect 7**' on this pious festival of colours. May this version of '**Perfect 7**' instill a new energy and a new spirit in you. We wish that the bond of affection between you and Dhyeya IAS is reaches a new height.

PREFACE



On the joyous occasion of Holi, Dhyeya family has decided to bring a new colourful and vibrant version of **'Perfect 7'** – a panacea for current affairs. Just like vividness of colours, newer version of **'Perfect 7'** will add positive and dynamic energy in your preparation.

'Perfect7' is an outstanding compilation of current affairs topics as per the new pattern of Civil Service examination (CSE). It presents weekly analysis of information and issues (national and international) in the form of articles, news analysis, brain boosters, PIB highlights and graphical information, which helps to understand and retain the information comprehensively. Hence, **'Perfect 7'** will build in-depth understanding of various issues in different facets.

'Perfect7' is our genuine effort to provide correct, concise and concrete information, which helps students to crack the civil service examination. This magazine is the result of the efforts of the eminent scholars and the experts from different fields. **'Perfect 7'** is surely a force multiplier in your effort and plugs the loopholes in the preparation. We believe in environment of continuous improvement and learning. Your constructive suggestions and comments are always welcome, which could guide us in further revision of this magazine.

Omveer Singh Chaudhary

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

As a proud jewel of Dhyeya IAS, **'Perfect 7'** now comes in a new coloured avatar. **'Perfect 7'** is a quintessential part of your preparation strategy for Civil Services Examination. A regular and manageable dose of current affairs will now reach you in new format, making it more reader friendly. Our humble attempt to serve you is surely rewarded by your appreciations. It encourages us to innovate and provide the best as per our ability.

A dedicated team of experts at Dhyeya IAS toils night and day to make your dream of Civil Services come true. I heartily thank and express my gratitude to the esteemed readers and all the people involved in making this magazine a shining star in the galaxy of Dhyeya IAS.

Rajat Jhingan

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

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PERFECT 7

**Weekly
Current Affairs**

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DHYEYA TV
Current Affairs Programmes hosted
by Mr. Qurban Ali
(Ex. Editor Rajya Sabha, TV) & by Team Dhyeya IAS
(Broadcasted on YouTube & Dhyeya-TV)

SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF GREEN BUILDINGS IN INDIA

Why in News?

- ◆ The construction sector is essential for an economic recovery after the COVID-19 crisis. It can rapidly create large amounts of jobs and involves far-reaching value chains of small and large businesses.
- ◆ The building sector holds the potential for a double win: providing a powerful tool to stimulate the economy, while moving the whole sector to a new and greener state. For small extra investments, green buildings can achieve massive long-term savings of cost and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that realizing the potential of sustainable buildings will save USD 1.1 trillion by 2050.

Green Buildings: Introduction

- ◆ Green building (also known as green construction or sustainable building) refers to both a structure and the application of processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle: from planning to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, and demolition. Green buildings preserve precious natural resources and improve our quality of life.
- ◆ There are a number of features which can make a building 'green'. These include:

- ◆ Efficient use of energy, water and other resources;
- ◆ Use of renewable energy, such as solar energy;
- ◆ Pollution and waste reduction measures, and the enabling of re-use and recycling;
- ◆ Good indoor environmental air quality;
- ◆ Use of materials that are non-toxic, ethical and sustainable;
- ◆ Consideration of the environment in design, construction and operation;
- ◆ Consideration of the quality of life of occupants in design, construction and operation; and
- ◆ A design that enables adaptation to a changing environment.
- ◆ Any building can be a green building, whether it's a home, an office, a school, a hospital, a community centre, or any other type of structure, provided it includes features listed above.
- ◆ However, it is worth noting that not all green buildings are – and need to be – the same. Different countries and regions have a variety of characteristics such as distinctive climatic conditions, unique cultures and traditions, diverse building types and ages, or wide-ranging environmental, economic and social priorities – all of which shape their approach to green building.

Indian Scenario

- ◆ India has the second largest urban population in the world and this is expected to double by 2050, with the addition of 416 million people. Concurrently with 70 percent (International Finance Corporation estimates) of the buildings (housing, retail, commercial, hospitality and health) needed by 2030 still to be constructed, India's construction sector is at an inflection point – an opportunity for energy efficiency expansion by building green. Residential and commercial buildings in India account for 30 percent of the energy consumption. This is expected to increase to 48% by 2042.

The Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC), was launched by Ministry of Power, Government of India in May 2007, as a first step towards promoting energy efficiency in the building sector.

The ECBC was developed by an Expert Committee, set up by India's Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), with support and guidance from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and significant inputs from various other stakeholders.

- ◆ The National Building Code, 2016, which regulates construction activity, now incorporates the Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) developed by the Bureau

of Energy Efficiency (BEE). The 2017 development on the ECBC prescribes a minimum standard for energy use in new commercial buildings.

Financing Issues

- ◆ There is a need for massive involvement of the private sector in environment and sustainability issues. The public sector can't do it alone.
- ◆ Green real estate has not received the warranted attention by investors. This is due to several market barriers which include: (i) information asymmetry (degree assurance of the green component), and (ii) limited financial products and instruments. In terms of financing green buildings, limited products (green home loans offered by a few banks) and programs (IFC's EDGE program) operate in India.
- ◆ It has to be a combination of incentives at the local government level and individual level such as building energy efficient houses wherein the government can offer tax credits, e-mobility and traffic management.
- ◆ States including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh provide incentives such as increased Floor Area Ratio (FAR), subsidy on fixed capital (excluding cost of land, land development, preliminary and preoperative expenses and consultancy fees) and discounts on municipal taxes for buildings which classify as green.

Sources of Funds

Commercial Banks and NBFCs

- ◆ As important sources of funds for developers, banks and Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC's) can incentivize green construction by offering concessional construction finance based on the green rating of the building design. Housing loans are already covered under the priority sector lending (PSL) guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the possibility of including green mortgage as a sub category under PSL norms could be explored. To incentivize property buyers, banks could explore linking home loan interest rate to the star rating/certification of the property. The higher the star rating the lower the interest rate.

Green Bond/Mortgage

- ◆ A green bond is like any other regular bond but with one key difference: the money raised by the issuer is earmarked towards financing 'green' projects, i.e. assets or business activities that are environment-friendly. Such projects could be in the areas of renewable energy, clean transportation and sustainable water management.
- ◆ Yes Bank was the first bank to come out with an issue worth Rs 1,000 crore in 2015. Following this, few other banks too had green bond issuances. CLP India, was the first Indian company to tap this route.

Green Real Estate Investment Trusts

- ◆ Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) are investment trusts are intended to enable more people to

invest in the Indian property market and boost funding in the sector. The REIT platform has already been approved by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and like mutual funds, it will pool the money from all investors across the country. The money collected from the REIT funds, will subsequently be invested in commercial properties to generate income. Embassy Office Parks, India's first listed REIT. A green REIT that invests in green property could be a viable option for ESG equity investors.

Way Forward

- ◆ The significance of green financing in India – with its ambitious targets for renewable energy of 100 GB by 2020, the significance green construction, and the stress electric transport facilities, mass rapid transportation, etc. – cannot be over-emphasized.
- ◆ India needs a strong and robust green energy policy with defined mechanism for ratings and implementation of standards. Though, the National Building Code, 2016, which regulates construction activity, now incorporates the ECBC developed by the BEE, there is a need to add a strong emphasis on the green component which is not just an emerging sub-sector but also a strong sustainable solution for a better tomorrow.
- ◆ Therefore, for mainstreaming green real estate in the built environment, finance will play a catalytic role. To support green buildings, a few research priorities and objectives could be:
 - ◆ The development of a robust regulatory and policy framework with incentives and guidelines

- for both the green construction and the financial sector;
- ♦ The identification and improvement of green credit for real estate;
- ♦ The assessment of various financial modalities for suitability to the Indian market; this should be followed by a study of international best practices;
- ♦ The strengthening and adaption of the rating and green certification mechanism for application in the financial sector; and
- ♦ The development of a mechanism to track financial flows in green construction.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Topic: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.



Q. "India needs a strong and robust green energy policy with defined mechanism for ratings and implementation of standards." Discuss it in the context of scope of green buildings in India.

2. COVID-19 AND TRANSFORMATION OF GLOBAL MANUFACTURING

Why in News?

- ♦ COVID-19 continues to spread rapidly around the world. Almost every country has reported cases, but the burden is asymmetrically distributed. Global Value Chains are undergoing profound changes, with important implications for the manufacturing and production ecosystem.

Background

- ♦ The threat of COVID-19 to lives and livelihoods will fully resolve only when enough people are immune to the disease to blunt transmission, either from a vaccine or direct exposure. Until then, governments that want to restart their economies must have public-health systems that are strong

enough to detect and respond to cases.

- ♦ Low-cost manufacturing hubs in Asia may have a harder time, especially in the wake of the pandemic. China, which secured its economic rise by establishing itself at the centre of many global value chains, will face particularly serious challenges, despite its plans to shift

Companies need to think and act across five horizons.

The five horizons



1 Resolve

Address the immediate challenges that COVID-19 represents to institution's workforce, customers, technology, and business partners



2 Resilience

Address near-term cash-management challenges and broader resiliency issues during virus-related shutdowns and economic knock-on effects



3 Return

Create detailed plan to return business to scale quickly as COVID-19 situation evolves and knock-on effects become clearer



4 Reimagination

Reimagine the next normal: what a discontinuous shift looks like and implications for how institutions should reinvent



5 Reform

Be clear about how regulatory and competitive environments in industry may shift

to higher-value-added activities and boost domestic consumption.

- ◆ From shifting manufacturing bases to adoption of robots for production, the industry is taking innovative steps to rise above the crisis. This trend will be concentrated in the sectors that are most exposed to global value chains. Globally, the industries where the most reshoring activity is taking place are chemicals, metal products, and electrical products and electronics.
- ◆ This trend poses a major threat to many developing countries' growth models, which depend on low-cost manufacturing and exports of intermediate inputs. In Central and Eastern Europe, some countries have responded to this challenge by investing in robots themselves. The Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Slovenia (which have large foreign-owned auto sectors) now have more robots per 10,000 workers than the United States of America or France. And the strategy seems to be working: they remain an attractive offshoring destination for rich countries.
- ◆ The priorities for most manufacturers today fall into three distinct phases: Phase 1 – Survival; Phase 2 – Recovery; Phase 3 – Business as Usual in the new post-crisis paradigm.

Next Normal

- ◆ **Defining the future of work and consumption:** The crisis has propelled new technology across all aspects of Asian life, from e-commerce to remote-working and -learning tools, including Alibaba's DingTalk, WeChat Work, and Tencent Meeting. New working and shopping practices will probably become a permanent fixture of the next normal.

