

PERFECT 7

**Weekly
Current Affairs**

An Initiative of Dhyeya IAS

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The Gendered Impact of COVID-19

Locked and Down



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DHYEYA IAS : AN INTRODUCTION



Vinay Kumar Singh
Founder & CEO

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 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



Kurban Ali
Chief Editor

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

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 vital and full of challenges. 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 'misinformation' or 'overdose of information'. Focussing on civil services examination 'Perfect 7' embodies in itself perfect 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 always motivate us and keep our morale high.

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.



Send us your suggestions, comment, views and feedback for guiding us on

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PREFACE



Dhyeya family has decided to bring a new colourful and vibrant version of '**Perfect 7**' – a panacea for current affairs, which 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 Services 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 CSE. 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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 most trusted since 2003

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 MAY 2020 | ISSUE 03

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7 IMPORTANT ISSUES

01

The Gendered Impact of COVID-19 : Locked and Down

Why in News?

- ◆ COVID-19 pandemic has brought a tsunami of collateral impacts on social, economic, cultural and public health systems. While pandemics and their impact are not completely alien to human knowledge, it seems the modern world was not very well prepared for this global-scale pandemic.
- ◆ As we learn by taking steps to manage and minimize its effects on the human population, it is important to consider the disproportionately greater burden that COVID-19 extends to women, calling for a fresh design to the gendered public health emergency response.

Background

- ◆ Globally, women dominate the health care workforce by contributing 67% of the total number of health workers.
- ◆ In South-East Asia region, 79% of the front-line health workers like nurses are women. If we draw upon the recent past experience of China and Italy, the health workers are most likely to be directly affected by the pandemic.
- ◆ Given the gaps in resources and support systems for the health care

The unpaid care and domestic work performed by women is critical for sustaining societies, has immense economic value and needs to be supported through adequate policies.



Women on average spend
4.1 hours/day
on unpaid care and
domestic work, compared to
1.7 hours/day
for men



Women's unpaid contributions
to healthcare equate to
2.35%
of global GDP, or the
equivalent of
US\$ 1.5 trillion



When women's contribution to
all types of care (not just
healthcare) is considered, this
figure rises to
US\$ 11 trillion

facilities in developing countries, the risk is elevated for health care workers. This will affect male health workers as well, but given the huge proportion of women in the front-line health workforce, the impact will be more on women. For example, a nurse, frontline health worker, policewoman and waste picker returning home from work is expected to cook, clean, and bathe the children, with little concern for her own rest or recreation, while simultaneously facing resentment for 'putting the family at risk'.

- ◆ Since women are considered primary caregivers, the burden of care and responsibility – of home staying children, extended family members, elderly – can make the situation more stressful for the

women, even for those who do not work outside of the home. For those who do, working from home will imply lower productivity. Male involvement in the domestic activities has been a hard nut to crack despite many long going gendered and family welfare interventions.

- ◆ For house wives the impact is manifold as her unpaid care giving timings have increased along with the threats of domestic violence. For professional women, the work from home deluge along with extended care giving has made the situation worse. The medicine seems to be dangerous than the disease.
- ◆ In developing countries like India, women are the primary caregivers

at the household level. With the mobility restrictions, educational institution closures the burden of household care is likely to be increasing on the women.

- ◆ This year's budget of the Indian government has reduced the fund allocation for reproductive and child health from 20% to 7% of the total health budget. At the same time, relatively low prioritization of women's health is not only limited to India as most of the low- and middle-income countries assign a lower tab. Further de-prioritization will hit the women's health harder.

Impacts on Women

◆ Unpaid Care and Unequal Share in Domestic Responsibilities

- ◆ Due to pandemic and lockdown, women have to bear the lopsided burden of unpaid care and unequal share in household responsibilities. Being the de facto caregivers within the homes has put an outsized portion of the domestic workload on women. The children are out of school with numerous online-from-home-classrooms, sick and needy elders, probably office-work assigned by a manager who is under the impression that work-from-home is a single-way ticket to exploit employees has thrown a lot of challenges towards women.

◆ Economic Regression

- ◆ Compared to men, women are usually earning less, saving barely, mostly engaging in contractual, temporary, unorganized and insecure jobs as per the availability of jobs in the market offered to them. In the post-pandemic

world, women are predicted to comprise of major-share of lay-offs by corporations. Women getting back to work after a lay-off may see an impact because of the cut in jobs and budgets, a shift in employers' attitude and inclination towards hiring a male employee due to obvious reasons of return on investment (ROI).

◆ Increase in Domestic Violence across Sectors

- ◆ Gender-based violence exacerbates with the tensions around security, money and health conditions. Within confined spaces, living conditions for certain families are not even healthy and can lead to violence against the vulnerable members of the household. So many women are stuck with their perpetrators in the lockdowns imposed to contain the virus and helpline numbers are limited in scope due to restrictions on relocation or mobility. Globally, as well as in India, helplines are being set up by women's organisations to deal with the escalating physical and sexual violence. Needless to say, violence within the home and outside it is inter-related; therefore dealing with both is equally essential.

◆ Health

- ◆ While early reports that emerged from different parts of the world provide evidence that more men are dying compared to infected women, more women are likely to catch the virus in the first place by comprising 70% in the front-line healthcare workforce. But it is not just about the virus cause diseases, the impact on

women's sexual health has also caused a red flag.

- ◆ Sexual activity, whether consensual or forced, also impacts men and women differently. In this globalised world, the raw material for the Medical Abortion Pills (MAPs), which comes from China, would not be available to import during lockdown. The cost of MPAs is likely to skyrocket in India, making access difficult for many women.
- ◆ On the other hand, Indian pharmaceuticals are the largest suppliers of MAPs globally; thus, there could be a cascading effect on supplies worldwide. Decreased production and distribution of condoms, oral pills and emergency contraception pills, and reduced access to abortion (both surgical and medical) will force women to go through unwanted pregnancies or resort to unsafe methods to terminate pregnancy, unless abortion (which also has legal implications in terms of gestational time limit) is considered an essential medical service.

◆ Increase in Marginalisation

- ◆ While the government is shifting most resources to curb the COVID-19 spread, the factors such as economic slowdown, adversely impacted production and distribution system both at the rural and urban level have already started affecting the food and nutrition security in the countries like India. Lower availability of food and access to the market and other distribution system is going

to affect women's nutrition wellbeing more.

- ♦ The intra household distribution of resources is always low for women in developing countries like India. When household resources are reduced, women are more likely to be left with very inadequate food and nutrition. The shutdown of the informal sectors, where women constitute a significant share of the workforce will lead to a reduction in access to income by women, leading to further marginalization.

UN Policy Brief

- ♦ The year 2020, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, was intended to be ground-breaking for gender equality. Instead, with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, even the limited gains made in the past decades are at risk of being rolled back. The pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities, exposing vulnerabilities in social, political and economic systems which are in turn amplifying the impacts of the pandemic. On 9th April 2020, UN released a twenty-one page "Policy Brief" titled, "The Impact of Covid-19 on Women".
- ♦ In this policy brief UN explores how women and girls' lives are changing in the face of COVID-19, and outlines suggested priority measures to accompany both the immediate response and longer-term recovery efforts. UN highlighted three cross-cutting priorities to rectifying long-standing inequalities but also about building a more just and resilient

world. Women will be the hardest hit by this pandemic but they will also be the backbone of recovery in communities.

- ♦ Ensure Women's Equal Representation in All COVID-19 Response Planning and Decision-Making: Evidence across sectors, including economic planning and emergency response, demonstrates unquestioningly that policies that do not consult women or include them in decision-making are simply less effective, and can even do harm. Beyond individual women, women's organizations who are often on the front line of response in communities should also be represented and supported.
- ♦ Drive Transformative Change for Equality by Addressing the Care Economy, Paid and Unpaid: In the formal economy care jobs, from teachers to nurses, are underpaid in relation to other sectors. In the home, women perform the bulk of care work, unpaid and invisible. Both are foundational to daily life and the economy but are premised on and entrench gendered norms and inequalities.
- ♦ Target Women and Girls in All Efforts to Address the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19: It will be important to apply an intentional gender lens to the design of fiscal stimulus packages and social assistance programmes to achieve greater equality, opportunities, and social protection.

Way Forward

- ♦ Not only has the COVID-19 pandemic affected men and women differently, it has also affected unequally placed women differently. Therefore, only an approach that recognises the special needs and rights of marginalised and excluded people can have a meaningful and lasting impact on the wellbeing of all our people.
- ♦ Further, governments have to take aggressive steps to mitigate the collateral damage of the COVID-19 that is going to hit the women harder. Among the expected policy-level decisions, is addressing the needs and safety of the female health workforces, especially the nurses engaged in front-line combat. There is a need to strengthen the community-based support systems for domestic violence survivors including phone-in support systems, sensitized police, and neighbourhood watch.

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: "The COVID-19 has put disproportionately greater burden on women, compared to men." In the context of given statement, highlight the gender issues and suggest the steps to contain them.

02

COVID-19 Highlighted the Problems of Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood

Why in News?

- ◆ The current national lockdown to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the problems of food, nutrition and livelihood security confronting a large number of rural people, in particular, migrants to cities.

Introduction

- ◆ India has slipped to 102nd position from earlier 95(2018) in Global Hunger Index, 2019 behind its neighbors Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- ◆ In the absence of demand, the lack of storage or value addition facilities, especially for perishable commodities, we do not yet know

exactly what the impact of the current pandemic will be on the kharif sowing and food availability in the future.

- ◆ Several measures have been announced, such as provision of additional rice or wheat, some pulses and oil free of cost, as well as Rs. 1,000 cash for the purchase of other essential commodities through the Public Distribution System (PDS), we need to understand the different dimensions of food security in a holistic manner in order to address this problem in its totality.
- ◆ The first is the availability of food in the market, and this is seen as a function of production. Fortunately,

thanks to the Green Revolution, today we have enough food in the market and in government godowns.

- ◆ This is a great accomplishment by Indian farmers who converted a "ship to mouth" situation to a "right to food" commitment. Yet we cannot take farmers' contributions in terms of sustaining production for granted.
- ◆ While some special exemptions have been given to the agricultural sector, farmers are confronted at the moment with labour shortages, many of the inputs, including seeds, are expensive or unavailable, marketing arrangements including supply chains are not fully functional, pricing is not remunerative, and public procurement is also not adequate.

National Food Security Act

What is Food security?

- Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

Salient Features of NFSA, 2013:

- It converts entitlements of existing food security programmes of the Central Government including the Midday Meal Scheme, Integrated Child development scheme and PDS into legal entitlements.
- The NFSA aims to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two thirds of the population. (75% in rural areas and 50% in urban area; 81.31 cr beneficiaries).
- The head of every eligible household shall be a woman (18 years of age or above) for the purpose of issuance under this act
- Grains like wheat, rice and coarse grain will be distributed at the subsidized price of Rs. 3, Rs. 2 and Rs. 1 and uniform entitlement of 5 kg per person per month is provided
- Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) (poorest of the poor) households will be protected at 35 kg per household per month.
- Pregnant women and lactating mothers and children are entitled to get meals under the prescribed nutrition by MDM and ICDS.
- NFSA 2013 will provide high nutrition food to children from the age group of 6 months to 14 years.
- Pregnant women and lactating mothers will be entitled to get maternity benefit of Rs.6000.
- Under NFSA, there is no provision for any Commission at the national level or District level. The Act provides for State Food Commission (SFC) in every State/UT, for the purpose of monitoring and review of implementation of the Act.
- The act also provides for the payment of food security allowance to entitled persons by State

Widen the Food Basket

- ◆ The second dimension is the access to food, which is a function of purchasing power, as unless you are a farmer and grow your own food, others have to buy it. Fortunately, the government, through the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and the PDS, has assured some additional food to every individual during this crisis.
- ◆ This should be further strengthened and the food basket widened by including millets, pulses and oil. Steps should also be taken to avoid hidden hunger caused by the deficiency of micronutrients in the diet.
- ◆ In light of the closure of schools and anganwadicentres, and the consequent disruptions in the provision of midday meals or other

nutritional inputs, it is important to pay attention to the life cycle approach advocated in the NFSA, particularly the first thousand days in a child's life, when the cognitive abilities of the child are shaped. We may otherwise see negative effects on nutritional security in the medium to longer term.

Work under MGNREGA

- ◆ An important pathway to livelihood security for small and marginal farmers and landless households, and women within them, is strengthening the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).
- ◆ The definition of a worker in MGNREGA has so far been applied only to unskilled, manual work, and not to skilled jobs in agriculture and allied activities. Given the lack of jobs and incomes during the COVID-19 crisis, it is imperative to expand the definition of work in MGNREGA to cover skilled work related to farmers and their farming activities.
- ◆ This is particularly important for women farmers and workers, who should not just be given tasks of carrying stones or digging mud. Apart from farming, they engage in a range of essential care tasks, including caring for children, the elderly and sick people.
- ◆ These tasks, often invisible, need to be recognized as work

and supported with appropriate education, including on nutrition.

Focus on Non-Food Factors

- ◆ The third dimension of food security is absorption of food in the body or its utilization, which is dependent importantly on sanitation, drinking water and other non-food factors, including public health services.
- ◆ Ensuring that these services are functional depends on the capacities of the local panchayats and their coordination with other local bodies. The lack of adequate clean water in particular has come to the fore in both rural areas and urban slums in the context of COVID-19, where one of the key measures for stopping transmission relates to frequent hand-washing.
- ◆ If we can ensure food availability, food access and food absorption, then we have a fairly robust system of food and nutrition security. All the above dimensions are, however, now threatened by the novel coronavirus, as discussed earlier. It is very critical to highlight the linkages between agriculture, nutrition and health.

Conclusion

- ◆ Over the last thirty years, significant progress has been made towards reducing poverty and global hunger. However, one in every eight people living in developing

countries still suffers from chronic undernourishment.

- ◆ Globally, poverty rates have seen improvements, but progress has been uneven with the number of people living in extreme poverty still unacceptably high. Conflicts and civil insecurity, as well as natural disasters from climate change, further exacerbate poverty, hunger, and global food security.
- ◆ India avoided what could have been a big famine in the 1960s through the help of technology and public policy, which actively worked with and supported farmers to achieve significant increases in yield.
- ◆ Today's problems are not as daunting. Through a combination of farmers' cooperation, technological upgrading and favorable public policies in procurement, pricing and distribution, we can deal with the fallouts of the pandemic. We hope that this pandemic will help recognize the contribution of our farmers.



General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

Topic: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Q: "Through a combination of farmers' cooperation, technological upgrading and favorable public policies in procurement, pricing and distribution, we can deal with the fallouts of the pandemic." Discuss the statement in the context of problems of food, nutrition and livelihood security during Covid pandemic.

03

Decoding the Global Terrorism Index : NITI Aayog

Why in News?

- ◆ A report compiled by NITI Aayog has questioned the methodology adopted by a Australian-based institute to rank India as the seventh worst affected country in terms of terrorism, ahead of conflict ridden countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Palestine, South Sudan and Lebanon.
- ◆ 2019 edition of the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) was issued by the Australia based Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).
- ◆ India has consistently ranked behind conflict ridden states such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Palestine and Lebanon.
- ◆ Apart from such surprising rankings, the report also makes other startling conclusions such as stating that the ten countries with the highest impact of terrorism, including India, are all engaged in at least one armed conflict.

Background

- ◆ The 2019 GTI Report threw some startling conclusions, with India's rank falling from 8th in 2017 and 2018 to 7th in 2019 reflecting a worsening of the overall security situation in the country on grounds of terrorism;
- ◆ The GTD is based solely on

Issues on Credibility of Data Collection

- ◆ Following points have been raised by NITI Aayog regarding the credibility of data collection, authentication, classification and reporting of the said report:
- ◆ The GTD is based solely on

unclassified media articles, with more than 100 structured variables such as each attack's location, tactics and weapons, perpetrators, casualties and consequences etc.

- ◆ While the GTD claims to analyse more than two million open source media reports published each day, it lacks any mechanism to engage with Governments or to further classify and verify such open source media reports through Government databases in any of the 163 countries it covers.
- ◆ The large diversity in definitions of terrorism amongst countries, and the lack of a universally accepted definition of terrorism, including in the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism pending in the UN General Assembly since 2014, leads to a great deal of ambiguity in calculating and understanding GTI reports.
- ◆ Defining terrorism as 'the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation,' the GTI accounts for terrorist attacks over five prior years.
- ◆ IEP's economic impact of terrorism model does not account for costs for countering violent extremism and long-term economic impacts on business activity, production and investment.
- ◆ Indeed, the GTI 2019 report itself states that a great majority of property damage values from terrorist incidents are coded in

About GTI

- The GTI aims to comprehensively analyse the impact of terrorism on 163 countries, covering 99.7% of the world population.
- Defining terrorism as 'the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation,' the GTI accounts for terrorist attacks over five prior years.
- Using four parameters to calculate each country's annual score, namely total number of terrorist incidents, fatalities and injuries caused by terrorists, and total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year, the GTI report is based primarily on the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) collated by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, apart from other sources.

Key Findings

- The total number of deaths from terrorism declined for the fourth consecutive year in 2018, falling by 15.2 per cent to 15,952 deaths.
- Despite the fall in total deaths, the number of countries affected by terrorism remains high. 71 countries recorded at least one death from terrorism in 2018, the second highest number of countries since 2002.
- Afghanistan had the largest deterioration, recording 7,379 deaths from terrorism, an increase of 59 per cent from the prior year, and is now at the bottom of the index.

the GTD as 'unknown,' resulting in 1 out of 4 parameters scoring nil for most countries.

- ◆ Similarly, the definition of mass shootings used in the GTI is limited to 'indiscriminate rampages in public places resulting in four or more victims killed by the attacker,' leaving out lone wolf attacks which may have lesser fatalities and more injuries, and attacks foiled by security and intelligence agencies.
- ◆ Understaffing
 - ◆ The Australian Government's Charities and Not-for-profits Commission does not reveal any data about IEP's funding sources. Emailed queries sent to the IEP requesting a list of its donors have also remained unanswered. The IEP's 2019 annual report shows that the organization has only 12 full time staff, 12 full-time equivalent staff and 6 volunteers.
 - ◆ It is indeed surprising that an organization is able to annually collect, meaningfully analyse and disseminate data about 163 countries in the Global Terrorism and Peace Indices and provide country wise national peace reports with just 24 staff members and 6 volunteers.
 - ◆ Similarly, the list of experts consulted by the IEP for preparing the GTI report do not list a single expert with experience in tackling field and policy level security challenges in South Asia.

Possible Impact of the Ranking

- ◆ The GTI score and methodology are important since GTI scores are directly used in the Global Peace Index, published by the IEP, the Global Slavery Report published by the Walk Free Foundation, and indirectly used in computing country scores in the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness and Global Competitiveness Indices. The GTD is also used in computation of the Safe Cities Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit.
- ◆ Hence, the positioning in the global indices affects the attractiveness of the country as an investment destination and other opportunities. It may also send a wrong signal for a developing country like India where strategic partnerships and collaborations are much in need.

Suggestions by NITI Aayog

- ◆ The IEP must engage with Governments, merge data collected from the GTD with Government data and try to evolve a more generally acceptable definition of terrorism to provide a better aid to decision making.
- ◆ The GTI may also provide a short term and long term forecast of terrorist incidents globally and regionally, along with further analysis of past trends, to help provide a clearer, broader picture to policy makers.

- ◆ Indian policymakers should also undertake a focussed PR campaign about India's successes in tackling the scourge of terrorism, including cross-border terrorism, while also engaging with the IEP to make the Global Terrorism Index more robust and relevant to the Indian context.

Way Forward

- ◆ The absence, therefore, of a robust data collection and analysis methodology, and any engagement with Governments facing the scourge of terrorism, means that the Global Terrorism Index has low direct value for policymakers and cannot be used as an aid to understand and alleviate challenges to countries from domestic and cross border terrorism.
- ◆ The wrong portrayal of India by various think tanks across the globe is not a new incident. It is high time that India stands to such reports and clear its stand as India has much to lose being a developing country. 📌📌📌

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

Q. Highlighting India in a bad light has been often seen in many reports by individual think tanks whose methodology and funding has been less than credible. Comment on the above given statement in light of India's ranking in Global Terrorism Index 2019.

04

Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020 : An Overview

Why in News?

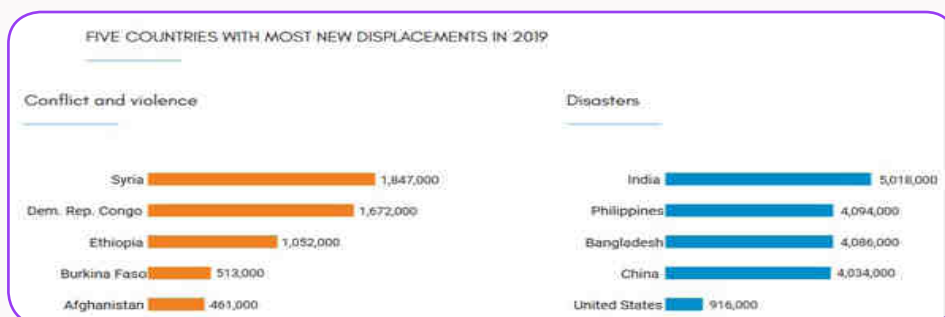
- Recently, Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) has released a Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020.

