Dear Student,

Warm Greetings.

- DnD aims to provide every day news analysis in sync with the UPSC pattern.
- It is targeted at UPSC – Prelims & Mains.
- Daily articles are provided in the form of Question and Answers
  - To have a bank of mains questions.
  - And interesting to read.
  - Providing precise information that can he carries straight to the exam, rather than over dumping.

Enjoy reading.

THE HINDU - TH
INDIAN EXPRESS - IE
BUSINESS LINE - BL
ECONOMIC TIMES - ET
TIMES OF INDIA - TOI

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Essay Paper

Editorial

Q – Role and measures taken by SAARC countries to fight the Pandemic?

INTRO = So far as the Role is concerned, South Asia has not exactly borne the brunt of the pandemic. Of the total confirmed cases in the world that stood at 12,89,380 on April 6 (according to the Johns Hopkins Corona virus Resources Centre), SAARC countries reported only 8,292 cases, representing 0.64%. Whether the low share is due to limited testing, a peculiarity of the strain of the virus, people’s unique immunity, South Asia’s climate, decisive measures by governments, or just good fortune is difficult to say. But it is evident that India’s imaginative diplomacy has leveraged the crisis to create a new mechanism for workable cooperation. Through measures such as –

1) All the eight member-states were represented at the video conference — all at the level of head of state or government, except Pakistan. They readily agreed to work together to contain the virus, and shared their experiences and perspectives.

2) India’s proposal to launch a COVID-19 Emergency Fund was given positive reception. Within days, all the countries, except Pakistan, contributed to it voluntarily, bringing the total contributions to $18.8 million. Although it is a modest amount, the spirit of readily expressed solidarity behind it matters.

3) The fund has already been operationalised. It is controlled neither by India nor by the Secretariat. It is learnt that each contributing member-state is responsible for approval and disbursement of funds in response to requests received from others.
4) In the domain of implementation, India is in the lead, with its initial contribution of $10 million. It has received requests for medical equipment, medicines and other supplies from Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

5) A follow-up video-conference of senior health officials was arranged on March 26. The agenda included issues ranging from specific protocols dealing with screening at entry points and contact tracing to online training capsules for emergency response teams. This is diplomatic resilience and leadership at its best. And thus, In the face of this Pandemic both New Delhi and its neighbours need to start preparing them for SAARC 2.0.

GS 2

- Governance

Q – Plan for calibrated exit from lockdown?

BACKGROUND = After an interaction with Chief Ministers via a video conference last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday sought suggestions from his Council of Ministers for a calibrated exit from the 21-day lockdown, imposed from March 25 to April 14 to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. According to recent updates by Union Health Ministry Lav Agarwal, 76% of the confirmed cases were male and 24% female; 47% were below 40 years of age, 34% between 40 to 60 years and 19% above 60 years. And the measures sought are as charted in the below Image –

Along with –

- The Union Cabinet approving a 30% cut in the salaries of all Members of Parliament and a two-year suspension of the MP Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme so that the amount saved can go to the Consolidated Fund of India to fight COVID-19.

GS 3

- Technology

Q – How was the recent ‘Lights Out’ managed by the Hydro Power board in India?

BACKGROUND = According to the Power System Operation Corporation Limited (POSOCO), The total reduction in all-India demand during the lights out at 9 p.m. on 5/4/2020 was 31,089 MW and showed regional variations, with the demand dip in North Eastern region being 30%, 32% in western region, 17% in the south, 39% in the east and 40% in the north-east. Hydro and gas-powered plants can support fast changes in load. Coal plants have a more limited ability to handle sharp load variations. Nuclear plants even lesser.
The steps taken such as—

- Advance actions such as switching off transmission lines
- and taking reactors in service were undertaken to keep voltages and line loads within permissible limits

The exercise showed that the Indian grid could handle large load changes if done in a planned way.

**Snippets**

**GS 2**

- **International Relations**
  
  *Japan’s Prime Minister Abe Proposes a ‘State of Emergency’.*
  
  - As well as a stimulus package worth $1 trillion to cushion the impact on the world’s third-biggest economy.
  - The declaration hands regional Governors the power to ask residents to stay inside, seek the closure of businesses that attract large crowds and commandeer land and buildings for medical purposes.
  - The measure does not include legal powers to enforce requests for people to stay inside, or punishments for people who fail to do so.

**GS 3**

- **Biodiversity**
  
  *New York based Bronx Zoo – Malaysian Tiger (Nadla) tests positive for COVID-19.*
  
  - An asymptomatic caretaker could have passed on the infection to the big cat.
  - And this raised an alarm, as the death of a 10-year-old ailing male tiger, in the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR), India — the country’s most munificent reserve — that succumbed to a ‘respiratory illness’ puzzling the NTCA’s (National Tiger Conservation Authority) on whether the tiger should be tested for the novel corona virus disease.

- **Economic Development**
  
  *Fund raising via public equity markets (IPO) rose by more than 60% in 2019-20.*
  
  - Even as the fiscal ended on a highly volatile note with a drop of almost 30% in the Sensex.
  - Despite the market plunge, seven of the 13 IPOs are trading above issue price

However, it is highly unlikely that any of these issues will hit the market till the time the uncertainty around pandemic ends.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>How about this today!?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Court’s steps in tune with ‘Social Distancing Norms’ invokes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Article 19(1)</td>
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<td>c. Article 245</td>
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<th>Hey from Yesterday….</th>
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<td>India after the Tablighi Incident, Is believed to be in which stage of Covid-19 by ICMR?</td>
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**Answer:** Local transmission (with hints of limited Community Transmission)