◆ **Moving from globalization to regionalization:** The pandemic has exposed the world's risky dependence on vulnerable nodes in global supply chains. China, for example, accounts for about 50 to 70 percent of global demand for copper, iron ore, metallurgical coal, and nickel. We could see a massive restructuring as production and sourcing move closer to end users and companies localize or regionalize their supply chains.

◆ **Support and protect employees in this brave new world:** Many institutions have put basic protections in place for their employees and customers. Companies have activated no-travel and work-from-home policies for some workers and physical-distancing-at-work measures for others. The challenge is evolving. For remote workers, interruptions are more frequent than in the office. Making a mental separation from a sometimes-chaotic home life is tough. Workers are finding that they don't have the skills to be successful in an extended remote environment, from networking to creating routines that drive productivity. They worry that staying remote could make them less valuable, especially in a recessionary environment.

◆ **Rise of robots:** Instead to await a return to business as usual, with manufacturing activities concentrated in countries where labour is cheap and plentiful, advanced-economy companies are shifting their focus to the lowest-wage workers of all: robots.

Case for Robots

- ◆ At a time when adopting robots is cheaper than ever, the incentive to reshore production is even stronger. The arithmetic is simple. A company in, say, the United States

of America would have to pay an American worker a lot more than, say, a Vietnamese or Bangladeshi one. But a United States of America based robot would not demand wages at all, let alone benefits like health insurance or sick leave.

- ◆ Investment in robots is not new. Advanced-economy firms have been pursuing it since the mid-1990s, led by the automotive industry, which can account for 50-60% of a country's robot stock. In Germany—a global leader in robot adoption—robots per 10,000 workers in manufacturing stood at 322 in 2017. Only South Korea (with 710 robots per 10,000 workers) and Singapore (with 658 robots per 10,000 workers) have a higher ratio. The United States of America has 200 robots per 10,000 workers.

Industry 4.0 and COVID-19

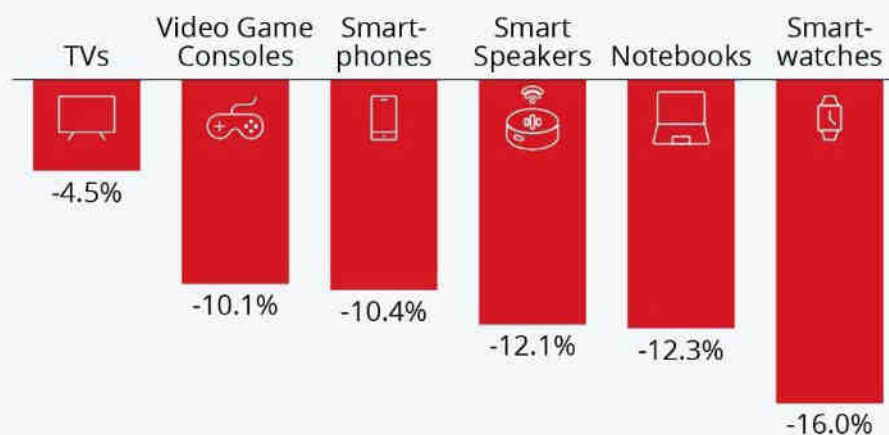
- ◆ Industry 4.0 is not only as relevant as it was before the global COVID-19 emergency; it's actually far more relevant moving forward. Every manufacturer is impacted by this crisis in some way and for many this poses an existential threat. Prior to the crisis, Industry 4.0 was an area of great interest to many manufacturers. It was an exciting topic with huge potential benefits and was widely regarded as a 'positive' and future thinking topic.
- ◆ Today, many of us are focused on the here and now. The business drivers of Industry 4.0 pre-crisis were focused on competitive advantage, cost reduction, productivity, sustainability and innovation. The goal was to make well run businesses run better. The focus for many manufacturers now is survival first and foremost and beyond that, damage limitation.

♦ Industry 4.0 can achieve this because many of the capabilities it offers could have greatly reduced the impact of this crisis on us all. Just a few examples are:

- ♦ Real-time visibility into the availability of raw materials, finished goods, WIP, people and assets.
- ♦ Use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to constantly reassess and re-plan activities.
- ♦ Robotic process automation (RPA) to support non-value add labour intensive activities.
- ♦ The use of mobile technology and augmented / virtual reality to enable workers to perform tasks they were not trained for more easily. This could have assisted with skills shortages due to self-isolation or repurposing of manufacturing.
- The same technologies together with digital twins and remote support from original equipment manufacturers (OEM's) would improve availability of assets.
- The same technologies could also have enabled more remote and virtual working to help with the issue of lockdown and social distancing
- ♦ 3D printing of spare parts that were stuck in the supply chain.
- ♦ Use of AGV's, autonomous electric vehicles and drones to again reduce the reliance on people and to further assist with social distancing.

Coronavirus Expected to Impact Tech Industry Shipments

Estimated impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on global tech shipments in Q1 2020*



* smartphone forecast refers to production volume instead of shipments

Source: TrendForce

Many of these technologies and solutions were seen as a nice to have. Many were waiting to 'cross the chasm' into mainstream adoption.

Way Forward

- ♦ The emergence of COVID-19 is accelerating the change of global value delivery models, with unprecedented consequences for manufactures and supply chains. Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on manufacturers and supply chains requires both new approaches and new forms of collaboration to increase overall resilience.
- ♦ Between rising protectionism and the COVID-19 pandemic, the

advanced economies seem to be geared up for a manufacturing renaissance. But while this may reduce risks for large firms, it probably will not benefit very many advanced-economy workers, let alone the developing countries from which production is being shifted. For that, governments will need to implement policies suited to this new economic order.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.



Q. "COVID-9 will accelerate the reshoring of jobs to big economies, aided by greater robot adoption to lower costs." Do you agree? Give reasons.

3. USA'S SUSPENSION OF WHO FUND AND ITS IMPACT

Why in News?

- ◆ The United States of America (US) President Donald Trump has told his administration to temporarily halt funding to the World Health Organization (WHO) in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the new coronavirus.

Introduction

- ◆ It was set up in 1948 as the United Nations (UN) agency. It has a mandate to improve the standard of health worldwide. It is credited with leading a 10-year campaign to eliminate smallpox in the 1970s and has coordinated the fight against epidemics including Ebola.
- ◆ The WHO is currently leading the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, providing countries with advice on how to contain its spread. It is also coordinating global research into potential drugs and vaccines against COVID-19.
- ◆ The WHO now has more than 7,000 people working in 150 country offices, six regional offices and Geneva headquarters.
- ◆ The WHO's budget is biennial, spanning a two-year period.
- ◆ The WHO's 2020-2021 budget, approved by health ministers last May, amounts to nearly \$4.85 billion in total and represents a 9% rise from the previous two-year period.
- ◆ Almost \$1 billion of the 2020-2021 budget is earmarked for WHO operations across Africa, the world's poorest continent with the highest rates of under-five mortality from vaccine-preventable diseases.
- ◆ Polio eradication remains a major WHO programme and the US is a key contributor to this effort.

- ◆ The WHO's emergency programme is also seeking to stamp out other deadly infectious disease outbreaks including Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Funding of the WHO

There are four kinds of contributions that make up funding for the WHO. These are assessed contributions, specified voluntary contributions, core voluntary contributions, and PIP contributions.

- ◆ According to the WHO website, assessed contributions are the dues countries pay in order to be a member of the Organization. The amount each Member State must pay is calculated relative to the country's wealth and population.
 - ◆ Voluntary contributions come from Member States (in addition to their assessed contribution) or from other partners. They can range from flexible to highly earmarked.
 - ◆ Core voluntary contributions allow less well-funded activities to benefit from a better flow of resources and ease implementation bottlenecks that arise when immediate financing is lacking.
 - ◆ Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Contributions were started in 2011 to improve and strengthen the sharing of influenza viruses with human pandemic potential, and to increase the access of developing countries to vaccines and other pandemic related supplies.
- ◆ In recent years, assessed contributions to the WHO have declined, and now account for less than one-fourth of its funding.

These funds are important for the WHO, because they provide a level of predictability and minimise dependence on a narrow donor base.

- ◆ Voluntary contributions make up for most of the remaining funding.

Current Funding of the WHO

As of fourth quarter of 2019, total contributions were around \$5.62 billion, with assessed contributions accounting for \$956 million, specified voluntary contributions \$4.38 billion, core voluntary contributions \$160 million, and PIP contributions \$178 million.

- ◆ The US is currently the WHO's biggest contributor, making up 14.67 per cent of total funding by providing \$553.1 million.
- ◆ The US is followed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation forming 9.76 per cent or \$367.7 million.
- ◆ The third biggest contributor is the GAVI Vaccine Alliance at 8.39 per cent, with the UK (7.79 per cent) and Germany (5.68 per cent) coming fourth and fifth respectively.
- ◆ The four next biggest donors are international bodies: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (5.09 per cent), World Bank (3.42 per cent), Rotary International (3.3 per cent), and the European Commission (3.3 per cent). India makes up 0.48 per cent of total contributions, and China 0.21 per cent.
- ◆ Out of the total funds, \$1.2 billion is allotted for the Africa region, \$1.02 billion for Eastern Mediterranean region, \$963.9 million for the WHO headquarters, followed by South East Asia (\$198.7 million), Europe (\$200.4 million), Western Pacific

(\$152.1 million), and Americas (39.2 million) regions respectively. India is part of the South East Asia region.

- ◆ The biggest programme area where the money is allocated is polio eradication (26.51 per cent), followed by increasing access to essential health and nutrition services (12.04 per cent), and preventable diseases vaccines (8.89 per cent).

Previous Incidents of Suspension of Fund

- ◆ Over more than 70 years of operations, a number of countries have failed to pay their membership dues on time.
- ◆ At one point the former Soviet Union announced it was withdrawing from the WHO and refused to pay its membership fees for several years. When it then rejoined in 1955, it argued for a reduction in its back dues, which was approved.

Political Criticism of the WHO

- ◆ In 2009, the WHO was accused of acting too early in declaring swine flu a pandemic, in part over concerns it had been pressured by pharmaceutical companies.
- ◆ Five years later, the organization was accused of acting too late in declaring the West African Ebola outbreak a public health emergency.
- ◆ Trump has criticized the WHO for not acting quickly enough in sending its experts to assess China's efforts to contain COVID-19 and call out China's lack of transparency over its handling of the initial stage of the crisis.
- ◆ Critics also believe the WHO lulled the world into complacency by delaying the decision on calling

it a global emergency. Whatever the merits of these arguments, they point to the new geopolitics of multilateralism, disprove the assumptions in both the West and India on China's role in the UN, and underline Beijing's success in the leveraging of international organisations for its national advantage.

- ◆ But these criticisms ignore China's sovereignty. The WHO does not have the power to force member states to accept a team of WHO experts to conduct an assessment. The country must request WHO assistance. Nor does the organization have the power to force a country to share any information. It can only request.