Background

- What makes internally displaced people different from what we would normally consider as refugees is that, having not crossed a border, they are not typically covered by international refugee protections. They remain subject to national laws, and as such are afforded far less recognition. This is a crucial difference when the violence they are fleeing is caused by the government in the country they live. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IDPs are "among the most vulnerable in the world."
- The coronavirus pandemic is further frustrating efforts to deal with the plight of internally displaced people. Many IDPs live in a kind of limbo, unattended to by the state and ineligible for the aid efforts afforded those who have crossed borders. At a time when strident efforts are required to prevent mass outbreaks of coronavirus, the IDMC is concerned that the tenuous position IDPs find themselves in will prevent the kind of public health measures needed from reaching them.

Key Findings

- Unlike refugees, internally displaced people have not crossed a border to find safety.



- According to the report, the number of internally displaced people (IDPs), those who have been forced to flee their homes but haven't crossed a national border, has hit an all-time high. It revealed that conflict, violence and disasters led to nearly 51 million internally displaced people at the end of 2019.
- 45.7 million people were driven from their homes by conflict or violence.
- 5.1 million of those were forced to move as a result of disasters.
- COVID-19 adds a new lethal threat on top of hunger, violence and poor sanitation.
- Bangladesh, China, India and the Philippines each recorded more than 4 million disaster displacements.
- Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia accounted for more than a million new displacements each.

India Related Findings

- India has the highest level of disaster displacement in South Asia in absolute terms, and consistently one of the highest in the world. An average of around 3.6 million people a year were displaced between 2008 and 2019, the majority by flooding during the monsoon.

- India is also prone to other sudden and slow-onset hazards including earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, storm surges and drought. Protracted conflict in Indian-controlled Kashmir and localised ethnic and religious violence also trigger displacement every year, but to a much lesser extent.
- There were five million new disaster displacements in India in 2019, the highest figure in the world and the result of a combination of increasing hazard intensity, high population exposure and high levels of social and economic vulnerability. The year was also the seventh warmest since records began in 1901, and the monsoon was the wettest in 25 years. These conditions helped to fuel the destructive power of the eight tropical storms to hit the country during the year.
- Conflict and violence triggered about 19,000 new displacements in 2019. Political and electoral violence, primarily in Tripura and West Bengal in first half of the year, accounted for more than 7,600. Lesser unrest and inter-communal violence continued to trigger displacement in the second half of the year.
- The states worst affected by disasters in recent years include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir,

Odisha and eastern Uttar Pradesh. Displacement associated with disasters such as riverine and flash floods tends to be large-scale but short-lived. Such hazards are seasonal and recurrent, and many states are affected every year. IDPs' exact locations and movements are not usually documented, but the majority tend to stay with family or friends. Relatively few seek shelter in state-run relief camps

Impact of Internal Displacement in India

- ◆ The fate of people displaced in India constitutes a significant information gap, particularly for those who do not live in formal camps or resettlement areas. No comprehensive humanitarian assessment of IDPs' needs has been conducted at the national level.
- ◆ Profiling exercises, however, show that some socially excluded communities such as scheduled castes, indigenous groups and religious minorities are often disproportionately at risk of becoming displaced, and may be propelled further into poverty and marginalisation as a result.
- ◆ Women and girls displaced by conflict are often vulnerable to gender-based violence, and struggle to access healthcare, education, livelihoods and legal remedies. This can be aggravated by the fact that IDPs often leave behind or lose identity cards, sometimes as

a result of confiscation or violence, which obstructs their access to social security.

- ◆ People displaced by development tend not benefit from the projects they are forced to make way for. Only a minority receive assistance, which is often inadequate to restart their lives. People who have been resettled report a range of challenges, including tenure insecurity, inadequate housing, absence of basic services, lack of safety for women and children and limited livelihood opportunities.

India's Legal Framework on Internal Displacements

- ◆ A 2004 national policy on families affected by projects was updated in 2007 and became the national rehabilitation and resettlement policy. It was intended to reduce large-scale displacement, ensure adequate resettlement and recovery packages are put in place and improve communication and cooperation between development planners and affected families.
- ◆ Protection for people displaced by development projects was enshrined in law in 2013 via a landmark piece of legislation. The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act (LARR) goes further than previous policies by introducing the legal power of prior consent or refusal and land acquisitions by affected families, the possibility of market transactions for the transfer of land, improved compensation rates and greater institutional capacity for resettlement and

recovery.

- ◆ India also has legislation relevant to disaster displacement. The 2016 national disaster management plan was developed in accordance with the provisions of the 2005 Disaster Management Act and guidance given in the 2009 national disaster management policy, along with other established national practices. It provides guidance on all phases of the disaster management cycle in line with the Sendai framework's approach. The country also has a national action plan on climate change (NAPCC).

Conclusion

- ◆ Bringing internal displacement to an end has been understood mostly in terms of the durable solutions set out in the Guiding Principles, namely return, local integration and resettlement. This has limited the way in which existing practices and promising new approaches have been assessed. What is needed in the coming years is a thorough analysis of how countries and communities have managed to resolve displacement crises and what windows of opportunities enabled progress.



General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Q. Internally displaced people are more vulnerable than internal refugees. Explain the given statement along with the status of internally displaced people in India and any Indian policy or laws dealing with them, if any.

05

AarogyaSetu App and Privacy Concerns

Why in News?

- ◆ The government of India has launched the 'AarogyaSetu app' for pan-India use as the main contact tracing technology. The contact tracing application is supposed to alert users in case they come in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.
- ◆ But, it has raised privacy concerns amid executive overreach. Many fear the data may be shared with third-party companies. Currently, there is no legal framework that governs the AarogyaSetu app, beyond the privacy policy and the terms of use.
- ◆ However, the Centre has specified that the users' data can be stored for up to 180 days but said it is only meant for health purposes.

Background

- ◆ Data sharing by technology companies is helping government officials fight the dizzying spread of the coronavirus by monitoring compliance with social distancing and stay-at-home orders. It's also putting privacy experts on edge.
- ◆ During a disease outbreak, one of the best tools at the disposal of public health officials is low-tech detective work. When a person is diagnosed with an illness like COVID-19, public health experts figure out where they've recently been and track down everyone they've been in contact with.



- ◆ The ability to pinpoint the movements of individuals is crucial at a time when controlling the pandemic's spread depends on compliance with government orders to stay home if possible, and to practice social distancing if not. The tracker and geo-fencing apps are here to stay.
- ◆ Despite the government assurances of data ownership and maintenance of privacy, the fact that it is being used by millions of people makes the aware citizens suspicious when there is no clear instructions about the third party access, in which servers will data be kept, how long will the record being maintained, who will handle the data, who shall ensure data protection and timely deletion. Particularly, in India there has been an instance of the Aadhar data leak, which points out to the lack of robust and intuitive technology to plug in the gaps.

Proportionality Standard Adopted in Puttaswamy (Privacy) Judgement

- The use of any privacy infringing technology must satisfy five criteria:
 - It must have a legislative basis;
 - It must pursue a legitimate aim;
 - It should be a rational method to achieve the intended aim;
 - There must not be any less restrictive alternatives which can also achieve the intended aim; and
 - The benefits must outweigh the harm caused to the right holder.

AarogyaSetu Debate

- ◆ The Ministry of Home Affairs, in its guidelines has made 'AarogyaSetu App' mandatory for employees of private and public sector offices. It also asked local authorities to ensure 100% coverage of the app in containment zones. The guidelines were issued by the National Executive Committee set up under the National Disaster Management Act (NDMA), 2005.

- ♦ But, the directive has not gone down well with privacy advocates who feel the app has several security-related blackholes and can eventually become surveillance tool for the government.
- ♦ The app exists in the privacy law vacuum that is India. With no legislation that spells out in detail how the online privacy of Indians is to be protected; 'AarogyaSetu' users have little choice but to accept the privacy policy provided by the government. The policy goes into some detail on where and how long the data will be retained, but it leaves the language around who will have access to it vague.
 - ♦ As per the policy, "persons carrying out medical and administrative interventions necessary in relation to COVID-19" will have access to the data.
- ♦ Beyond the legal loopholes, there are technical loopholes as well. The unique digital identity in 'AarogyaSetu' is a static number, which increases the probability of identity breaches.
- ♦ The abundance of data collected is also potentially problematic. 'AarogyaSetu' uses both Bluetooth as well as GPS reference points, which could be seen as overkill.
- ♦ Further, the app breaches the fundamental right to privacy, it must have legislative sanction. Instead, the app is being imposed through executive order.
- ♦ Merely saying that data is kept secure through encryption is nothing but lip service. The government need to give

more details on the security procedures and answer what level of encryption is being used. App does not tell how it complies with the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Information Technology Rules, 2011.

- ♦ In addition to being silent on the handling of data, the app itself has been protected from scrutiny by keeping its source code a secret. The closed source architecture of the app violates transparency principles and this government's own policies. Singapore's TraceTogether app was made open source, thus allowing researchers and experts to test the architecture and suggest measures to correct vulnerabilities.

The Government's Arguments

- ♦ The Centre has released a protocol for the usage and sharing of data collected through its coronavirus contact tracing app 'AarogyaSetu'. The Centre specified that the users' data can be stored for up to 180 days but said it is only meant for health purposes.
- ♦ In its protocol, the Centre said that the National Informatics Centre, the developer of the application, will only collect data which is "necessary and proportionate" to formulate or implement appropriate health responses.
- ♦ The Centre said that the users' data can be retained for a period of 180 days and shared between any government department or ministry. However, response

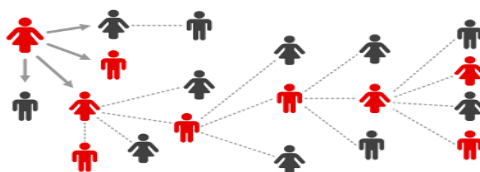
data may be shared with such third parties only if it is strictly necessary to directly formulate or implement appropriate health responses.

- ♦ The users can also ask the government to delete demographic data. Demographic data of an individual that has been collected by NIC shall be retained for as long as this protocol remains in force or if the individual requests that it be deleted, for a maximum of 30 days from such request, whichever is earlier.
- ♦ The protocol will remain in force for six months.

Global Examples

- ♦ In South Korea, investigators scan smartphone data to find within 10 minutes people who might have caught the coronavirus from someone they met.
- ♦ Israel has tapped its Shin Bet intelligence unit, usually focused on terrorism, to track down potential coronavirus patients through telecom data.
- ♦ Russia's Social Monitoring app for citizens who have tested positive for COVID-19, will request access to calls, location, camera, storage, network information and other data to check they do not leave their home while contagious.
- ♦ Taiwan has been using network data to monitor citizens in quarantine, in one case resulting in a man getting a visit from the police 45 minutes after his phone went flat.

