

1. COVID Emergency Fund

Recently the Prime Minister has proposed the creation of a COVID 19 emergency fund based on voluntary contribution from SAARC nations.

India Response for COVID 19

- India is assembling a Rapid Response Team of doctors and specialists, along with testing kits and other equipment.
- India has set up an Integrated Disease Surveillance Portal to better trace possible virus carriers and the people they contacted.
- This Disease Surveillance software could be shared with SAARC partners.

About South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985.
- Afghanistan became the newest member of SAARC at the 13th annual summit in 2005.
- **The Headquarters and Secretariat of the Association are at Kathmandu, Nepal.**

Members of SAARC

- It comprises of eight member States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- There are currently nine Observers to SAARC, namely: Australia, China, the European Union, Iran, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mauritius, Myanmar and the United States of America.

Topic- GS Paper 2–International Institutions

Source- AIR

2. State Disaster Response Fund

The Centre has recently said that it will treat the Novel Coronavirus outbreak as a notified disaster for the purpose of providing assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund.

- The Home Ministry has said in case of procurement of essential equipment, the expenditure will be incurred only from the SDRF and not the National Disaster Response Fund, NDRF.
- The total expenditure on equipment should not exceed 10 per cent of the annual allocation of the SDRF.

About the State Disaster Response Fund

- It is constituted under Section 48 (1) (a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, is the primary fund available with State Governments for responses to notified disasters.
- The Central Government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category States/UTs and 90% for special category States/UTs (NE States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir).
- The annual Central contribution is released in two equal installments as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.
- SDRF shall be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims.

Disaster (s) covered under SDRF

- Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.

During Local Disaster

- A State Government may use up to 10 percent of the funds available under the SDRF for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be ‘disasters’ within the local context in the State.
- These are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs subject to the condition that the State Government has listed the State specific natural disasters and notified clear.
- The transparent norms and guidelines for such disasters with the approval of the State Authority, i.e., the State Executive Authority (SEC).

About National Disaster Response Fund

- The National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF), constituted under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, supplements SDRF of a State, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in SDRF.

Topic- GS Paper 1–Disaster Management

Source- PIB

3. Uttar Pradesh Recovery of Damage to Public and Private Property Ordinance, 2020

The Uttar Pradesh government has recently notified the Uttar Pradesh Recovery of Damage to Public and Private Property Ordinance, 2020, promulgated by Governor Anandiben Patil.

About the Ordinance

- It is a stringent new law to recover compensation from those who damage public and private property during protests and riots.
- The owner of any private property or the head of the office concerned in respect of public property may file claims for compensation within three months of any incident that causes any damage during public protests, bandhs or riots.
- Claims for compensation will be decided by designated '**Claims Tribunals**' that will be authorized to investigate complaints and assess the damage.
- Every order or award passed by the Claims Tribunal would be "final" and no appeal would be "maintainable" before any court.
- Also, no civil court will have the jurisdiction to entertain any question regarding the claims.

Composition of Claims Tribunal

- The chairperson of the Claims Tribunal would be a retired district judge.
- Its members would be of the rank of additional commissioner.
- It would have the power to attach the property of the respondents and publicize their names, addresses and photographs to warn the public against purchasing the property.
- The tribunal will have to adhere to the principles of natural justice.

Jurisdiction of Claims Tribunal

- The Claims Tribunal shall have all the powers of a civil court for the purpose of taking evidence on oath and enforcing the attendance of witnesses and compelling the discovery and production of documents and material objects.
- The tribunal also has the power to appoint a claims commissioner to estimate the damage caused and investigate liability to assist it in holding the inquiry.

Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance

Source- The Hindu

4. The state of Rampur

The Supreme Court ended India's longest running civil dispute last year, and the process of evaluating the inheritance is currently ongoing fighting over the assets and legacy of Nawab Raza Ali Khan.

About the State of Rampur

- The state of Rampur was founded by Nawab Ali Muhammad Khan, the adopted son of Sardar Daud Khan, the chief of the Rohillas in Northern India.

- The Rohillas were Afghans who entered India in the 18th century as the Mughal Empire was in decline, and took control of Rohilkhand, at the time known as Katehr.