China's Increasing Influence over the WHO

Understandably China has grown in power and economic influence since 2003, when then-Director General -Gro Harlem Brundtland publicly criticized it for trying to hide the spread of the SARS virus.

- ◆ China's WHO contributions have grown in recent years, rising by 52% since 2014 to approximately \$86 million.
- ◆ While this jump is largely due to China's increase in assessed contributions, Beijing has also slightly increased voluntary contributions from \$8.7 million in 2014 to approximately \$10.2 million in 2019.
- ◆ Other experts suggest that China's political support was crucial in the election of Tadros in 2017. Observers of the UN point to something more fundamental — a conscious and consequential Chinese effort to expand its clout in the multilateral system. China, which was admitted to

the UN system in the 1970s, was focused on finding its way in the 1980s, cautiously raised its profile in the 1990s, took on some political initiatives at the turn of the millennium and seized the leadership in the last few years.

- ◆ China has also been criticized for blocking Taiwan's bid to join the organization. Taiwan has had one of the most robust responses to the COVID-19 crisis.

What Happens If the US Cut Funding?

- ◆ If enacted, these funding cuts may cause the WHO to go bankrupt in the middle of a pandemic. That might mean the WHO has to fire staff, even as they are trying to help low- and middle-income countries save lives.
- ◆ It will also mean the WHO is less able to coordinate international efforts around issues like vaccine research, procurement of personal protective equipment for health workers and providing technical assistance and experts to help countries fight the pandemic.
- ◆ It will likely cause people in low income countries to lose access to vital medicines and health services.
- ◆ There will also be a cost to the United States' long-term strategic interests.
- ◆ For decades, the world has looked to the US to provide leadership on global health issues. Due to Trump's attempt to shift blame from his administration's failures to prepare the US for the arrival of COVID-19, he has now signaled the US is no longer prepared to provide that leadership role.
- ◆ And one thing we do know is that if nature abhors a vacuum, politics abhors it even more.

Conclusion

- ◆ The US and the WHO work together on global health challenges to make the world a safer and healthier place. But, during the worst public health crisis in a century, halting funding to the WHO is a dangerous step in the wrong direction that will not

make defeating COVID-19 easier. There will be plenty of time after the virus is vanquished to review its actions. Therefore, there is a need for a strong and coordinated international response to defeat the pandemic and the WHO is an important part of that collaboration and coordination.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Topic: Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.



Q. In the midst of the COVID-19, the USA has halted the funding to the World Health Organization (WHO). Critically evaluate the impact of this move.

4. WAYS AND MEAN ADVANCES : RBI'S TOOL TO MANAGE CASH FLOW

Why in News?

- ◆ In order to deepen the availability of credit, India's Central bank, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced an increase in the Ways and Means Advances (WMA) limits to States.
- ◆ For the first half of FY21, WMA limit of States has been increased by 60 per cent over the level as on March 31, 2020. Separately, the Centre has allowed states to borrow up to Rs. 3.2 trillion in the first nine months of FY21. States will be able to raise 50% of the increased net borrowing limit in April-December.
- ◆ State governments have already borrowed as much as Rs. 44,778 crore so far this fiscal against Rs. 29,572 crore worth of state development loans last April.

WMA: Introduction

- ◆ When managing money, we know that cash outflows often overshoot inflows. State governments in India either go for market borrowings

by issuing securities or seek short-term funding from the RBI. WMA is a temporary liquidity arrangement with RBI that enables the Centre and states to borrow up to 90 days from the central bank to tide over mismatches between revenues and expenditure, usually offered at the repo rate.

- ◆ There are two types of WMAs — normal Ways and Means Advances; and Special Drawing Facilities against government securities held by States as collateral.
 - ◆ Any amount drawn by a State in excess of the normal WMA is an overdraft. There is a State-wise limit for the funds that can be availed via WMA. These limits depend on many factors, including total expenditure, revenue deficit and fiscal position of the State. WMA limits are revised periodically and the previous utilisation rates are considered while determining revised limits.

Current WMA Limit

- ◆ The RBI raised the amount that the Union government can borrow from it for the short term to Rs. 2 trillion for the first half of 2020-21. The so-called WMA was fixed at Rs. 1.2 trillion on 31 March, against Rs. 75,000 crore in the April-September period of the previous fiscal.
- ◆ The move comes after it raised the WMA limit for states by 60% over and above the level as on 31 March 2020 to help them plan their market borrowing programmes better. The limit will apply till 30 September.

Need of the Hour

- ◆ The cash flow problems of State governments, which were already under stress, have been aggravated by the impact of COVID-19.
- ◆ As frontline fighters against COVID-19, many States are in need of immediate and large financial resources to deal with challenges,

including medical testing, screening and providing income and food security to the needy.

- ◆ Increased WMA limit for States to borrow short-term funds from the RBI provides a financial cushion when there's uncertainty in revenue collections due to stressed economic conditions.
- ◆ WMA can be an alternative to raising longer-tenure funds from the markets, issue of State government securities (State development loans) or borrowing from financial institutions for short-term funding.
- ◆ WMA funding is much cheaper than borrowings from markets.

Sufficiency of Funds

- ◆ A report by India Ratings and Research has hinted that the WMA relief is "too little to help" as the additional liquidity increase is of mere Rs 19,335 crores. The rating agency said it did an analysis of monthly expenditures of 18 states based on their FY21 budget projections for April 2020 and the liquidity available with them from various sources including consolidated sinking fund (CSF), guarantee redemption fund (GRF), government securities and auction treasury bills (ATBs).
- ◆ Revenue from own sources for the states has dried up and if the lock down continues, many more states will find it difficult to make payments. Several states have already deferred a part of salary payments.

◆ Majority fourteen of the states will be able to make payments on their commitments in April 2020. However, four states - Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh may face pressure in the near-run and may find it difficult to make payments, if the lockdown continues beyond 3 May 2020.

◆ With already expanding fiscal deficits and drying revenues the interest on WMA along with other stimulus can empty the state coffers by the end of 2020. Such situations may push vulnerable states into debt traps making interest payments a bigger part of their expenditures.

◆ In order to tide over the financial shocks during the crises some suggestions were given by many state finance ministers. The three measures suggested were a moratorium on repaying all loans and interest for nine months, doubling the special drawing limit and WMAs for the next nine months, relaxing the number of days of restriction while availing of overdraft facilities from the current 36 to at least 60 days. Unfortunately only one — the limit of WMAs — has been met partially whereas the other suggestions have not yet been taken up.

◆ Experts have expected a higher recourse to the WMA facility, especially by those states that have been relatively badly affected by the COVID-19 health crisis and those with a higher proportion of daily wagers or migrant workers, as

such states' immediate spending requirement would be very high.

- ◆ States will find the fixed rate of 4.4 per cent required to be paid on WMA outstanding, attractive in relation to the higher state development loan yields that the market participants are likely to demand.

Way Forward

- ◆ The higher WMA limit is expected to temper the surge in issuance of state government bonds, known as state development loans (SDLs) in technical parlance. This, in turn, will allow interest rates on state borrowings to ease from "alarmingly high levels seen in the last six weeks. States will pay an interest rate of 4.4 percent on WMA borrowings compared to an interest rate of 7.65 percent that they are paying on 10-year bonds.
- ◆ It may not eventually solve the problem for states as funding requirements in fighting the Covid crisis may be long term in nature. Equally, the expected revenue shortfall may last through the course of this financial year due to a sharp slowdown in growth.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.



Q. What do you understand by 'Ways and Means Advances'? Discuss how it will provide additional liquidity to the states.

5. THE FEASIBILITY OF EMERGENCY BASIC INCOME IN INDIA

Why in News?

- At the time of global economic crisis due to COVID-19 strangulating the supply chains and productive capacities remaining idle, there is a need to maintain the productive capacity and seeing that the firms and the workers are able to survive the economic crisis. The question is not of thriving but about surviving while maintaining the hard earned sustainability. The basic income at the time of emergency could be the ventilator that economy is looking for.

Background

- As the novel coronavirus spreads across the world, it is becoming increasingly clear that a large part of the world will remain under lockdown for months to come. Any

exit from the lockdown is likely to be partial and provisional.

- In India, most state governments, including Kerala (which has had some success in containing new infections over the past couple of weeks), are not prepared to end the lockdown fully any time soon.
- This poses a unique challenge. Unlike a normal slump, when policies can be tailored to finance and raise demand, here, the challenge is of keeping productive capacity intact, even as many firms and workers remain idle.

Understanding Emergency Basic Income (EBI)

- EBI, a generous, but provisional aid programme, which is unconditional and universal like a universal

basic income. Think of it as a universal basic income, but one that is subject to a rollback when normalcy returns.

- An EBI is meant to be a short term measure which will help the most vulnerable to survive the crisis. It could be new businesses, entrepreneurs or the daily wage workers. The EBI is also meant to cover most of the people employed in un-organised sector. EBI must also include an in-kind transfer component.

Need

- As per the Krugman, the economic response to the crisis will have to include two parts: One, an immediate disaster relief component that ensures survival of both firms and workers who have been rendered idle. And, two, a stimulus component that aims

Key relief measures taken by India in response to COVID-19

As part of relief packages

₹1.7 trillion (0.8% of GDP)

- In-kind (food, cooking gas) and cash transfers to lower-income households
- Insurance coverage for workers in the healthcare sector
- Wage support to low-wage workers (including easing the criteria for receiving benefits in the event of job loss)

₹150 billion (0.1% of GDP)

- Additional spending on health infrastructure, including for testing facilities for COVID-19, personal protective equipment, isolation beds, ICU

Approx ₹400 billion (0.2% of GDP)*

- Measures taken by state governments in the form of direct transfers (free food rations and cash transfers)

Other relief measures for consumers and businesses

- Relief to both borrowers and lenders, including a three-month moratorium on loan repayments and relaxation of norms related to debt default
- Measures to ease the tax compliance burden across a range of sectors, including postponing tax-filing and other compliance deadlines

*Based on IMF calculation. The Reserve Bank of India has also taken numerous measures to ease liquidity including reduction of key policy rates

to repair and restart production lines during the exit phase of the lockdown.

- ◆ For a country like India, with a large informal sector and a weak social safety net, the first challenge is going to be much tougher than the second one. As the migrant exodus after the lockdown announcement showed, the sustainability of even a partial lockdown will depend on how well India meets the disaster relief challenge.
- ◆ While the Union and state governments have announced some relief measures, they appear to be grossly inadequate to meet the challenge. Compared to most other countries, India's relief-cum-stimulus measures so far appear puny.

Global Scenario

Some commentators have argued that emerging markets, such as India, don't have the luxury of offering generous relief, unlike developed markets. But data suggests considerable diversity in response within emerging markets.