What is contact tracing?



Contact tracing aims to identify and alert people who have come into contact with a person infected with coronavirus.



Smartphones can be used to quickly and automatically determine whether somebody has been in contact with an infected person.

BBC

- ◆ Companies including Alphabet Inc.'s Google and Facebook Inc. were already collecting, for advertising purposes, huge volumes of data from websites and smart-phone apps like maps and weather services, which transmit signals about their owners' location. Some of them are now stripping the data of personal identification markers, aggregating it, and providing it to researchers, public-health authorities and government agencies.
- ◆ The Iranian government built an app for people to check their symptoms that also included a geo-tracking feature.

Way Forward

- ◆ To avoid unforeseeable dangers of mass surveillance and disproportionate restrictions of fundamental rights, it is therefore

imperative that the 'ArogyaSetu' app is implemented only through law, especially since India lacks a comprehensive data protection or surveillance law. It is already a settled legal principle that any limitation of fundamental rights must be implemented only through a law pursuing legitimate state interest. Enacting such a law will not only subject government actions to limitations but will also facilitate its constitutional scrutiny.

- ◆ Across India, there are efforts to build databases of people's health records to enable easier treatment, including through telemedicine. If instances of misuse of the AarogyaSetu app emerge, then people will not trust other government initiatives involving health records, even if they are undertaken with due care, inclusive consultations,

and respect for privacy. The government must address these concerns in an open manner.

- ◆ The balance between protecting individual privacy and collecting information that is critical to the public good changes over the course of a disease's spread. The amount of data public health officials need to collect and disclose changes as well. Right now, the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating, and there is still a lot doctors and scientists don't know about the disease. Collecting detailed health information is, therefore, more useful and important. That could change as the outbreak progresses. 📡📶📶

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

Q. Leveraging the technology to manage the coronavirus threat seems to be a wise idea, but there seems to be a fading boundary between individual privacy and data collection for health purposes. Comment.

06

Emerging Scenario of COVID-19 : Challenges or Opportunities for India

- ◆ “You never let a serious crisis go to waste. And what I mean by that it's an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before.” -*American Politician Rahm Emanuel*

Why in News?

- ◆ Prime Minister Narendra Modi in late April held a “comprehensive” meeting to discuss strategies to attract more foreign investments into India as well as promote local investments to boost the economy against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ◆ India has been proactive and leadership has been courageous to go to extremes. What we have is the biggest ever lockdown in the history of mankind. There is an opportunity to do things we could not do before.

Coronavirus: Opportunity

- ◆ Under normal times, the government's hands are tied by fiscal prudence and danger of inflation. Now is the time the government is unshackled. Even if fiscal deficit goes up to around 5% in such times, neither economists nor critics would mind it.
- ◆ As we deal with recession and deflation, there is no threat of spectre of inflation either. Some leeway from fiscal deficit and \$50 billion windfall from lower oil prices can allow government to put together a stimulus plan of



\$100-120 billion, unprecedented but justified for the worst-ever crisis. This would still pale in comparison to \$2 trillion planned by the United States (US) Senate and White House, but will work for India.

- ◆ There are lessons to learn from the US on how to convert a crisis into a windfall. The global financial crisis of 2008 had its roots in an over-leveraged US economy. Yet, the US with bold measures turned it into the biggest opportunity driving income and wealth of Americans to a new high through uninterrupted 11-year bull run in the US stock markets.

- ◆ India imports about \$135 billion worth of crude oil and petroleum gases every year, the largest share of nearly \$500 billion annual import bill. Arguably, given the lockdown on transportation and sharp decline in the oil price itself, this will cut by a third this

year - saving some \$45 billion for the economy in 2020-21.

From China to India

- ◆ The world will keep debating about the “role” of China in the emergence and spread of this virus, but it is clear that a large number of countries have already started thinking in terms of shifting their investments out of China.
- ◆ Global manufacturers have initiated talks with Indian firms to explore the possibility of shifting a part of their supply chains from China as they seek to diversify their operations following the COVID-19 outbreak.
- ◆ Most of these multinationals have suffered widespread disruptions to their businesses as authorities enforced strict lockdown measures to contain the pandemic, which originated in Wuhan city in China's Hubei province. Wuhan is one of China's

so-called “motor cities”, housing several automotive factories.

- ♦ A lot of supply chain was coming from China and today some of the large original equipment makers (OEMs), will migrate to countries like India, Vietnam and others. That will be a growth opportunity and we will see a migratory growth in supply chain.
- ♦ In March, India’s cabinet announced a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the electronics sector with an outlay of over Rs. 40,000 crore.
- ♦ India exports electronic products worth \$9 billion each year, while its domestic market is estimated at \$120 billion.
- ♦ Japanese and South Korean firms are also interested in developing supply chains from the country.
- ♦ Among global firms that have shown interest in India are US-based makers of medical electronics products Teledyne and Amphenol, and medical equipment makers such as Johnson and Johnson.
- ♦ Japan has announced \$2 billion financial aid for its companies to shift production out of China. Many more countries could follow Japan, which is expected to benefit India.

US Nudging Firms towards India

- ♦ With China in the firing line over its way of handling the deadly virus outbreak, major countries are expected to nudge

their corporations to relocate production units out of China or set up new units at alternative locations.

- ♦ India could emerge as an alternative investment destination for US companies doing business in China in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic, a view that the US government’s Department of State is supporting.

Why India?

- ♦ India is generally considered an attractive destination because of its market size and also India being a possible hub for exports in the region. That’s the reason foreign direct investment (FDI) has been recording very impressive growth in the last 5-6 years. While government is making all-out attempt to hard-sell India as a manufacturing hub it may find it an uphill task given that the production cost difference between India and South East Asian countries is about 10-12 per cent.
- ♦ The government, however, sees large market size of India as a big plus for manufacturers. For example, there is a huge market in India for mobile phones that cost less than \$100. For mobiles costing \$200 or more there is huge potential of export. So, from the 10-12 per cent (percentage cost difference between India and South East Asia), almost 6-7 per cent is negated or adjusted

by India’s market itself. For the remaining 5-6%, a combination of state incentives and central incentives are there.

Pro-Active Steps

- ♦ India is developing a land pool nearly double the size of Luxembourg to lure businesses moving out of China. A total area of 461,589 hectares has been identified across the country for the purpose. That includes 115,131 hectares of existing industrial land in states such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Luxembourg is spread across 243,000 hectares, according to the World Bank.
- ♦ At present, investors keen on setting up a factory in India need to acquire land on their own. The process, in some cases, delays the project as it involves negotiating with small plot owners to part with their holding.
- ♦ Providing land with power, water and road access may help attract new investments to an economy that was slowing even before the virus hit, and is now staring at a rare contraction as a nationwide lockdown hit consumption.
- ♦ The government has hand-picked 10 sectors -- electrical, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, electronics, heavy engineering, solar equipment, food processing, chemicals and textiles -- as focus areas for promoting manufacturing. It has asked embassies abroad to identify companies scouting

for options. Invest India, the government's investment agency, has received inquiries mainly from Japan, the US, South Korea and China, expressing interest in relocating to the Asia's third-largest economy.

- ◆ Making unused land available in special economic zones, which already have robust infrastructure in place, is also being examined.
- ◆ The government wants to get more investment into India, with ministries such as road transport, highways and MSMEs eager to fast track permissions to companies wanting to shift their operations from China to India.
- ◆ Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has set up a committee of joint secretaries from across ministries and other departments to reach out to the industry and seek comments.
- ◆ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked state chief ministers to explore possibility of attracting investments from companies exiting from China and that they should have ready strategies to welcome industries on a state-level.



Way Forward

- ◆ The government and the Reserve Bank of India will have to act quickly before things aggravate economically - Work on tax cuts to revive demand, infuse liquidity, lower interest rates, forbearance to bank and non-bank lenders, allocate resources for direct benefit transfer to the bottom of pyramid, credit or credit guarantee to MSMEs, and public investment in infrastructure, etc. The opportunity will not be fully realised if the government does not unshackle domestic.
- ◆ Further, India seems to be at junction where the crisis has been accompanied by equal opportunity. The world is looking for alternative

to China and India with its size in terms of land, market, labour and resources is being more suitable and attractive.

- ◆ Therefore, the need of the hour is to attract as much FDI as possible into both greenfield and brownfield investments. It will salvage the country from the recession and will also help to rebuild the economy in a better and robust manner. <<<

General Studies Paper- III

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

Q. "Coronavirus pandemic has shattered the global economy, but has silver linings for India."Elaborate.

07

Changing Global Energy Scenario Due to Lockdowns

Why in News?

- ♦ The International Energy Agency (IEA) has released a report, Global Energy Review 2020, detailing the impact of COVID-19 — which it has called a “once-in-a-century crisis” — on global energy demands and CO₂ emissions. With lockdowns imposed in several countries, transportation such as road and air travel has been largely restricted, due to which global energy demands have plummeted.

Introduction

- ♦ The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has created an unprecedented global health and economic crisis. The energy sector, as a key enabler of modern life, is uniquely affected by this crisis but is also critical for global and national response and recovery efforts.
- ♦ In response to the exceptional circumstances stemming from the coronavirus pandemic, the annual IEA Global Energy Review 2020 has expanded its coverage to include real-time analysis of developments to date in 2020 and possible directions for the rest of the year.
- ♦ The uncertainty surrounding public health, the economy and hence energy over the rest of 2020 is unprecedented. This analysis therefore not only charts a possible path for energy use and CO₂ emissions in 2020 but also highlights the many factors that could lead to differing outcomes.
- ♦ As per the report, countries in full lockdown are seeing an average decline of 25 per cent in energy demand per week, while in those with a partial lockdown, the fall in

energy demand is about 18 per cent per week. This may not be a reason to celebrate as it is expected that emissions will soar once economies restart, unless governments take a conscious decision to change the sources of energy.

Key Findings

- ♦ Beyond the immediate impact on health, the current crisis has major implications for global economies, energy use and CO₂ emissions. The report showed that countries in full lockdown are experiencing an average 25% decline in energy demand per week and countries in partial lockdown an average 18% decline.
- ♦ Global coal demand was hit the hardest, falling by almost 8% compared with the first quarter of 2019. Three reasons converged to explain this drop. China – a coal-based economy – was the country the hardest hit by COVID 19 in the first quarter; cheap gas and continued growth in renewables elsewhere challenged coal; and mild weather also capped coal use.
- ♦ Oil demand was also hit strongly, down nearly 5% in the first quarter, mostly by curtailment in mobility and aviation, which account for nearly 60% of global oil demand. By the end of March, global road transport activity was almost 50% below the 2019 average and aviation 60% below.
- ♦ The impact of the pandemic on gas demand was more moderate, at around 2%, as gas-based economies were not strongly affected in the first quarter of 2020.
- ♦ Renewables were the only source that posted a growth in demand,

driven by larger installed capacity and priority dispatch.