After Independence

- Rampur, under Nawab Raza Ali, was the first kingdom to accede to India in 1949, becoming the only Muslim-majority district in Uttar Pradesh.

Patrons of the arts, culture

- The Rampur royals have played an important role in the socio-cultural history of the Ganga-Yamuna belt.
- They run the Amir Raza library in Rampur, once known as the official darbar of the Nawab, which is home to some 15,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Turkish, as well as a seventh-century Quran.
- The library has also the extremely rare Persian translation of Valmiki's Ramayana, which is believed to have been Emperor Aurangzeb's personal copy.

Note: Rampur District is the only Muslim majority district in the state of Uttar Pradesh, according to the 2011 Census of India which is the 50.57% of Rampur population.

Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance (Important for State PCS)

Source- Indian Express

5. Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products Scheme

Union Cabinet has recently given its approval for introducing the Scheme for Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP).

About the Scheme

- The scheme aims to reimburse taxes and duties paid by exporters such as value-added tax, coal cess, transportation cost among others which are not getting exempted or refunded under any other existing mechanism.
- It will replace the Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS) that was found to violate the World Trade Organization rules as it was export-focused.

About Merchandise Exports from India Scheme

- It was introduced in the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20.
- Its objective is to offset infrastructural inefficiencies and associated costs involved in exporting goods which are manufactured in India including products manufactured by the MSME Sector.

Topic- GS Paper 3–Economics
Source- Economics Times

6. Sepsis

Sepsis is a life-threatening organ dysfunction caused by the body's immune system overreacting in response to an infection. This overactive, toxic response can lead to tissue damage, multiple organ failure and death.

Organism responsible for Sepsis

- Viruses, bacteria, fungi or parasites — sepsis can be triggered by a variety of pathogens.
- The causes of sepsis are usually pneumonia, wound infections, urinary tract infections or infections in the abdominal cavity.
- In addition to the known seasonal influenza viruses, other viruses that are highly infectious, such as coronaviruses, Ebola and yellow fever viruses, dengue, swine flu or bird flu viruses can also cause sepsis.

Topic- GS Paper 3–Science and Technology
Source- TOI

7. National Creche Scheme

Recently Minister of Women and Child Development has given in a written reply in the Lok Sabha about the National Creche Scheme

About National Creche Scheme

- The scheme was earlier named as Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through States/UTs. with effect from 1.1.2017.
- It provides day care facilities to children (age group of 6 months to 6 years) of working mothers.

The salient features of the National Creche Scheme are as follows:

- Daycare Facilities including Sleeping Facilities.
- Early Stimulation for children below 3 years and pre-school Education for 3 to 6 years old children.
- Supplementary Nutrition (to be locally sourced)
- Growth Monitoring
- Health Check-up and Immunization

Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance
Source- PIB

8. Crime Multi Agency Centre and National Cybercrime Training Centre

Union Minister for Home affairs has launched the Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) and National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC).

About Crime Multi Agency Centre

- Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) aims to share information on heinous crime and other issues related to inter-state coordination.

About National Cybercrime Training Centre

- The National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC) is meant for professional quality eLearning services on cybercrime investigation on large scale to police officers, judges, prosecutors and other stakeholders.

Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance
Source- PIB

9. White Giraffe

Recently, Poachers have killed two extremely rare white giraffes in northeast Kenya leaving just one such animal in the world.

About Giraffe:

Giraffes are most often found in savanna/woodland habitats and range widely throughout Africa.

Conservation Status

- The IUCN Status is : Vulnerable
- CITES: Appendix II

Note: The white appearance of the giraffe is due to leucism, a genetic condition that causes skin cells to have no pigmentation.

- The condition leucism, which leads to the white colour of these giraffes, is different from albinism, because of which animals lack melanin throughout their body.

Topic- GS Paper 3–Environment
Source- The Hindu

10. Essential Commodities Act, 1955

The Centre has brought masks and hand sanitisers under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (EC Act).

- It will help to make sure that these products, key for preventing the spread of Covid-19 infection, are available to people at the right price and in the right quality.

About the Essential Commodities Act, 1955

- Under this Act, the States and Union Territories can ask manufacturers to enhance their production capacity so that these products are widely available to consumers.
- Under the Act, an offender may be punished with an imprisonment up to seven years.

Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance

Source- The Hindu