- ◆ Thailand, whose per capita income (in purchasing power parity terms) is a little more than two times that of India, has announced a package that is 10 times bigger (as a share of its gross domestic product or GDP) than ours.
- ◆ Malaysia, whose per capita income is four times that of India, has announced a package that is 16 times bigger.
- ◆ Even poorer neighbour Pakistan has a much larger COVID-19 response package (as share of its GDP) compared to India.

Challenges to Emergency Basic Income

- ◆ Without resorting to some off-budget borrowings, it may not be

possible for the Union government to fund a programme like EBI. Even if the government cuts back on some non-essential expenditures (establishment costs, for instance) and pools funds for certain welfare schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for an EBI, it may still not be enough to fund a generous EBI, suggests an analysis of budget documents.

- ◆ But extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Like other countries, India too could explore unconventional options, such as a special purpose vehicle, to fund this programme as long as the lockdown lasts.
- ◆ Implementing EBI will be the harder challenge compared to funding it. Although almost everybody has a unique ID by now (Aadhaar), not everyone has a functional bank account or access to mobile or internet (for e-transfers).
- ◆ The latest district-wise data on these parameters come from the National Family Health Survey for 2015-16. It showed that despite gains in access to bank accounts and mobile phones, there were still significant disparities across districts. Internet access was limited across most districts.
- ◆ In India, for instance, more than 80 percent of non-agricultural workers are in the informal sector, without any contracts, with no safety net, and no employer obligations. The gig economy has practically removed the "classical employer" and created "partners" - driver partners, delivery partners, etc.
- ◆ Some states have announced enhancement of rations under the Food Security Act. While providing additional foodgrains is useful,

with broken supply chains and crumbling logistics, this may be difficult to implement.

Way Forward

- ◆ Such a programme with a fixed and transparent sunset clause (linked to new infections falling beyond a certain level, or economic growth rising above a certain threshold) can inspire the confidence of both ordinary citizens and bond markets, and help resolve the trade-off between lives and livelihoods that the country is now staring at. It would also be possible to ramp up or ramp down the quantum of aid at any place or time, depending on the stringency of lockdown measures.
- ◆ EBI must also include an in-kind transfer component. The ratio of cash to in-kind transfers is something that is best left for states to decide. The Centre's role should be to enable funding for this programme so that states can focus on fixing implementation glitches rather than having to worry about finances at a time when their resources are already stretched. The costs of inaction are growing with every passing day.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.



Q. At the time of global economic crisis due to COVID-19 strangulating the supply chains and productive capacities remaining idle, there is a need for a provisional aid programme like Emergency Basic Income. Do you agree? Give reasons.

6. SANITATION WORKERS : FRONTLINE WARRIORS AGAINST COVID-19

Why in News?

- ◆ In addition to healthcare professionals, there is another group of people at the frontlines of the global crisis caused by COVID-19. They put their lives at risk every day and play a critical role in preventing the spread of the virus, by ensuring our streets, parks, public spaces, sewers, septic tanks, communities, and public toilets are kept clean and hygienic. They are our often-overlooked sanitation workers.

Introduction

- ◆ Around five million public health and safety workers—who continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic—are unprotected, stigmatized, unappreciated, and seen as people to be shunned.
- ◆ One of the biggest challenges they face is that they have no information about affected households, nor about those who are at high risk. If they contract the virus, they have very little recourse to health safety nets, insurance, or access to already overflowing public health facilities.
- ◆ This is particularly stark for women sanitation workers, who make up more than 50 percent of urban sanitation workers.
- ◆ Sanitation workers are at risk from handling unmarked medical waste emerging from homes where COVID-19 patients are quarantined, medical experts and waste management specialists warned. Discarded masks, gloves and tissues could be potential sources for the spread of this highly contagious virus.

- ◆ Therefore, a set of guidelines on the handling, treatment and disposal of waste generated during treatment, diagnosis and quarantine of COVID-19 patients was released by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
- ◆ Further, most hospitals follow the Bio-medical Waste Management (BMWWM) Rules, 2016 and more rigorously so in the times of COVID-19. But it is waste disposed of by quarantined households, where there is limited awareness about the issue that could expose solid waste/sanitation workers to bigger risks.

Ensuring the Health and Safety of Sanitation Workers

To ensure the health and safety of sanitation workers, the governments (Central and states) need to:

Provide Protective Equipment

- ◆ While we recognize that frontline staff in hospitals and health facilities face a dire shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), the need of the hour is also to find ways to provide sanitation workers with the following necessities: masks (at the very least, double-layered stitched cloth masks), rubber gloves, aprons, protective footwear or boots, sanitiser, and soap.
- ◆ In Maharashtra, the government has allowed all Urban Local Bodies to use the Fourteenth Finance Commission funds to purchase PPE for sanitation workers, and allowed sanitation workers to work in shifts. In Telangana, self-help groups (SHGs) have been roped in to produce masks for sanitation workers.

Mandatory Check-up

- ◆ Government should do mandatory COVID-19 checkup for these front liners due to their high movability to keep these worrier and people safe.

Provide Financial Support

This can be done both at individual and organizational levels.

- ◆ **Protection of salaries:** An advisory has been issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs stating that the salaries of sanitation workers must be protected if they are unable to report to duty due to lockdown.
- ◆ **Allocation of CSR funds to organizations that work with sanitation workers:** The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has declared that CSR funds may be utilized for activities related to COVID-19 including preventive healthcare, sanitation, and disaster management.
- ◆ While such efforts by government at national, state, and city levels are welcome, they do not reach all the five million sanitation workers in India.

Other Support at a Local Level

- ◆ Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) should ensure that sanitation workers who work in their localities have proper PPE. If required, funds can be collected at a local level to ensure that workers have proper safety gear.
- ◆ RWAs can also support the sanitation workers' organisations to ensure that all sanitation workers are provided health insurance and regular health checks. MPs, MLAs, and municipal

councilors have annual funds available for development in their respective constituencies and can be encouraged to allocate amounts from these for the welfare of sanitation workers.

Provide Access to Food and Boarding Facilities

- ◆ In Chennai, sanitation workers are provided free meals at Amma Canteens. Local communities could also pool resources to ensure that sanitation workers have access to food and other supplies. This will ensure that they do not have to worry about providing for their families while they are at their jobs.
- ◆ In terms of helping them self-isolate, to keep their families safe, state governments should explore the option of providing sanitation workers with boarding in designated hostels and residential facilities.
- ◆ The Delhi government has undertaken a similar step, wherein hotel rooms have been rented for doctors who do not want to go home for the fear of infecting their families with COVID-19.

Solutions Box

- Decontaminate waste with sanitisers, put into a separate bag and bin;
- Use reusable cloth masks that can be washed and reused;
- For quarantine camps and home care of the suspected patients, the CPCB has advised collection of biomedical waste in yellow bags; bins containing these should be handed over to authorised collectors;
- Sanitary staff should be provided safety gear such as masks and gloves.

Recent Developments

The Central Government has issued an advisory to all states for 'ensuring the health and safety of sanitation workers during COVID-19', asking them to draw

up clear Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) for their work protocol through the lockdown period.

- ◆ The advisory asks for 'mandatory orientation' of sanitation workers on COVID-19, providing them with a special pass/ID card/permission letter for working during lockdown, besides adequate provision of personal Protective Equipment, sanitizers and disinfectants for their safety.
- ◆ It also asks every state to designate a nodal officer to lead and monitor the implementation of the SoP at department and Urban Local body level.
- ◆ The Centre has already recommended some measures to be taken immediately towards the safety of sanitation workers. These are:
 - ◆ The sanitation worker is to change into work clothes and at a designated changing area before starting the day's work. He is to be in mask, gloves, footwear and appropriate clothing- full sleeved shirt, long trousers and apron and keep gloves in a plastic bag rather than pockets.

- ◆ No garbage is to be touched with bare hand, hands are to be washed with soap and water before and after garbage collection and every time the gloves are removed. The mobile phone- if used- has to be put on speaker.
- ◆ Workers are to maintain 1 meter distance from each other and the general public and work in small groups only- if necessary. After work, they are advised to wash and clean work tools and PPE with water and disinfectant cleaner and be put to dry in the Sun. This is to be followed by a shower and a wash of the work clothes at the changing area and a change of clothes.

What Can We Do at Our Level?

Don't Waste Food

- ◆ Do not waste food and take only what you can eat completely because food from your plate will go in bin and it is possible that if you are contaminated then it may indirectly contaminate these front line worriers.



Segregation of Waste

- ◆ At the time when the pandemic is so widespread, it is imperative that we segregate our waste. Segregation from our end will mean that the sanitation workers will have to deal with less waste.
- ◆ Moreover, we must discard our used medical waste like (masks, inhalers, syringes etc.) with extreme caution.
- ◆ Three-way segregation of waste at source must be ensured. We must take time to rinse out our soiled plastic or beverage cans and take away boxes, including sachets, pizza/cake boxes etc.



Engagement with Door-to-Door Sanitation Workers

- ◆ The door-to-door sanitation workers must be specifically apprised about the contents of the waste.
- ◆ People must provide them with personal protective equipment such as gloves, masks, and boots as a matter of duty for their important contributions to the society.

Way Forward

- ◆ It is important to raise the profile of sanitation workers—just like we do

with all the other health workers—and pay them their due respect, acknowledging their importance as frontline warriors.

- ◆ Because, just as the nation's health workers tirelessly work to save lives, our sanitation workers have also been working in every ward and mohalla to ensure that we remain safe and healthy. It is time for all of us to recognize this.
- ◆ When the pandemic ends, it is essential that civil society and governments remember their work, the risk at which it was undertaken, and how poorly prepared and compensated they are. The governments must ensure their job security with reasonable wages and benefits that allow for

social mobility, and civil society should pressure governments to make sure this is done.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/ Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.



Q. Sanitation workers put their lives at risk every day and play a critical role in preventing the spread of the virus. Discuss the measures taken by the government for the sanitation workers.

7. CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC VS SUSTAINABILITY OF SDGs

Why in News?

- ◆ The COVID-19 crisis is now a global one that has also morphed into larger and more global economic and social crisis than the financial collapse of 2008-2009.
- ◆ The pandemic, by itself, and also through various economic, social and political avenues, will affect global developmental objectives at a much broader scale. The impacts will be observed more prominently in the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Background

- ◆ As the tenure of the millennium development goals ended in 2015, all UN member nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that entailed a shared vision of peace and prosperity for the planet. At the core of this global call are the 17 SDGs that emphasise the development of human society need not entail the destruction of the natural ecosystem and biodiversity.
- ◆ On the contrary, there is a huge dependence of human society on the ecosystem services provided by biodiversity. Therefore, SDGs stress on ending poverty and deprivations, reduce inequality, improve health and education, and spur economic growth — while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.
- ◆ In a sense, SDGs have become the cornerstone of global governance, and governance at all levels, even at the most micro-level of an institutional governance set-up.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund

- ◆ The UN Secretary-General has announced the establishment of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and launched a report serving as a call to action. Both the fund and the call to action take a long-term view, stressing that the world must address the issues that “make us all unnecessarily vulnerable to crises,” with the 2030 Agenda serving as the roadmap to achieving this.
- ◆ The Fund will complement the World Health Organization (WHO)’s Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)’s Consolidated Global Humanitarian Appeal for COVID-19.
- ◆ The Fund has three aims, with a finance window for each one: stop transmission of the virus, protect the most vulnerable from its socio-economic impacts, and make countries more resilient to future health crises.