- ♦ Electricity demand has been significantly reduced as a result of lockdown measures, with knock-on effects on the power mix. Electricity demand has been depressed by 20% or more during periods of full lockdown in several countries, as upticks for residential demand are far outweighed by reductions in commercial and industrial operations. Demand reductions have lifted the share of renewables in the electricity supply, as their output is largely unaffected by demand. Demand fell for all other sources of electricity, including coal, gas and nuclear power.
- ♦ The impact of COVID 19 on energy demand in 2020 would be more than seven times larger than the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on global energy demand.
- ♦ All fuels will be affected:
 - ♦ Oil demand could drop by 9%, or 9 mb/d on average across the year, returning oil consumption to 2012 levels.
 - ♦ Coal demand could decline by 8%, in large part because electricity demand will be nearly 5% lower over the course of the year. The recovery of coal demand for industry and electricity generation in China could offset larger declines elsewhere.
 - ♦ Gas demand could fall much further across the full year than in the first quarter, with reduced demand in power and industry applications.

- ◆ Nuclear power demand would also fall in response to lower electricity demand.
- ◆ Renewables demand is expected to increase because of low operating costs and preferential access to many power systems. Recent growth in capacity, some new projects coming online in 2020, would also boost output.

How has COVID-19 Impacted CO₂ Emissions?

- ◆ Since the end of World War II, the decline in CO₂ emissions witnessed in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 will be the largest. In the first quarter of 2020, because the most carbon-intensive fuels saw the biggest fall in demand, the decline in CO₂ emissions was more than the fall in global energy demand.
- ◆ In the first quarter of this year, carbon emissions were five per cent lower than during the same time in 2019. This year saw an 8 per cent decline in coal emissions, 4.5 per cent from oil and 2.3 per cent from natural gas.
- ◆ Emissions declined the most in regions which were impacted the highest by the disease. For instance, there was an 8 per cent decline in emissions in China and Europe, and a 9 per cent decline in the US.
- ◆ Overall, the emissions decline in 2020 could be 8 per cent lower than in 2019, which would be the lowest level of emissions since 2010 and the largest level of emission reduction — six times larger than

what was witnessed during the 2009 financial crisis, and twice as large as the combined total of all reductions witnessed since World War II.

Impact on India's Energy Demands

- ◆ COVID-19 is having a ripple effect in the global energy space. India, which is one of the IEA association countries, has seen a reduction in its energy demands by over 30 per cent as a result of the nationwide lockdown. This translates to a fall in energy demand by 0.6 per cent with every additional week of lockdown.
- ◆ In the first quarter of 2020, energy demand in the country increased by 0.3 per cent relative to the first quarter of 2019. This will be the first time that energy demand in India has fallen, "following on from low demand growth in 2019."
- ◆ Moreover, in India, where "economic growth and power production are slowing significantly", the demand for coal will decline steeply. China and India are the largest and third-largest electricity users in the world respectively, and coal use is dominant in both these countries shaping the global demand for this fuel.

Conclusion

- ◆ The COVID-19 crisis and measures taken to slow its spread have had a profound impact on energy demand, the likes of which have not been seen for 70 years.

- ◆ The full impact of the current situation, as yet unknown, will be determined by the duration of lockdown measures and the recovery paths taken around the world.
- ◆ This unprecedented situation and the stimulus packages that governments are putting in place will shape the energy sector for years to come, with significant consequences for the energy industry at large, energy security and clean energy transitions.
- ◆ Governments will play a major role in shaping the energy sector's recovery from the COVID 19 crisis, just as they have long been in the driving seat in orienting energy investment.
- ◆ The IEA report is right to conclude that a coordinated policy effort will be needed to harvest its opportunities and lead to a more modern, cleaner and more resilient energy sector for all. Nuclear is cost-effective and will help deliver a faster and better clean energy transition that will provide high-valued jobs now and for a sustainable future. <<<>>>

General Studies Paper- III

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

Q. Discuss how COVID-19 lockdowns have impacted the global energy sector.

7

IMPORTANT BRAIN BOOSTERS

01

Annual Special 301 Report

1. Why in News?

- In its latest Special 301 report released by the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the United States (US) government has retained India on the "priority watch list" for its alleged poor enforcement of intellectual property (IP) regulations even while it acknowledged steps taken by the Indian government to promote IP protection.



2. About Annual Special 301 Report

- The Special 301 Report is prepared annually by the Office of the USTR that identifies trade barriers to US companies and products due to the intellectual property laws, such as copyright, patents and trademarks, in other countries.
- By statute, the annual Special 301 Report includes a list of "Priority Foreign Countries", that are judged to have inadequate intellectual property laws; these countries may be subject to sanctions.
- In addition, the report contains a "Priority Watch List" and a "Watch List", containing countries whose intellectual property regimes are deemed of concern.
- For countries failing to address US concerns, USTR may take appropriate actions, which may include enforcement actions under Section 301 of the Trade Act or pursuant to World Trade Organization (WTO) or other trade agreement dispute settlement procedures.

3. Relevant Findings

- The US placed 10 countries, including some of its major trading partners like India and China, on the list, alleging that enforcement of the intellectual properties have deteriorated or remained at inadequate levels and the Americans who rely on their protection have difficulty with fair and equitable market access.
- The countries placed on the list by the Trump administration on IP related issues are Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Venezuela.
- India remains on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework on the "long-standing" and "new challenges" that have negatively affected US right holders over the past year.
- Quoting a 2019 publication produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), USTR said India was among the top five provenance economies for counterfeit goods.
- Long-standing IP challenges facing US businesses in India include those which make it difficult for innovators to receive, maintain, and enforce patents in India, particularly for pharmaceuticals; ineffectual enforcement activities, copyright policies that fail to incentivise the creation and commercialisation of content, and an outdated and insufficient trade secrets legal framework.

5. IPR Laws in India

- IPR laws in India
 - Copyright Act, 1957;
 - Patents Act, 1970;
 - The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999;
 - Trade Mark Act, 1999;
 - Design Act, 2000;
 - The Semi Conductor Integrated Circuits Layout Design Act, 2000; and
 - The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001.
- In early 2019, India acceded to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Internet Treaties and the Nice Agreement.
- India also issued revised draft legislation to criminalise illicit camcording.

4. India's Take

- India had over the years rejected the observations in the Special 301 report, maintaining that it was a unilateral report of the US government and India was fully compliant with multilateral IP regulations.

02

Multi-system Inflammatory State

1. Why in News?

- UK's Paediatric Intensive Care Society said it had observed an "apparent rise" in the number of children, of all ages, with a "multi-system inflammatory state requiring intensive care".
- There is a growing concern of a SARS-CoV-2 related inflammatory syndrome emerging in children in the UK or that there may be another unidentified infectious pathogen associated with these cases.



2. About Multi-system Inflammatory State

- This rare illness causes inflammation of the blood vessels, which leads to low blood pressure.
- It affects the entire body as it causes a build-up of fluid in the lungs and other organs.
- This condition is similar to Kawasaki disease. Patients suffering from it require intensive care to support the lungs, heart and other organs,

3. Symptoms

- Symptoms vary among the children depending on which organ system is affected.
- Children were showing abdominal and gastrointestinal symptoms as well as cardiac inflammation.
- There were also overlapping symptoms of toxic shock syndrome and atypical Kawasaki disease.
 - Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) is a rare life-threatening condition caused when certain bacteria enter the body and release harmful toxins.
 - If not treated in time, the condition could be fatal.
 - Symptoms include high temperature, flu-like symptoms including headache, sore throat, cough, diarrhea, dizziness or fainting, difficulty breathing and confusion.

4. About Kawasaki Disease

- Kawasaki disease is characterized by inflammation in the coronary arteries and other blood vessels.
- It mostly affects children around the age of two, but has also been found in some teens.
- Although all children are at risk, it is most common in those of Japanese and Asian descent. Most children with Kawasaki disease fully recover, but urgent medical treatment is needed to prevent significant heart problems.
- Also known as Kawasaki syndrome or mucocutaneous lymph node syndrome, symptoms include a fever, rash, swollen hands and feet, red and irritated eyes, swollen lymph glands in the neck, and irritated and inflamed mouth, lips, and throat.
- Early diagnosis and treatment of patients meeting full or partial criteria for Kawasaki disease is critical to preventing end-organ damage and other long-term complications.

6. Another Threats

- Another syndrome associated with an over-stimulated immune system response is the cytokine storm syndrome.
- It is suspected that some COVID-19 patients, even young ones, can develop this response leading to sepsis, multiple organ failures and even death.

5. Is It Related to CCOVID-19?

- Only some of the children with these symptoms tested positive for COVID-19.
- Therefore, it remains unclear if and how the inflammatory syndrome is related to the virus.
- Some doctors have suggested that the illness may be "post-infection inflammatory response", where the immune system goes into overdrive.
- This also explains why some children with this illness could have tested negative for the virus.
- They could have already recovered from the virus before the inflammation set in or the tests simply did not detect the virus.

03 APEC**1. Why in News?**

- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) region is expected to post a 2.7 per cent economic decline in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19.

**4. About APEC**

- The APEC is an inter-governmental forum for 21 member economies in the Pacific Rim that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region
- Following the success of ASEAN's series of post-ministerial conferences launched in the mid-1980s, APEC started in 1989, in response to the growing interdependence of Asia-Pacific economies and the advent of regional trade blocs in other parts of the world; it aimed to establish new markets for agricultural products and raw materials beyond Europe.
- The headquarters of APEC is in Singapore. APEC is recognized as one of the highest-level multilateral blocs and oldest forums in the Asia-Pacific region, and exerts a significant global influence.
- APEC's 21 member economies are Australia; Brunei; Canada; Chile; China; Hong Kong; Indonesia; Japan; South Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; the Philippines; Russia; Singapore; Taiwan; Thailand; the United States; and Vietnam.

2. APEC in the Epicentre of COVID-19

- This decline will be the most significant fall since the near-zero growth rate logged in 2009 during the global financial crisis.
- Trade ministers of the APEC called for the essential movement of people across borders, saying measures designed to address challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic should not create unnecessary barriers to trade.
- The contraction compares with a 3.6 percent growth in 2019 for the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, which includes Japan, China and the United States.
- The region's unemployment rate is projected to rise to 5.4 percent in 2020 from 3.8 percent in 2019, or an additional 23.5 million workers in the region being unemployed in 2020.
- An economic rebound is forecast for 2021, with the APEC region anticipated to grow 6.3 percent, higher than the projected global economic growth of 5.8 percent.
- Economic activity has been on a near standstill as economies implemented stringent measures to contain the pandemic, including travel bans, quarantines, lockdowns, and social distancing measures to curb the spread of COVID-19.
- Healthcare systems are grappling with acute shortages of medical supplies and equipment as well as inadequate numbers of hospital beds and isolation units.
- APEC economies have responded with exceptional fiscal and monetary measures, representing 1 to 20 percent of GDP, depending on fiscal room. The measures are targeted at bolstering health systems and providing direct support to households and businesses, including micro, small and medium enterprises.
- Regional cooperation is crucial during a pandemic. Economies should come together to exchange health information, keep open the supply chains for medical and food products, and coordinate policy responses. Regional cooperation should be sustained and strengthened to ensure resilience and revive regional growth going forward.