UN Moving Forward

Here are some examples of how the United Nations is fighting back against the threat of the COVID-19:

- ◆ **Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being):** The World Health Organization (WHO) is leading the global fight against COVID-19. WHO has also announced the launch of the “Pass the message to kick out coronavirus” campaign by teaming up with FIFA.
- ◆ **Goal 4 (Quality Education):** According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), roughly

1.25 billion learners, or 72.9 per cent of total enrolled learners, worldwide have been affected by the coronavirus outbreak as of 20 March. UNESCO is supporting Governments for distance learning, scientific cooperation, and information support.

- ◆ **Goal 5 (Gender Equality):** The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) has issued a checklist for COVID-19 response.
- ◆ **Goal 6 (Water and Sanitation):** One of the most effective ways to slow down transmission is to wash or sanitize hands. However, globally three billion people do not have access to even basic hand washing facilities at home. Lack of access to clean water affects vulnerability to disease and ill health. It is for this reason that UN-Water members and partners are committing to the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, which will unify the international community and deliver fast results in countries at an increased scale as part of the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- ◆ **Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth):** Almost 25 million people could lose their jobs due to a coronavirus-induced economic and labour crisis, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has projected. ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 said that countries should guarantee at least a basic level of social security to all, and progressively ensure adequate levels of protection to as many people as possible, as soon as possible.

- ◆ **Goal 10 (Reduce Inequalities):** In crises, the most vulnerable, including women and children, people with disabilities, the marginalized and the displaced, pay the highest price. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration have been working hard to have a plan, working with the host countries to prevent the arrival of the virus in refugee camps or in settlements.
- ◆ **Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions):** This goal is about finding ways to make sure everyone lives in a peaceful society. The UN has made an urgent appeal for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world and for a united international effort to combat the pandemic ravaging the world.
- ◆ **Goal 17 (Partnerships):** To make all the goals a reality will require the participation of everyone, including Governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and people around the world. The fight against COVID-19 is no exception.

Digital Options

- ◆ From the perspectives of SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), the impacts in the short-run will be worrisome. More so because one very critical factor to promote SDG8 is human capital and that has taken a massive beating now. The same goes for SDG 9. However, it may be expected that newer forms of institutions will emerge over

time to combat this crisis, and the growth drivers will change.

- ◆ Already as far as the service sector is concerned, a large part of it has been moving to the digital world thereby creating virtual workspaces replacing the physical workstations. Moreover, the world is already witnessing a heavy reliance on digital connectivity. Hence, there remains the possibility that growth may be spurred from this digital space mostly from services, but this will also witness simultaneous slump and closures of traditional manufacturing. This is the apparent impact.

Challenges

- ◆ A large part of the services sector in the developing world remains unorganised and does not feature in the digital space — neither it will be easy to place them there as almost all of it requires physical presence. This inability of being accommodated in digital spaces will lead to more poverty, hunger, and inequalities thereby hampering achievements of SDGs 1, 2, and 10. These are the challenges to the equity dimension of holistic development that is being posed by the pandemic severely affecting SDG3 (good health and well-being).
- ◆ On the other hand, reduced economic activity in the physical space of the planet will be good for the natural environment: SDG13 (climate action), SDG 14 (life below water) and SDG 15 (life on land) may get augmented. The revival of dolphins and pangolins

in spaces where land-use change has altered forest lands to urban agglomerations is a case in point. However, sustainable development is not devoid of humans: it talks of the coexistence of biodiversity conservation, and development of the human society by meeting with the various equity needs.

Way Forward

- ◆ The pandemic COVID-19 doesn't just come in the way of the SDGs, but calls for a rethinking of the timeline. The pandemic has aggravated the situation. This will definitely come in the way of realising SDG 17 that talks of global partnerships for achieving other SDGs.
- ◆ The coronavirus pandemic presents an opportunity for the human family to act in solidarity and turn this crisis into an impetus to achieve the SDGs. The world shares a common but differentiated responsibility to prevent destructive unilateral economic actions that prevent other nations from realizing these common goals, while maintaining the right to pursue national development strategies, advance global public goods and protect the global commons. We have to act now.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.



Q. Elaborate the impact of the pandemic COVID-19 on the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

1. POST-INTENSIVE CARE SYNDROME

1. Why in News?

- Various news reports have pointed out that for some COVID-19, after leaving the ICU, they may suffer from what is known as post-intensive care syndrome (PICS) or post-ICU delirium, which can happen to any person who has been in the ICU.



2. About PICS

- "PICS is defined as new or worsening impairment in physical (ICU-acquired neuromuscular weakness), cognitive (thinking and judgment), or mental health status arising after critical illness and persisting beyond discharge from the acute care setting.
- Further, such patients may experience neuromuscular weakness, which can manifest itself in the form of poor mobility and recurrent falls.
- Psychological disability may arise in a person in the form of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- The most common PICS symptoms are generalised weakness, fatigue, decreased mobility, anxious or depressed mood, sexual dysfunction, sleep disturbances and cognitive issues. These symptoms may last for a few months or many years after recovery.
- Other studies have hinted that COVID-19 infection could lead to heart injury, which is damage that can occur when blood flow to the heart is reduced.
- Beyond the potential for cognitive problems, there's early evidence that some patients may continue to struggle getting enough air into their lungs.

3. Causes

- Longer the patient stays in the intensive care unit, the more they are likely to experience long-term physical, cognitive and emotional effects of being sedated.
- PICS may be induced if a person was on prolonged mechanical ventilation, experienced sepsis, multiple organ failure and a prolonged duration of "bed-restore deep sedation".
- There is still no known exact cause of the post-ICU syndrome but experts believe that it can be due to lack of oxygen or blood in the patient's brain.
- They also see sedative medicines as a possible cause but it is vital for doctors to use in acute care.
- When patients recover to the point of being discharged, cognitive difficulties may follow.

4. Treatment

- To avoid PICS, patients' use of deep sedation is limited and early mobility is encouraged, along with giving them "aggressive" physical and occupational therapy.
- Rehab can take as long as six months, and very often, doctors say the best way to help patients avoid such post-ICU stress in the first place is through contact with loved ones.
- ICU patients must have humans to orient, touch, look and make them understand what is happening. Patients with COVID-19 do not have the liberty of human interaction because they have to be isolated.
- Further, patients should be given the lowest dose of pain medications when possible, and should be put on lung or cardiovascular rehabilitation treatments along with treatments for depression, anxiety and PTSD.

2. THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S NURSING REPORT - 2020

1. Why in News?

- A new report, 'The State of the World's Nursing 2020', provides an in-depth look at the largest component of the health workforce.
- The report is published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in partnership with the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and Nursing Now.



2. Nurses and SDGs

- Investment in nurses will contribute not only to health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets, but also to education (SDG 4), gender (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8).

3. Current Status - Findings

- More than 80 per cent of the world's nurses work in countries that are home to half of the world's population. And one in every eight nurses practices in a country other than the one where they were born or trained.
- Ageing also threatens the nursing workforce: one out of six of the world's nurses are expected to retire in the next 10 years.
- To avert the global shortage, the report estimates that countries experiencing shortages need to increase the total number of nurse graduates by on average 8% per year, along with improved ability to be employed and retained in the health system. This would cost roughly USD 10 per capita (population) per year.
- About 90 per cent of all nurses are female, yet few nurses are found in senior health leadership positions-- the bulk of those positions are held by men.
- A total of 82 out of 115 responding countries (71%) reported having a national nursing leadership position with responsibility for providing input into nursing and health policy.

4. Nursing Roles in 21st Century Health Systems

- **Universal Health Coverage**
 - Front-line providers of primary care.
 - Preventing and treating wide range of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
 - Offering care across the life course, from birth to death.
- **Emergencies, Epidemics and Disasters**
 - Delivering care for clinical emergencies.
 - Responding to epidemics, disasters and humanitarian crises.
 - Recognizing life-threatening conditions and performing life-saving procedures.
- **Health and Well-Being**
 - Addressing the social determinants of health through collaborative action.
 - Addressing and treating the impacts of climate change.
 - Ensuring access for vulnerable groups, including women and youths.

6. Report Recommendations

- Countries affected by shortages will need to increase funding to educate and employ at least 5.9 million additional nurses.
- Countries should strengthen capacity for health workforce data collection, analysis and use.
- Nurse mobility and migration must be effectively monitored and responsibly and ethically managed.
- Nurse education and training programmes must graduate nurses who drive progress in primary health care and universal health coverage.
- Nursing leadership and governance is critical to nursing workforce strengthening.
- Planners and regulators should optimize the contributions of nursing practice.
- Policy-makers, employers and regulators should coordinate actions in support of decent work.
- Countries should deliberately plan for gender-sensitive nursing workforce policies.
- Modernize professional nursing regulation by harmonizing education and practice standards and using systems that can recognize and process nurses' credentials globally.
- Strengthen the role of nurses in care teams by bringing different sectors (health, education, immigration, finance and labour) together with nursing stakeholders for policy dialogue and workforce planning.

5. Data for India

- Nursing professionals: 1563629
- Share of professional nurses: 67%
- Density : 17.3 per 10 000 population
- Graduates per year: 322827
- Minimum duration of training: 4 Years
- Gender Composition: 88% Female; 12% Male

3. NALSA

1. Why in News?

- The outbreak of COVID-19 and subsequent lockdown of nearly half of the world economy has posed serious challenges of survival specially among the poor and underprivileged sections of the society.
- In this backdrop the legal Services authorities are reaching out to people in different parts of the country providing legal aid and support to women, children and the needy amid COVID-19 lockdown.
- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has recently passed an order directing the State Legal Services Authority to take initiative to provide assistance to the needy during the lockdown period.



2. Initiatives at the Time of Covid-19

- NALSA has said that around 11,077 undertrials have been released from prisons nationwide as part of the mission to decongest jails following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- NALSA has been providing assistance to prisoners who were eligible to be released on parole or interim bail under the relaxed norms, through its panel lawyers.
- Local legal services authorities are assisting the high powered committee, constituted in pursuant to the order of the Supreme Court, for identifying undertrials who could be released on bail during the present scenario.
- Legal Services Authorities are regularly receiving calls by Legal aid helpline numbers like 15100, regarding shortage of food, migrant labourers stranded at places away from their home state, denial of wages, victims of violence etc.
- These problems are being addressed by Legal Services Authorities through its workforce consisting of Panel lawyers and Para Legal Volunteers in close co-ordination with the District administration. Para- Legal Volunteers are also reaching out to remote areas and coordinating with the district administration and local members to help distribution of food and masks.
- NALSA has requested all the State Legal Services Authorities to coordinate with the One Stop Centres of Ministry of Women and Child across the country to provide legal aid and assistance to women who are victims of crime. Also, through women helpline no.181, any legal assistance can be given to women in coordination with the officials managing those helplines.
- Nomination of women lawyers is to be done by State Legal Services Authorities to solve problems of domestic violence.

3. About NALSA

- NALSA has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society.
- In every State, State Legal Services Authority has been constituted to give effect to the policies and directions of the NALSA and conduct Lok Adalats in the State.
- The State Legal Services Authority is headed by the Chief Justice of the respective High Court who is the Patron-in-Chief of the State Legal Services Authority.
- In every District, District Legal Services Authority has been constituted to implement Legal Services Programmes in the District.
- The District Legal Services Authority is situated in the District Courts Complex in every District and chaired by the District Judge of the respective district.

4. CORONA BOND

1. Why in News?

- European countries are under growing pressure to take an unprecedented move and issue a new kind of debt to tackle the economic impact of the coronavirus.
- Central bankers, heads of state and economists have called on the euro zone to develop so-called 'corona bonds', a new instrument that would combine securities from different European countries.

2. Understanding 'Corona Bonds'

- 'Corona bonds' are joint debt issued to member states of the European Union (EU). The funds would be common and would come from the European Investment Bank.
- This would be mutualised debt, taken collectively by all member states of the EU.
- This new debt instrument, which would combine securities from different countries, is needed to mitigate the vast economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

3. Issues in EU

- As obstacles to public debt have been lifted within the EU, Germany and France have issued important budget plans to protect their national economies, but other countries like Spain and Italy, despite being the hardest-hit by the virus, have not implemented such broad measures.
- At the moment, the European Central Bank (ECB) oversees monetary policy across the 19 countries that share the euro, while the different capitals retain powers over fiscal policy.
- In order to provide that credit line, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) would have to raise money from financial markets. This could also be seen as issuing corona bonds, given that the fund is backed by all euro area countries and the credit line would be targeted at dealing with the impact of the coronavirus.
 - ✦ ESM, a permanent agency based in Luxembourg that was created during the 2008 financial crisis and provides financial assistance, in the form of loans, to Eurozone countries or as new capital to banks in difficulty.
- Countries want that with financial stimulus, the donor countries should get say in the finances of the countries receiving the money.
- Whether or not Europeans help each other in this acute emergency can shape popular perceptions of what Europe stands for – and for a long time to come.



4. Pro-bond Countries

- Nine EU countries have been calling for such bonds to be issued EU-wide: Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, Portugal, Greece and Slovenia.
- These nine countries are prone to calling for the mutualisation of European national debts, while others — richer countries in the north of Europe — usually oppose such measures.
- Corona Bonds have also been backed by International Monetary Fund.

5. Anti-Bond: 'Frugal Four'

- Germany, Netherlands, Austria and Finland, also known as the 'Frugal Four' the fiscally conservative EU states.
- For decades, Germany applied a "Schwarze Null" (black zero) debt brake policy: it would never, under any circumstance, allow government borrowing.
- During the 2010-2012 sovereign debt crisis, while France and Italy supported the idea of issuing joint "Eurobonds", Germany strongly resisted the idea, pointing to the individual responsibility of EU member states to keep their finances in order.

5. COLOUR CODING AND COVID-19

1. Why in News?

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which has come out with a new set of guidelines for the second phase of lockdown till May 3, has identified 170 hotspot districts, 207 non-hotspot districts reporting cases and 359 green zone districts not reporting any cases across the country.



2. Introduction

- The government decision to divide all districts across the country into hotspots, non-hotspots and green zones will help in managing the COVID-19 pandemic as well as partial opening up of economic activities during the extended period of the nationwide lockdown.
- The health ministry used two criteria to classify the districts as hotspots — the absolute number of cases and the speed of growth in cases. Though the ministry has been maintaining that reporting of a single case of an area makes the area a hotspot, the technical definition followed to classify the districts is any district reporting more than six cases would be classified as hotspot district or red zone.
- According to this definition, Delhi and NCR would remain in the red zone. So will the most metros and big cities and towns across the country.
- As per this, a house with positive cases or a cluster with positive cases is marked as the epicentre of the containment zone. A radius of 0.5 km is taken and the area around it is cordoned off with only essential services available. Also, a buffer zone is marked where people with severe and acute respiratory illnesses (SARI) are checked and monitored.

3. Conclusion

- The government has decided to adopt the 'middle path' approach during lockdown extension and impose a smart lockdown by categorising areas into red, orange and green zones.
- One of the key reasons behind the middle-path approach of Central Government is its focus on dwindling economy.
- With the economic activity in the country at a standstill for the last fortnight, the centre now has to shoulder the all-important responsibility of lifting the lockdown to restart the economy before it suffers from irreversible damage. This is where the idea of a smart lockdown comes into picture.

Green Zones	Yellow Zones	Orange Zones	Red Zones
➤ Raise public awareness, including disease transmission mechanisms and avoidance (social distancing, hand washing, masks) ➤ Develop rapid response process to test domestic citizens for related symptoms ➤ Perform quick tests at borders of individuals traveling from Yellow or Orange Zones to identify symptomatic individuals (fever, cough). Passengers entering from the same vehicle (airplane, train, bus, car) should be detained for the result. If positive, enforce 14 day quarantine of the confirmed case, and of other passengers and crew (individually or in small groups). Inform the region of origin for corresponding actions ➤ Enforce 14 day quarantine for at-risk individuals, including all travelers from Red Zones	➤ All the responses of Green Zones ➤ Identify contacts of confirmed cases (contact tracing), and test, monitor and/or self-isolate them. ➤ Promote personal protection including social distancing, hand washing, sneeze etiquette. ➤ Frequently monitor the health condition of a selected group of people with frequent social contact, especially in the area where local transmission is detected, for early case and outbreak detection ➤ Urge citizens to avoid nonessential gatherings, especially in confined spaces ➤ Provide maximum protection for medical staff	➤ All the responses of Yellow Zones ➤ Promote personal protection including facial masks ➤ Postpone/cancel nonessential gatherings and events ➤ Disinfect public places ➤ Actively test everyone with symptoms ➤ Increase test capacity and speed	➤ All the responses of Orange Zones ➤ Suspend schools, places of worship and businesses ➤ Restrict travel only for essential purposes ➤ Lockdown (quarantine) infected communities keeping people in their homes and delivering necessities to them without contact ➤ Quarantine contacts of cases ➤ Galvanize national resources (medical, logistical...) for the quarantined areas ➤ Separate facilities for infection cases from other health services ➤ Create different tiers of hospitals to separate and treat cases of different severity

6. MEASLES RISK FROM COVID-19 RESPONSE: UN

1. Why in News?

- According to United Nations (UN) around 117 million children worldwide risk contracting measles because dozens of countries are curtailing their vaccination programs as they battle COVID-19.



2. Introduction

- Measles is caused by a virus in the paramyxovirus family and it is normally passed through direct contact and through the air.
- The virus lives in the mucus of the nose and throat of an infected child or adult.
- The virus infects the respiratory tract, and then spreads throughout the body.
- Measles is a human disease and is not known to occur in animals.
- Even though a safe and cost-effective vaccine is available, in 2018, there were more than 140 000 measles deaths globally, mostly among children under the age of five.
- Measles vaccination resulted in a 73% drop in measles deaths between 2000 and 2018 worldwide.
- In 2018, about 86% of the world's children received one dose of measles vaccine by their first birthday through routine health services – up from 72% in 2000.

3. Signs and Symptoms

- The first sign of measles is usually a high fever, which begins about 10 to 12 days after exposure to the virus, and lasts 4 to 7 days.
- A runny nose, a cough, red and watery eyes, and small white spots inside the cheeks can develop in the initial stage.
- After several days, a rash erupts, usually on the face and upper neck. Over about 3 days, the rash spreads, eventually reaching the hands and feet.
- The rash lasts for 5 to 6 days, and then fades. On average, the rash occurs 14 days after exposure to the virus (within a range of 7 to 18 days).

4. Response

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued new guidelines endorsed by the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization - to help countries to sustain immunization activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The guidelines recommend that governments temporarily pause preventive immunization campaigns where there is no active outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.
- Measles and Rubella Initiative (M&RI) partners, which include the American Red Cross, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, the United Nations Foundation and WHO, strongly agree with these recommendations.
 - The Initiative is committed to ensuring that no child dies from measles or is born with congenital rubella syndrome. The Initiative helps countries to plan, fund and measure efforts to stop measles and rubella for good.
- The recommendations also ask governments to undertake a careful risk-benefit analysis when deciding whether to delay vaccination campaigns in response to outbreaks, with the possibility of postponement where risks of COVID-19 transmission are deemed unacceptably high.
- WHO continues to strengthen the global laboratory network to ensure timely diagnosis of measles and track international spread of the measles viruses to allow more coordinated country approach in targeting vaccination activities and reduce measles deaths from this vaccine-preventable disease.
- Measles can be prevented with MMR vaccine. The vaccine protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella.

7. NIHANG SIKHS

1. Why in News?

- The Patiala incident in which a group of Nihangs attacked a Punjab police party and chopped off the hand of an assistant sub-inspector when stopped for a curfew pass, and the subsequent seizure of weapons and narcotics, has put the spotlight on the Nihangs.

2. About Nihang

- Nihang is an order of Sikh warriors, characterised by blue robes, antiquated arms such as swords and spears, and decorated turbans surmounted by steel quoits.
- Sikh historian Dr Balwant Singh Dhillon said, "Etymologically the word nihang in Persian means an alligator, sword and pen but the characteristics of Nihangs seem to stem more from the Sanskrit word nihshank which means without fear, unblemished, pure, carefree and indifferent to worldly gains and comfort."
- The armed sect is believed to have emerged from the AkaalSena, a band of soldiers of Guru Hargobind, the sixth guru. Later, the AkaalSena metamorphosed into the 'KhalsaFauj' of the 10th guru.
- There are several theories about the origin of the Nihangs, including the one about their having been a part of the AkaalSena and later KhalsaFauj. But unlike the Udasi sect and the Nirmalayas who can be clearly traced back to the Sikh gurus, there is no concrete historical evidence of the origin of the Nihangs.