3. APEC and INDIA

- India has requested membership in APEC, and received initial support from the United States, Japan, Australia and Papua New Guinea.
- Officials have decided not to allow India to join for various reasons, considering that India does not border the Pacific Ocean, which all current members do.
- In 2014, India signed a separate Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in services and investments with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), marking a strong and close partnership.
- For APEC members, greater integration with India would translate into an alternative source of intermediary goods, especially manufactured goods.
- India as a new trade partner can serve as an alternative and possibly a sustainable avenue in balancing out the high dependence of member countries on China.

04

Report on National Infrastructure Pipeline

1. Why in News?

- The task force on National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) has submitted its final report for FY 2019-25.
- The report contains recommendations on general and sector reforms relating to key Infrastructure sectors for implementation by the Centre and States in India.



2. Background

- The task force was set up following Prime Minister Narendra Modi Independence Day speech of 2019 where he alluded to an investment of Rs. 100 lakh crore in infrastructure.
- Components of Infrastructure Vision 2025
 - ☛ Affordable and clean energy
 - ☛ Digital Services
 - ☛ Convenient and efficient transportation and logistics
 - ☛ Quality Education
 - ☛ Housing and water supply for all
 - ☛ Disaster-resilient standards compliant public infrastructure
 - ☛ Agriculture infrastructure
 - ☛ Good health and well being

3. Key Suggestions

- The final report identifies and highlights recent infrastructure trends in India as well as global in all sectors of infrastructure.
- It also captures sector progress, deficits and challenges. In addition to update existing sectoral policies, the final report also identifies and highlights a set of reforms to scale up and propel infrastructure investments in various sectors throughout the country.
- The report also has suggested ways and means of financing the NIP through deepening Corporate Bond markets, including those of Municipal Bonds, setting up Development Financial Institutions for infrastructure sector, accelerating Monetisation of Infrastructure Assets, Land monetisation, etc.
- The task force has recommended that three Committees be setup:
 - ☛ A Committee to monitor NIP progress and eliminate delays;
 - ☛ A Steering Committee in each Infrastructure ministry level for following up implementation; and
 - ☛ A Steering Committee in DEA for raising financial resources for the NIP.
- A monitoring mechanism has also been suggested to ensure timely implementation.

4. About NIP

- NIP is a first-of-its-kind, whole-of-government exercise to provide world-class infrastructure across the country and improve the quality of life for all citizens.
- The funding of the NIP will be jointly made by the Centre, states and the private sector in the proportion of 39:39:22 (39 % each by the centre and states and 22% by the private sector).
- It is estimated that India should invest \$4.5 trillion in infrastructure by 2030 to support faster growth. The National infrastructure Pipeline is a part of that attempt to invest \$4.5 trillion.
- Out of the total expected capital expenditure of Rs. 111 lakh crore, projects worth Rs 44 lakh crore (40% of NIP) are under implementation, projects worth Rs 33 lakh crore (30%) are at conceptual stage and projects worth Rs 22 lakh crore (20%) are under development.
- Information regarding project stage are unavailable for projects worth Rs 11 lakh crore (10%).
- Sectors such as energy (24%), roads (18%), urban (17%) and railways (12%) amount to around 71% of the projected infrastructure investments in India.

05

ATM Skimming

1. Why in News?

- Recently cases of using cloned ATM Cards have been reported in Delhi.



2. What is ATM skimming?

- ATM skimming is a theft of card information, where a small device, known as a skimmer, is used to steal the information during a legitimate ATM transaction. As the card is swiped at the machine, the skimmer device captures the information stored on the card's magnetic strip.
- Thieves place the skimmer on the ATM card swiping mechanism. However, only a skimmer is not enough. The crooks trying to dupe the people, either place a camera inside the ATM or hack the bank camera to get to know the ATM pin of the card user. Once the pin is recorded and the card details are stored on the skimmer, the thieves use it to purchase things online or create cloned cards.

3. Devices Used for ATM Skimming

- **Card reader overlays:** These plastic devices fit over the slot where you insert your card. They steal and store your card data when you put your card in them.
- **Hidden cameras:** These are usually very tiny and can be placed on or around an ATM to help thieves keep an eye on the area and capture PINs.
- **PIN-capture overlays:** These fake keypads fit over an ATM's actual keypad to capture PINs.
- **ATM faceplates:** These overlays fit over the entire ATM faceplate and can contain everything from card readers to keypad overlays to hidden cameras.

6. Who Returns Your Money?

- The bank that has issued you the card will pay you back the money. If prima facie it is established that you are a victim of skimming fraud, the bank makes the payment upfront.
- According to the RBI, the customer liability will be zero in a case where the unauthorised transaction occurs in a third-party breach where the deficiency lies neither with the bank nor with the customer, but elsewhere in the system and the customer notifies the bank within three working days of receiving the communication from the bank regarding the transaction.

4. Two Common Skimming Scenarios

- In the first one, a device called a "skimmer" is placed on the face of an operational ATM. When a card is swiped, the skimmer records the data on the card, and a camera hidden in a brochure holder or security mirror records the PIN. Usually, money is dispensed and the user is none the wiser.
- In the second scenario, a used ATM is rigged to record data and placed in a public area. These ATMs are only semi-operational and do not dispense cash. Users think that they're broken, but they're really just stealing card data.

5. What should be Done?

- The fraud needs to be reported as soon as possible.
 - ☛ If you have an account with Bank A and have used the card to withdraw money from an ATM of Bank B, which has been compromised which bank should you report your concern to?
 - ☛ A complaint should be lodged at Bank A at the earliest possible.
- According to the RBI, "longer the time taken to notify the bank, the higher will be the risk of loss."

06

Immunity Passports

1. Why in News?

- In one version of the future, a new type of test that measures antibodies would help restore a sense of normalcy for some people even as the coronavirus pandemic drags on.
- With the right antibodies, some may be immune to the virus, unable to get sick or spread the virus to others.
- Widespread testing for these antibodies could pave the way for so-called immunity certificates, which would allow people who have already been exposed to the virus to return to public life.



5. Way Forward

- At this point in the pandemic, there is not enough evidence about the effectiveness of antibody-mediated immunity to guarantee the accuracy of an "immunity passport" or "risk-free certificate."
- People who assume that they are immune to a second infection because they have received a positive test result may ignore public health advice. The use of such certificates may therefore increase the risks of continued transmission.
- Until a COVID-19 vaccine is available, and accessible, which is not guaranteed, the way out of this crisis will be built on the established public health practices of testing, contact tracing, quarantine of contacts, and isolation of cases.
- The success of these practices is largely dependent on public trust, solidarity, and addressing—not entrenching—the inequities and injustices that contributed to this outbreak becoming a pandemic.

2. Introduction

- WHO has published guidance on adjusting public health and social measures for the next phase of the COVID-19 response.
- Some governments have suggested that the detection of antibodies to the SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, could serve as the basis for an "immunity passport" or "risk-free certificate" that would enable individuals to travel or to return to work assuming that they are protected against re-infection.
- There is currently no evidence that people who have recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies are protected from a second infection.
- Immunity passports have been compared to international certificates of vaccination, such as the "Carte Jaune" for yellow fever.
- However, there are significant differences between the two types of documents, occasioning fundamentally different burdens on individuals' health risk and bodily integrity, the public health risk, and an individual's capacity to consent and control. The main distinction between the two is the nature of the incentive.

3. The Measurement of Antibodies Specific to COVID-19

- The development of immunity to a pathogen through natural infection is a multi-step process that typically takes place over 1-2 weeks.
- The body responds to a viral infection immediately with a non-specific innate response in which macrophages, neutrophils, and dendritic cells slow the progress of virus and may even prevent it from causing symptoms.
- This non-specific response is followed by an adaptive response where the body makes antibodies that specifically bind to the virus. These antibodies are proteins called immunoglobulin.
- The body also makes T-cells that recognize and eliminate other cells infected with the virus. This is called cellular immunity.
- This combined adaptive response may clear the virus from the body, and if the response is strong enough, may prevent progression to severe illness or re-infection by the same virus.

4. Tech-Savvy Passports

- With all the talks about reducing contact with others, checking such a passport will benefit from the help of technology; there's already an app for that. UK-based Bizagi released CoronaPass, an app that stores the user's immune status data obtained from a healthcare authority.
 - It presents a QR code that an official can then scan to check the user's immunity status. This can limit contact with other forms of an immunity certificate like a hard copy.
- But there are challenges with the privacy issues which come to mind with apps dealing with such sensitive data.

07

NGT on Waste Disposal of COVID-19

1. Why in News?

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the States and the Union Territories to closely monitor the transport, handling, storage and disposal of COVID-19.



2. Introduction

- The NGT has directed a team, comprising the Centre and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), to supervise handling and scientific disposal of COVID-19 waste in accordance with the guidelines.
- The tribunal said that while the Bio Medical Waste Rules deal with waste generated in dealing with infectious diseases, the coronavirus pandemic has presented further challenge in terms of capacity to scientifically dispose of generated waste.
- It directed the state Departments of Environment and pollution control boards to ensure compliance of Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016 and furnish action taken report to CPCB.
- It has urged the State Pollution Control Board and Pollution Control Committee to put in serious efforts to mitigate the possible risk of unscientific disposal of the bio-medical waste arising out of the handling of the COVID-19 disease.
- It has also raked up the issue of gaps in compliance of the Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules, 2016 which are applicable to the disposal of the bio-medical waste generated out handling the pandemic.

4. About NGT

- It has been established under the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- It is a specialized body equipped with the necessary expertise to handle environmental disputes involving multi-disciplinary issues.

3. About the Guidelines

- Healthcare facilities having isolation wards for COVID-19 patients need to keep separate colour coded bins/bags/containers in wards and maintains proper segregation of waste as per BWWM Rules, 2016.
- Collect and store biomedical waste separately prior to handing over the same to Common Bio-medical Waste Treatment and Disposal Facility (CBWTF).
- In addition to mandatory labelling, bags/containers used for collecting biomedical waste from COVID-19 wards, should be labelled as 'COVID-19 Waste, it said adding that general waste not having contamination should be disposed as solid waste as per Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.
- The CPCB said that faeces from COVID-19 confirmed patient, who is unable to use toilets and excreta is collected in diaper, must be treated as biomedical waste and should be placed in yellow bag/container.
- Biomedical waste generated from quarantine camps/quarantine home/home care would be treated as 'domestic hazardous waste' as defined under Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and shall be disposed as per provisions under Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016 and these guidelines.

7 MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

01 Annual Special 301 Report

Q. With reference to the 'Special 301 Report', consider the following statements:

1. It has been released by the United States Trade Representative and International Monetary Fund.
2. In this year edition, it has removed India from the 'Priority Watch List'.
3. But countries like Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Venezuela are still in 'Priority Watch List'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: **Statement 1 and 2 are incorrect.** The Special 301 Report is prepared annually by the Office of the USTR that identifies trade barriers to US companies and products due to the intellectual property laws, such as copyright, patents and trademarks, in other countries.

India remains on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework on the "long-standing" and "new challenges" that have negatively affected US right holders over the past year.

Statement 3 is correct. Other countries which are on the list by the Trump administration on IP related issues are Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Venezuela.



02 Multi-system Inflammatory State

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'multi-system inflammatory state':

1. It causes inflammation of the blood vessels, which leads to low blood pressure.
2. It affects the entire body as it causes a build-up of fluid in the lungs and other organs.
3. In India, remittances are projected to fall by about 23% in 2020.

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.** This rare illness causes inflammation of the blood vessels, which leads to low blood pressure.

It affects the entire body as it causes a build-up of fluid in the lungs and other organs. This condition is similar to Kawasaki disease. Patients suffering from it require intensive care to support the lungs, heart and other organs.



03 APEC

Q. With reference to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), consider the following statements:

1. The APEC region is expected to post a 2.7 per cent economic decline in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19.
2. India joined APEC in 2014 to mark a strong and close partnership with Pacific Rim countries.
3. In India, remittances are projected to fall by about 23% in 2020.

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: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) region is expected to post a 2.7 per cent economic decline in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. The region's unemployment rate is projected to rise to 5.4 percent in 2020 from 3.8 percent in 2019, or an additional 23.5 million workers in the region being unemployed in 2020.

Statement 2 is incorrect. India has requested membership in APEC, and received initial support from the United States, Japan, Australia and Papua New Guinea. Officials have decided not to allow India to join for various reasons, considering that India does not border the Pacific Ocean, which all current members do.

In 2014, India signed a separate Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in services and investments with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), marking a strong and close partnership.

04 Report on National Infrastructure Pipeline

Q. With reference to the 'task report on National Infrastructure Pipeline', consider the following statements:

1. The report has suggested ways of financing the NIP through deepening Corporate Bond markets, including those of Municipal Bonds and setting up Development Financial Institutions for infrastructure sector.
2. The funding of the NIP will be jointly made by the Centre, states and the private sector in the proportion of 39:39:22.
3. The report has recommended a steering committee in Department of Economic Affairs for raising financial resources for the NIP.

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 report also has suggested ways and means of financing the NIP through deepening Corporate Bond markets, including those of Municipal Bonds, setting up Development Financial Institutions for infrastructure sector, accelerating Monetisation of Infrastructure Assets, Land monetisation, etc.

The task force has recommended that three Committees be setup a Committee to monitor NIP progress and eliminate delays; a Steering Committee in each Infrastructure ministry level for following up implementation; and a Steering Committee in DEA for raising financial resources for the NIP.

NIP is a first-of-its-kind, whole-of-government exercise to provide world-class infrastructure across the country and improve the quality of life for all citizens. The funding of the NIP will be jointly made by the Centre, states and the private sector in the proportion of 39:39:22.

05 ATM Skimming

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'ATM Skimming':

1. ATM skimming is a theft of card information, where a small device, known as a skimmer, is used to steal the information during a legitimate ATM transaction.
2. As the card is swiped at the machine, the skimmer device captures the information stored on the card's magnetic strip.

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. ATM skimming is a theft of card information, where a small device, known as a skimmer, is used to steal the information during a legitimate ATM transaction. As the card is swiped at the machine, the skimmer device captures the information stored on the card's magnetic strip.

06 Immunity Passports

Q. With reference to the 'immunity passports', consider the following statements:

1. World Health Organisation has suggested the idea of immunity passport.
2. The detection of antibodies to the SARS-CoV-2, could serve as the basis for an "immunity passport" or "risk-free certificate".
3. It would enable individuals to travel or to return to work assuming that they are protected against re-infection.

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: (b)

Explanation: **Statement 1 is incorrect.** WHO has published guidance on adjusting public health and social measures for the next phase of the COVID-19 response. According to the WHO, at this point in the pandemic, there is not enough evidence about the effectiveness of antibody-mediated immunity to guarantee the accuracy of an “immunity passport” or “risk-free certificate.”

Statement 2 and 3 are correct. Some governments have suggested that the detection of antibodies to the SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, could serve as the basis for an “immunity passport” or “risk-free certificate” that would enable individuals to travel or to return to work assuming that they are protected against re-infection. 

07 NGT on Waste Disposal of COVID-19

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. It is a specialised body for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.
2. It also has jurisdiction over all civil cases involving substantial question relating to environment (including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment).

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.** NGT is a specialised body for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.

It also has jurisdiction over all civil cases involving substantial question relating to environment (including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment). Recently, NGT has directed a team, comprising the Centre and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), to supervise handling and scientific disposal of COVID-19 waste in accordance with the guidelines.

The tribunal said that while the Bio Medical Waste Rules deal with waste generated in dealing with infectious diseases, the coronavirus pandemic has presented further challenge in terms of capacity to scientifically dispose of generated waste. 

7 IMPORTANT NEWS

01

GI Tag to Several Products

- ◆ Recently, Chak-Hao, the black rice of Manipur; Gorakhpur terracotta; Kovilpatti kadalai mittai of Tamil Nadu; and Kashmir saffron have bagged the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

About Chak-Hao, the Black Rice of Manipur

- ◆ Chak-Hao, a scented glutinous rice which has been in cultivation in Manipur over centuries, is characterised by its special aroma. It is normally eaten during community feasts and is served as Chak-Hao kheer.
- ◆ Chak-Hao has also been used by traditional medical practitioners as part of traditional medicine. According to the GI application filed, this rice takes the longest cooking time of 40-45 minutes due to the presence of a fibrous bran layer and higher crude fibre content.
- ◆ At present, the traditional system of Chak-Hao cultivation is practised in some pockets of Manipur. Direct sowing of pre-soaked seeds and also transplantation of rice seedlings raised in nurseries in puddled fields are widely practised in the State's wetlands.

About Gorakhpur Terracotta

- ◆ The terracotta work of Gorakhpur is a centuries-old traditional art

form, where the potters make various animal figures like, horses, elephants, camel, goat, ox, etc. with hand-applied ornamentation. Some of the major products of craftsmanship include the Hauda elephants, Mahawatdar horse, deer, camel, five-faced Ganesha, singled-faced Ganesha, elephant table, chandeliers, hanging bells etc.

- ◆ The entire work is done with bare hands and artisans use natural colour, which stays fast for a long time. There are more than 1,000 varieties of terracotta work designed by the local craftsmen.

About Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai of Tamil Nadu

- ◆ Kovilpatti kadalai mittai is a candy made of peanuts held together with glistening syrup, and topped with wisps of grated coconut dyed pink, green and yellow. It is made using all natural ingredients such as the traditional and special 'vellam' (jaggery) and groundnuts and water from the river Thamirabarani is used in the production, which enhances the taste naturally.
- ◆ The groundnuts are grown in the native black soil in and around Kovilpatti. After sourcing, the groundnuts are shelled and roasted.

This is how this Kovilpatti kadalai mittai has a unique traditional flavour.

About Kashmir Saffron

- ◆ Kashmir saffron has been cultivated and harvested in the Karewa (highlands) of Jammu and Kashmir. The unique characteristics of Kashmir saffron are its longer and thicker stigmas, natural deep-red colour, high aroma, bitter flavour, chemical-free processing, and high quantity of crocin (colouring strength), safranal (flavour) and picrocrocin (bitterness).
- ◆ The saffron available in Kashmir is of three types — 'Lachha Saffron', with stigmas just separated from the flowers and dried without further processing; 'Mongra Saffron', in which stigmas are detached from the flower, dried in the sun and processed traditionally; and 'Guchhi Saffron', which is the same as Lachha, except that the latter's dried stigmas are packed loosely in air-tight containers while the former has stigmas joined together in a bundle tied with a cloth thread.
- ◆ Saffron cultivation is believed to have been introduced in Kashmir by Central Asian immigrants around 1st Century BCE. In ancient Sanskrit literature, saffron is referred to as 'bahukam'.



02

Tiger Population in Sunderbans

- ◆ According to the West Bengal Forest Department, the tiger count for the year 2019-20 rose to 96, from 88 in 2018-19. The latest estimation of tiger numbers in the Indian Sunderbans indicate an increase in the population of big cats.



was significant as it was the biggest annual jump reported from the Sunderbans. Previously, the highest yearly increase of tigers in the Sunderbans had been seven.

Key Highlights

- ◆ The estimation revealed that of the 96 tigers, 23 were identified as male and 43 as female, while the sex of 30 big cats could not be determined. The survey also revealed the presence of 11 tiger cubs.
- ◆ The Sunderbans delta, spread over India and Bangladesh, is the only mangrove forest in the world inhabited by tigers. The increase in the number by eight
- ◆ The Sunderban mangrove forest is spread over 2,585 sq. km and includes the Sundarban Tiger Reserve and the 24 Parganas (South) Division. While 23 tigers were found in 24 Parganas (South) Division, 73 big cats tigers were

recorded inside the four divisions of the Sunderban Tiger Reserve.

- ◆ Estimation of the number of tigers in the Sunderbans, a world heritage as well as a Ramsar site, has always been a challenge because of the difficult terrain that comprises dense mangrove forests, with creeks and rivulets, and floods twice a day during the high tides.

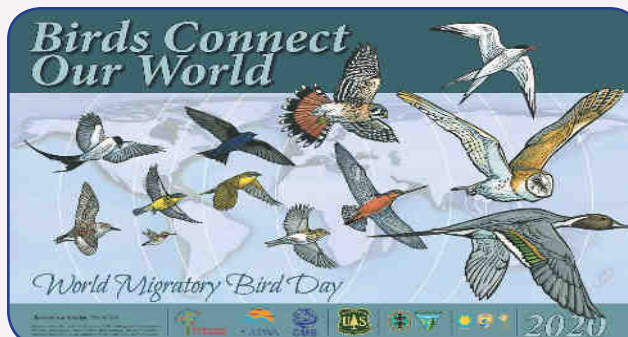
About Sunderbans

- ◆ The Sundarbans is a cluster of low-lying islands in the Bay of Bengal, spread across India and Bangladesh, famous for its unique mangrove forests. This active delta region is among the largest in the world, measuring about 40,000 sq km.