3. Role in Sikh History

- Nihangs had a major role in defending the Sikh panth after the fall of the first Sikh rule (1710-15) when Mughal governors were killing Sikhs, and during the onslaught of Afghan invader Ahmed Shah Durrani (1748-65).
- When the Khalsa army was divided into five battalions in 1734, one Nihang or Akali battalion was led by Baba Deep Singh Shahid.
- Nihangs also took control of the religious affairs of the Sikhs at Akal Bunga (now known as Akal Takht) in Amritsar. They did not consider themselves subordinate to any Sikh chief and thus maintained their independent existence.
- Their clout came to an end after the fall of Sikh Empire in 1849 when the British authorities of Punjab appointed a manager (sarbrah) for the administration of the Golden Temple in 1859.

4. Nihangs: Current Status

- Dr. Dhillon said the Nihangs today constitute a small community.
- About a dozen bands, each headed by a jathedar (leader), are still carrying on with the traditional order. Prominent among these are Budha Dal, Taruna Dal and their factions.
- In the absence of a centralised command, the Nihangs are loosely organised. For the whole year they remain stationed at their respective deras (centres) but set out on their annual pilgrimage of Anandpur Sahib, Damdama Sahib Talwandi Sabo and Amritsar, take part in religious events and exhibit their martial skills and horsemanship.
- As per Dr Gurmeet Singh Sidhu, professor-in-charge Guru Gobind Singh Chair at Punjabi University, Patiala, "With the advent of modernity, the balance between Bani (Guru Granth Sahib) and Bana (outer form) broke down, resulting in problems and unethical actions. Earlier, Nihangs would never attack an unarmed person."

SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS (Based on Brain Boosters)

1. Post-intensive Care Syndrome

Q. With reference to the 'Post-intensive Care Syndrome', consider the following statements:

1. 'Post-intensive Care Syndrome' comprises impairment in cognition, psychological health and physical function of a person who has been in the ICU.
2. COVID-19 is the cause of the post-ICU syndrome.
3. The most common symptoms are decreased mobility, anxious or depressed mood, sexual dysfunction, sleep disturbances and cognitive issues.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 3 are correct. "PICS is defined as new or worsening impairment in physical (ICU-acquired neuromuscular weakness), cognitive (thinking and judgment), or mental health status arising after critical illness and persisting beyond discharge from the acute care setting.

The most common PICS symptoms are generalised weakness, fatigue, decreased mobility, anxious or depressed mood, sexual dysfunction, sleep disturbances and cognitive issues. These symptoms may last for a few months or many years after recovery.

Statement 2 is incorrect. PICS may be induced if a person was on prolonged mechanical ventilation, experienced sepsis, multiple organ failure and a prolonged duration of "bed-restore deep sedation". There is still no known exact cause of the post-ICU syndrome but experts believe that it can be due to lack of oxygen or blood in the patient's brain. They also see sedative medicines as a possible cause but it is vital for doctors to use in acute care.

2. The State of the World's Nursing Report - 2020

Q. With reference to the 'State of World Nursing Report-2020', consider the following statements:

1. It has been published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in partnership with the United Nations Women.
2. About 90 per cent of all nurses are female, yet few nurses are found in senior health leadership positions-- the bulk of those positions are held by men.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. A new report, 'The State of the World's Nursing 2020', provides an in-depth look at the largest component of the health workforce. It has been published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in partnership with the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and Nursing Now.

Statement 2 is correct. According to the report, more than 80 per cent of the world's nurses work in countries that are home to half of the world's population. About 90 per cent of all nurses are female, yet few nurses are found in senior health leadership positions-- the bulk of those positions are held by men.

3. NALSA

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'NALSA':

1. NALSA has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society.

2. The State Legal Services Authority is headed by the Chief Justice of the respective High Court.
3. The District Legal Services Authority is chaired by the District Judge of the respective district.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d)

Explanation: All statements are correct. NALSA has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society. In every State, State Legal Services Authority has been constituted to give effect to the policies and directions of the NALSA and conduct Lok Adalats in the State. The State Legal Services Authority is headed by the Chief Justice of the respective High Court.

The District Legal Services Authority is situated in the District Courts Complex in every District and chaired by the District Judge of the respective district.

4. Corona Bond

Q. With reference to 'Corona Bonds', consider the following statements:

1. 'Corona bonds' are joint debt issued to member states of G7 group to tackle the economic impact of the coronavirus.
2. Corona Bonds have also been backed by World Bank.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (d)

Explanation: Both statements are incorrect. 'Corona bonds' are joint debt issued to member states of the European Union (EU) to tackle the economic impact of the coronavirus. The funds would be common and would come from the European Investment Bank.

This would be mutualised debt, taken collectively by all member states of the EU. This new debt instrument, which would combine securities from different countries, is needed to mitigate the vast economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Corona Bonds have also been backed by International Monetary Fund.

5. Colour Coding and COVID-19

Q. With reference to the colour coding to manage COVID-19, consider the following statements:

1. There will be no activity in the red zones -- the districts where sizeable number of cases were detected or areas which were declared hotspots.
2. In the orange zones -- where only a few cases were found in the past with no increase in the number of positive cases -- minimum activities like opening of limited public transport, harvesting of farm products will be allowed.
3. Green zones will be in the districts where there is no COVID-19 case.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d)

Explanation: All statements are correct. The Centre has categorised the country into red, orange and green zones depending on the number of coronavirus cases during the proposed extended period of lockdown and might allow limited services to function in the safe zones.

There will be no activity in the red zones -- the districts where sizeable number of cases were detected or areas which were declared hotspots.

In the orange zones -- where only a few cases were found in the past with no increase in the number of positive cases -- minimum activities like opening of limited public transport, harvesting of farm products will be allowed.

Green zones will be in the districts where there is no COVID-19 case.

6. Measles Risk from COVID-19 Response: UN

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'measles risk from COVID-19 response':

1. Measles is a bacterial infection of the respiratory system.
2. These bacteria live in the mucus of the nose and throat of an infected child or adult.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (d)

Explanation: Both statements are incorrect. Measles is caused by a virus in the paramyxovirus family and it is normally passed through direct contact and through the air. The virus lives in the mucus of the nose and throat of an infected child or adult.

The virus infects the respiratory tract, and then spreads throughout the body. Measles is a human disease and is not known to occur in animals.

7. Nihang Sikhs

Q. With reference to the 'Nihang Sikhs', consider the following statements:

1. Nihang is an order of Sikh warriors, characterised by blue robes, antiquated arms such as swords and spears, and decorated turbans surmounted by steel quoits.
2. The armed sect is believed to have emerged from the AkaalSena, a band of soldiers of Guru Hargobind.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. Nihang is an order of Sikh warriors, characterised by blue robes, antiquated arms such as swords and spears, and decorated turbans surmounted by steel quoits.

The armed sect is believed to have emerged from the AkaalSena, a band of soldiers of Guru Hargobind, the sixth guru. Later, the AkaalSena metamorphosed into the 'Khalsa Fauj' of the 10th guru.

There are several theories about the origin of the Nihangs, including the one about their having been a part of the AkaalSena and later KhalsaFauj. But unlike the Udasi sect and the Nirmalayas who can be clearly traced back to the Sikh gurus, there is no concrete historical evidence of the origin of the Nihangs.



SEVEN IMPORTANT NEWS

1. Software Technology Parks of India

In view of the challenges thrown by COVID-19 outbreak and consequent lockdown, the Government of India has taken a major decision to provide relief from payment of rental to the small IT units operating out of the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Most of these units are either Tech MSMEs or startups.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has decided to provide rental waiver to these units housed in STPI premises in the country from 01.03.2020 till 30.06.2020 i.e. for 4 months period as of now.

Significance

This initiative will provide benefit to nearly 200 IT/ ITeS MSMEs, operating

from these 60 STPI centers. This effort is also in the larger interest of around 3,000 IT/ ITeS employees who are directly supported by these units.

About STPI

Software Technology Parks of India, is an Autonomous Society set up by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) in 1991. Key objectives of the STPI are:

- ◆ To promote the development and export of software and software services including Information Technology (IT) enabled services/ Bio- IT.
- ◆ To provide statutory and other promotional services to the

exporters by implementing Software Technology Parks (STP)/ Electronics and Hardware Technology Parks (EHTP) Schemes and other such schemes which may be formulated and entrusted by the Government from time to time.

- ◆ To provide data communication services including value added services to IT / IT enabled Services (ITES) related industries.
- ◆ To promote micro, small and medium entrepreneurs by creating conducive environment for entrepreneurship in the field of IT/ ITES.

2. Chitra GeneLAMP-N

Trivandrum-based government institute Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology has developed a diagnostic test kit that can deliver COVID-19 testing results in just two hours at a low cost of Rs 1,000. The test called 'Chitra GeneLAMP-N' uses the reverse transcriptase loop-mediated amplification of viral nucleic acid (RT-LAMP) for testing.

Key Highlights

This is different from the popular testing methodology called RT-PCR

for COVID-19. Current PCR kits in India enable detection of E gene for screening and RdRp gene for confirmation.

Funded by Department of Science and Technology, the test kit is made especially for SARS-CoV-2 N-gene and can detect two regions of the gene, which will ensure that the test does not fail even if one region of the viral gene undergoes mutation during its current spread, ensuring a high possibility of accurate test results.

Significance

Chitra GeneLAMP-N gene testing will confirm the result in one test without any need for a screening test and at much lower costs.

It can take a total of 30 samples in a single batch in a single machine allowing a large number of samples to be tested each day.

The trial tests performed show that Chitra GeneLAMP-N has 100% accuracy and match with test results using RT-PCR.

About RT-LAMP

The Reverse transcription loop-mediated isothermal amplification (RT-LAMP) is a technique for the amplification of RNA with high specificity, efficiency, and rapidity under isothermal conditions. In this method, a DNA copy of the viral RNA

is generated by reverse transcriptase, and then isothermal amplification is carried out to increase the amount of total DNA.

Primer binding sites are chosen so that a series of strand displacement steps allow continuous synthesis of DNA without requiring thermocycling.

Reaction products can be detected by adding an intercalating dye to reaction mixtures that fluoresces only when bound to DNA, allowing quantification of product formation by measurement of fluorescence intensity.

3. Thrissur Pooram Festival of Kerala

For the first time in 58 years, Thrissur Pooram, arguably the biggest temple festival in Kerala, has been cancelled in the wake of the nationwide lockdown. This year's pooram was scheduled to be held on May 3.

About Festival

The 200-year-old festival, believed to have been started by erstwhile Cochin ruler Shakthan Thampuran, was conducted as a ritual-only event last in 1962 due to the Indo-China war.

The Thrissur Puram is a seven day festival starting with the Kodiyettam or

flag hoisting ceremony. This is followed, on the fourth day, by the sample Vedikettu or sample firecrackers ceremony.