03

World Migratory Bird Day 2020

- ◆ The World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2020 was observed on 9th May 2020. It aims to bring attention to the need of conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. The global programme helps raise awareness about the numerous threats faced by the birds. The theme of this year was 'Birds Connect Our World'. This theme is meant to put focus on conservation and restoring the ecological balance, which are closely linked to the survival of migratory birds.
- ◆ The World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated by a collaborative partnership between two UN treaties – the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) – and the Colorado-based non-profit organisation Environment



for the Americas (EFTA).

- ◆ Threats to Birds
- ◆ One cause of the decline in populations is climate change caused by global warming. As temperatures rise, birds are thrown from their migration cycle; when birds reach their destinations they rely on certain foods to live through the season. Breeding success in some species, such as insect-eating songbirds, could be jeopardized due to mismatch between the peak of availability of food and hatching of chicks. Climate

change leads to changes and shifts in habitats, which causes re-distribution of birds, too. Some species are threatened by nearly complete loss of their habitats.

- ♦ By far the largest threat to birds is the loss of habitat. Deforestation,

the draining of wetlands, planting of non-native trees, the loss of areas to urban developments and intensive agriculture are major threats to birds.

- ♦ Plastic waste is another serious risk to bird populations. Sea birds

are mistaking plastic pellets for fish eggs, small crabs and other prey, sometimes even feeding the deadly pellets to their young. These small plastic particles have been found in the stomachs of 63 of the world's 250 species of sea birds. < >

04

Locusts Attack

- ♦ The scientists at the Locust Warning Organisation (LWO) has observed groups of grasshoppers at Sri Ganganagar and Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan. But far from ordinary hoppers, these were desert locusts — the same destructive migratory pests currently devouring acres of maize, sorghum and wheat crops in East Africa.
- ♦ While locusts are seen in India as well, that is normally only during July-October and mostly as solitary insects or in small isolated groups. Their being spotted along the India-Pakistan border before mid-April this time — and coming after the damage they caused to the growing rabi crops along western Rajasthan and parts of northern Gujarat during December-January — has raised the alarm bells, and comes at a time when the country is battling the more high-profile

novel coronavirus pandemic.

What are Locusts?

- ♦ The desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) is a short-horned grasshopper that is innocuous while it is in a "solitary phase" and moving about independently. These winged insects differ from normal hoppers, and become dangerous only when their populations build up rapidly and the close physical contact in crowded conditions triggers behavioural changes. They, then, enter the "gregarious phase", by grouping into bands and forming swarms that can travel great distances (up to 150 km daily), while eating up every bit of vegetation on the way. If not controlled at the right time, these insect swarms can threaten the food security of countries.



What kind of Damage can they Cause?

- ♦ Locusts are polyphagous, i.e. they can feed on a wide variety of crops. Secondly, they have an ability to multiply rapidly. A single female desert locust lays 60-80 eggs thrice during its roughly 90-day life cycle. The damage potential of locusts has been limited in India only because of the country hosting a single breeding season — unlike Pakistan, Iran and East Africa, where they also multiply during January-June. < >

05

Stringency Index

- ♦ A Stringency Index created by Oxford University shows how strict a country's measures were, and at what stage of the pandemic spread it enforced these. The Index has found that India indeed had one of the strongest lockdown measures

in the world — at a 100 score since March 22.

About Index

- ♦ It is among the metrics being used by the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker.

The Tracker involves a team of 100 Oxford community members who have continuously updated a database of 17 indicators of government response. These indicators examine containment policies such as school and

workplace closings, public events, public transport, stay-at-home policies. The Stringency Index is a number from 0 to 100 that reflects these indicators. A higher index score indicates a higher level of stringency.



strictest lockdown, while India had 320. Again, India had only four deaths on March 22, when its score reached 100, while most countries had more deaths at that point (except Switzerland; no deaths). Other countries with a 100 score are Honduras, Argentina, Jordan, Libya, Sri Lanka, Serbia, and Rwanda. India now has the highest number of cases in this set.

Stringency Index and India

- When compared to other countries with similar or higher case load, India called its strict lockdown at

a much earlier point on its case and death curves. These 18 other countries had more than 500 cases when they called their



06

Visakhapatnam Gas Leak

- Recently, a gas leak has affected five villages in Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The source of the leak was a styrene plant owned by South Korean electronics giant LG, located at RRV Puram near Gopalapatnam. A gas leak, reminiscent of the 1984 Bhopal tragedy, has claimed at least 11 lives and affected thousands of residents in five villages.
- A statement from LG Polymers said that stagnation and changes in temperature inside the storage tank could have resulted in auto polymerization and could have caused vapourisation.



Recent Developments

What is Styrene Gas?

- It is a flammable liquid that is used in the manufacturing of polystyrene plastics, fiberglass, rubber, and latex. According to Tox Town, a website run by the US National Library of Medicine, styrene is also found in vehicle exhaust, cigarette smoke, and in natural foods like fruits and vegetables.

- As per the US-based Environment Protection Agency (EPA), short-term exposure to the substance can result in respiratory problems, irritation in the eyes, irritation in the mucous membrane, and gastrointestinal issues. And long-term exposure could drastically affect the central nervous system and lead to other related problems like peripheral neuropathy. It could also lead to cancer and depression in some cases.

- A day after the gas leak incident, the National Green Tribunal slapped an interim penalty of Rs 50 crore on LG Polymers India, and sought response from the Centre and others for the "damage to life, public health and environment".
- South Korean chemicals giant LG Chem has sent an eight-member team from Seoul to investigate the Visakhapatnam gas leak incident and rehabilitate the victims of the tragedy.



07

European Court of Justice

- Recently, Germany's constitutional court sent shockwaves through the European community as it questioned the legality of a past ruling of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). The judgment from Germany, which mainly takes aim at a bond-buying scheme of the European Central Bank (ECB), is seen at its heart as challenging the long-settled hierarchy of European Union (EU) judiciary, and has since resonated with many governments and politicians in the EU that are critical of its policies.

Key Highlights

- In 2018, the ECJ had ruled that a EUR 2 trillion bond-buying scheme of the European Central Bank (ECB), aimed at reinvigorating the EU economy after the multi-year European debt crisis, was legal as per EU law. In Germany, opponents of the scheme had for years complained to the German Constitutional Court, the country's highest, which in turn had expressed its concerns on parts of the scheme in 2017.
- The German court ruled that the ECJ's 2018 ruling was "ultra vires",



meaning beyond the latter's legal authority, and said that it did not properly address whether the ECB scheme was justifiably suited for the EU economy.

- The German court has now given the ECB three months to prove that the bond-buying scheme was proportionate as per the EU's actual needs.

Judiciary in the European Union

- The ECJ, a supranational institution, is a part Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), and is the European Union's supreme court in matters of EU law. Founded in 1952 after the Treaty of Paris, the Luxembourg-based court ensures that EU law is interpreted and applied the same in every EU country, and ensures that countries and EU institutions

abide by EU law. It settles legal disputes between national governments and EU institutions. In terms of hierarchy, the national courts of member countries are understood to be below the ECJ in matters of EU law.

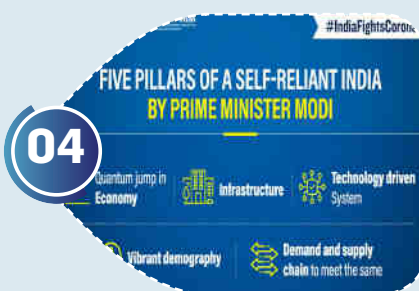
Significance of the verdict

- After the ruling, the European Commission underlined the supremacy of the ECJ, saying, "Notwithstanding the analysis of the detail of the German Constitutional Court decision today we reaffirm the primacy of the EU law, and the fact that the rulings of the European Court of Justice are binding on all national courts."
- Critics of the German verdict say it could strike at the legal foundations of the 27-member zone, and the ensuing power struggle between the two courts could lead to a rewriting of EU treaties – in itself a highly contentious process. Some economists have also slammed the judges' understanding of monetary policy– of both the German and EU courts.



7

IMPORTANT PRACTICE QUESTIONS (For Mains)



- 01** According to IMF, the global economy is expected to shrink by over 3 per cent in 2020 – the steepest slowdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Discuss how COVID-19 has affected the global economy.
- 02** 'One Nation One Ration Card' system will enable migrant workers and their family members to access PDS benefits from any Fair Price Shop in the country. Elaborate.
- 03** Discuss the work of 'Bose-Einstein Statistics' done by Prof. Satyendra Nath Bose and show how it revolutionized the field of Physics.
- 04** The Prime Minister of India has brought up the importance of local manufacturing and consumption of locally produced goods, stating that Indians needed to become "vocal for local". Comment.
- 05** How are the principles followed by NITI Aayog different from those followed by the erstwhile planning commission in India?
- 06** 'India should view the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to achieve economic self-reliance.' Discuss it in the context of recently released 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' (or Self-reliant India Mission).
- 07** How would the recent phenomena of protectionism and currency manipulations in world trade affect macroeconomic stability of India?

7

IMPORTANT FACTS (For Prelims)



01



03



05

01

Which state has banned 11 premium brands of pan-masala for a year, as products contain magnesium carbonate which can cause acute hypermagnesemia and sometimes cardiac arrest?

Jharkhand

02

Which institution has given its certification for mass production and uses of Indian Navy's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences

03

Which state government has launched 'Mukhyamantri Yuba Yogayog Yojana' to provide grants for the purchase of smartphones to the students of final year to empower them digitally?

Tripura

04

Which date is celebrated as 'National Technology Day 2020'?

11th May

05

Which animal is spotted for the first time in Goa's Netravali Sanctuary?

Black Panther

06

Which nation has launched first Arktika-M satellite for monitoring Arctic climate this year?

Russia

07

Which campaign has been launched by NITI Aayog in association with Piramal Foundation, and 25 Aspirational Districts to ensure the well-being of 2.9 million Senior Citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic?

'Surakshit Dada-Dadi & Nana-Nani Abhiyan'

7

IMPORTANT QUOTES (For Essay and Answer Writing)



01



03



05

01

"Prayer of the god lead to salvation in the temples but in politics it lead to the dictatorship"

B. R. Ambedkar

02

"Science without Religion is lame and Religion without Science is blind."

Albert Einstein

03

"Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime."

Aristotle

04

"I understand democracy as something that gives the weak the same chance as the strong."

Mahatma Gandhi

05

"Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

Benjamin Franklin

06

"Every morning we are born again. What we do today is what matters most."

Gautam Buddha

07

"Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind."

Immanuel Kant

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.

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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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