The main Pooram (on the sixth day) happens every year on the day when the 'Pooram' star rises in the sky in the Malayalam month of Medam. The Raja and the priests of the two other important local temples, the Paramekkavu Bagavathi Temple and the Thiruvambadi Sri Krishna Temple, pay obeisance to Shiva, the presiding deity of the Vadakkunnathan Temple. To this day the priests of the other two

temples and their processions stand opposite each other and celebrate Lord Shiva whose idol is placed in the center.

These two temples compete with and try to outwit each other in the procession. They bring fifteen elephants, each decorated to dazzle.

On the seventh day there is again a fantastic display of firework at the Swaraj ground, a fitting finale to the almost electric revels of the preceding days.

4. World Heritage Day 2020

World Heritage Day also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites is observed annually on April 18. The significance of the day is to promote cultural heritage through activities undertaken by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). ICOMOS works closely with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisations (UNESCO) for the conservation and

protection of cultural heritage sites, it also helps UNESCO on World Heritage Sites.

As the coronavirus pandemic is sweeping the globe, ICOMOS has decided that the theme for this year's World Heritage Day would be "Shared Culture, Shared Heritage and Shared Responsibility." ICOMOS aims at emphasising the importance of sharing of knowledge between generation through this theme. The theme for the previous year's celebration was "Rural Landscapes".

Aim

The aim of organizing the World Heritage Day is to preserve the human heritage and appreciate the efforts of all organizations that work for the

preservation of this heritage. The first World Heritage Day was organised by the ICOMOS in 1982 but it only got approved by the UN General Assembly in the following year.

What is World Heritage Site?

A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area selected by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific significance. These sites are protected by international treaties. According to UNESCO, a grand total of 1121 sites are listed across worldwide of which 869 are cultural, 213 are natural and 39 are a mixture.

There are a total of 38 heritage sites in India. India ranks sixth in the largest number of heritage sites in the world.



5. Kisan Rath Mobile App

Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has launched 'Kisan Rath Mobile App' to facilitate transportation of food grains and perishables during lockdown. This mobile application is developed by the National Informatics Centre to ensure farmers and traders are able to find transport for Agriculture and Horticulture produce.

Key Highlights

It has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to facilitate farmers & traders in searching transport vehicles for Primary and Secondary transportation for movement of Agriculture & Horticulture produce.

Primary transportation would include movement from Farm to Mandis, FPO Collection Centre and Warehouses etc. Secondary Transportation would include movement from Mandis to

Intra-state & Inter-state mandis, Processing units, Railway station, Warehouses and Wholesalers etc.

This app will also reduce wastage and contribute to better pricing of perishable commodities. The Mobile Application named "Kisan Rath" facilitates Farmers and Traders in identifying right mode of transportation for movement of farm produce ranging from foodgrain (cereal, coarse cereal, pulses etc), Fruits & Vegetables, oil seeds, spices, fiber crops, flowers, bamboo, log & minor forest produce, coconuts etc. This App also facilitates traders in transportation of perishable



commodities by Reefer (Refrigerated) vehicles.

Apart from the above features, the app also offers support for Hindi language so it can be easily accessed by farmers and traders.

6. Three New Mutations of Novel Coronavirus

Researchers at the state government-run Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC) have succeeded in decoding the entire genome sequence of the novel coronavirus and identified its three new mutations. With this, the GBRC has become the second institute

in India after the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune to decode the entire genome sequence of the virus.

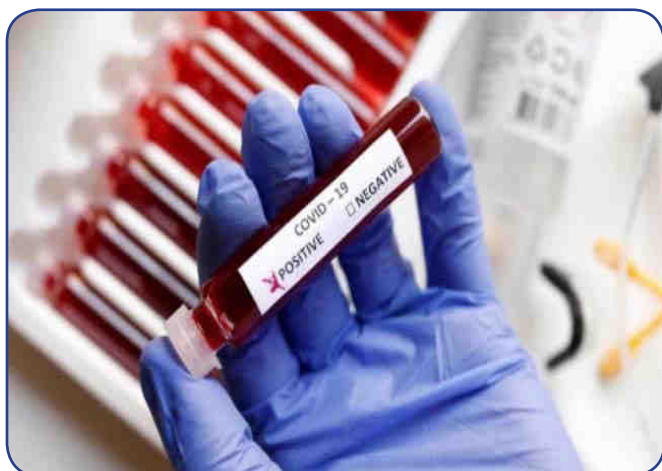
The first genome sequence of the COVID-19 virus was found by Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Beijing on January 10. It was made public by China. After that, the GBRC has also done it here. It has found total nine mutations in its genome sequence. However, six of the mutations were already found by other research institutes around the world. Three mutations, out of the total nine found by

the GBRC, are new and it will help in determining how the virus is changing in our conditions.

All living beings, be it humans, animals, plants or even viruses, their basic structure is found in the DNA or RNA. Many viruses have DNA or RNA (ribonucleic acid). Coronavirus has RNA. Generally, the virus mutates in order to adapt to and survive in different situations. It mutates when medicines try to control it. Coronavirus is mutating fast.

Significance

The findings will help in developing medicines or vaccines needed to stop the spread of the deadly virus, which has wreaked havoc across the globe.



7. 'Assess Koro Na' App for Door-to-Door Survey in Delhi

The Delhi government has asked officials to use the new 'Assess Koro Na' app for door-to-door survey in coronavirus containment zones to speed up decision-making by analysing real-time data, removing a major obstacle in the efforts to contain the virus. The first phase of the app-based

assessment will be launched in South Delhi.

During the process, surveyors ask questions like travel history, contact history, flu-like symptoms and shortness of breath. The data is then updated on real-time basis on server which is analysed by desktop tools to take decision for mobilization of ambulance to shift severe cases to hospital or Covidcare centres and conduct test on suspected persons.

The delay in collecting and analysing the data of a person in a physical form is a major challenge. With this app, the data collected can be uploaded on the

servers in real-time and immediately analyse. This will help the control centres in making a quick decision on requirement of ambulances and other medical equipment and personnel in the area. A swift decision can save many lives.

COVID-19 Cases in Delhi

By 23rd April, the total number of coronavirus cases in the national capital rose to 2,376, with 128 new cases and two fresh deaths being reported in a day according to the Delhi government authorities.



SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS (FOR MAINS)

1. Why is India taking keen interest in the Indian Ocean region? Discuss.
2. What is meant by conflict of interest? Illustrate with examples, the difference between the actual and potential conflicts of interest.
3. Discuss how appropriate local community level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to combat the COVID-19.
4. Assess the importance of the Panchayat system in India as a part of local government.
5. What are the key areas of reform, if the WTO has to survive in the present context of 'COVID-19', especially keeping in mind the interest of India?
6. Distinguish between "Code of ethics" and "Code of conduct" with suitable examples.
7. 'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing'. Explain by giving reasons.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS (FOR PRELIMS)

1. Which space agency has officially announced to use 'Falcon 9 rocket' for its crewed spaceflight to the International Space Station?

- NASA

2. What is the rank of India on 'The World Press Freedom Index 2020'?

- 142nd

3. Which state has become the first zero COVID-19 state in India?

- Goa

4. Which Indian institution has joined hands with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to establish a 'Communication Resource Unit' (CRU) for providing strategic communication support to national flagship programmes?

- National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)

5. Which index is a commonly used to measure the density of a crude oil or refined products?

- API Gravity Index

6. Which IT company has launched a built-in virtual Braille keyboard for blind and visually impaired users?

- Google

7. Which organisation has completed the bridge over the Daporijo River in Arunchal Pradesh in less than a month while adhering to the safety norms required to keep away COVID-19 infections?

- Border Roads Organisation

○○○

SEVEN IMPORTANT QUOTES

(IMPORTANT FOR ESSAY AND ANSWER WRITING)

1. "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved."

- B. R. Ambedkar

2. "There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing."

- Swami Vivekanand

3. "To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it's men's injustice to women."

- Mahatma Gandhi

4. "There is no development strategy beneficial to the society as a whole – than the one which involves women as central players."

- Kofi Annan

5. "If we are going to see real development in the world, then our best investment is women."

- Desmond Tutu

6. "You educate a man, you educate a man. You educate a woman, you educate a generation."

- Brigham Young

7. "A gender-equal society would be one where the word 'gender' does not exist: where everyone can be themselves."

- Gloria Steinem



AN INTRODUCTION

Dhyeya IAS, a decade old institution, was founded by Mr. Vinay Singh and Mr. Q.H. Khan. Ever since its emergence it has unparalleled track record of success. Today, it stands tall among the reputed institutes providing coaching for Civil Services Examination (CSE). The institute has been very successful in making potential realize their dreams which is evident from success stories of the previous years. Quite a large number of students desirous of building a career for themselves are absolutely less equipped for the fairly tough competitive tests they have to appear in. Several others, who have a brilliant academic career, do not know that competitive exams are vastly different from academic examination and call for a systematic and scientifically planned guidance by a team of experts. Here one single move invariably put one ahead of many others who lag behind. Dhyeya IAS is manned with qualified & experienced faculties besides especially designed study material that helps the students in achieving the desired goal. Civil Services Exam requires knowledge base of specified subjects. These subjects though taught in schools and colleges are not necessarily oriented towards the exam approach. Coaching classes at Dhyeya IAS are different from classes conducted in schools and colleges with respect to their orientation. Classes are targeted towards the particular exam. Classroom guidance at Dhyeya IAS is about improving the individual's capacity to focus, learn and innovate as we are comfortably aware of the fact that you can't teach a person anything you can only help him find it within himself.

DSDL Prepare yourself from distance

Distance learning Programme, DSDL, primarily caters the need for those who are unable to come to metros for economic or family reason but have ardent desire to become a civil servant. Simultaneously, it also suits to the need of working professionals, who are unable to join regular classes due to increase in work load or places of their posting. The principal characteristic of our distance learning is that the student does not need to be present in a classroom in order to participate in the instruction. It aims to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance. Realizing the difficulties faced by aspirants of distant areas, especially working candidates, in making use of the Institute's classroom guidance programme, distance learning system is being provided in General Studies. The distance learning material is comprehensive, concise and exam-oriented in nature. Its aim is to make available almost all the relevant material on a subject at one place. Materials on all topics of General Studies have been prepared in such a way that, not even a single point will be missing. In other words, you will get all points, which are otherwise to be taken from 6-10 books available in the market / library. That means, DSDL study material is undoubtedly the most comprehensive and that will definitely give you added advantage in your Preliminary as well as Main Examination. These materials are not available in any book store or library. These materials have been prepared exclusively for the use of our students. We believe in our quality and commitment towards making these notes indispensable for any student preparing for Civil Services Examination. We adhere all pillars of Distance education.

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