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## DAILY NEWS DIARY

Of

**24.04.2021**

# FOR PRELIMS AND MAINS

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 be carried 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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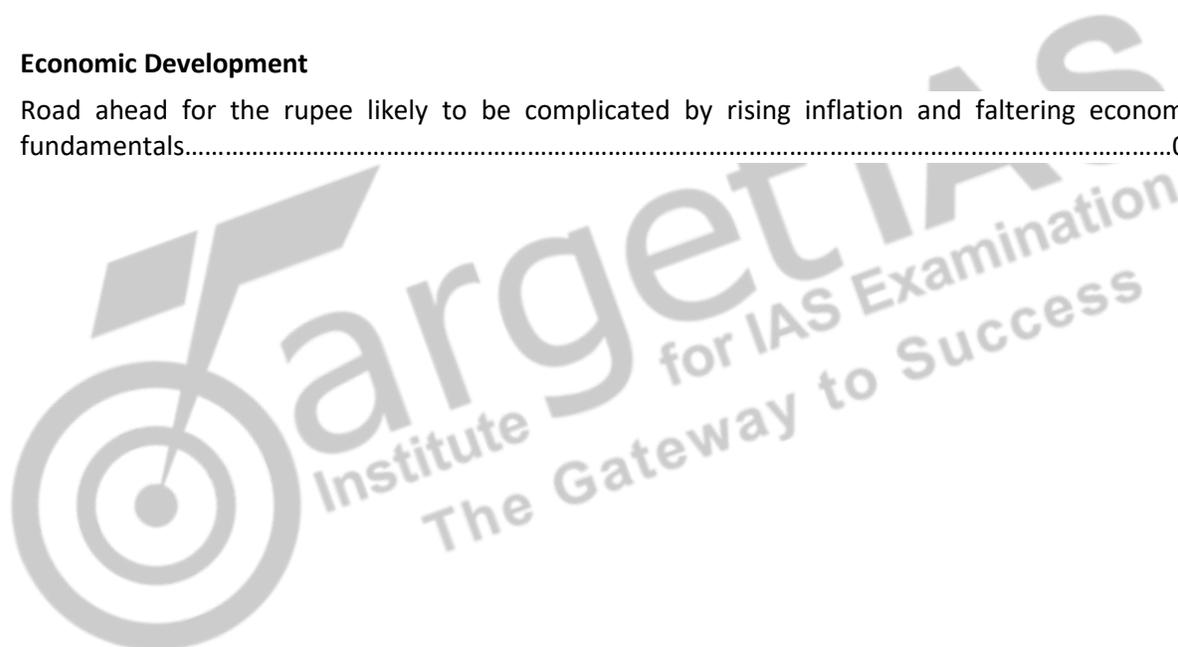
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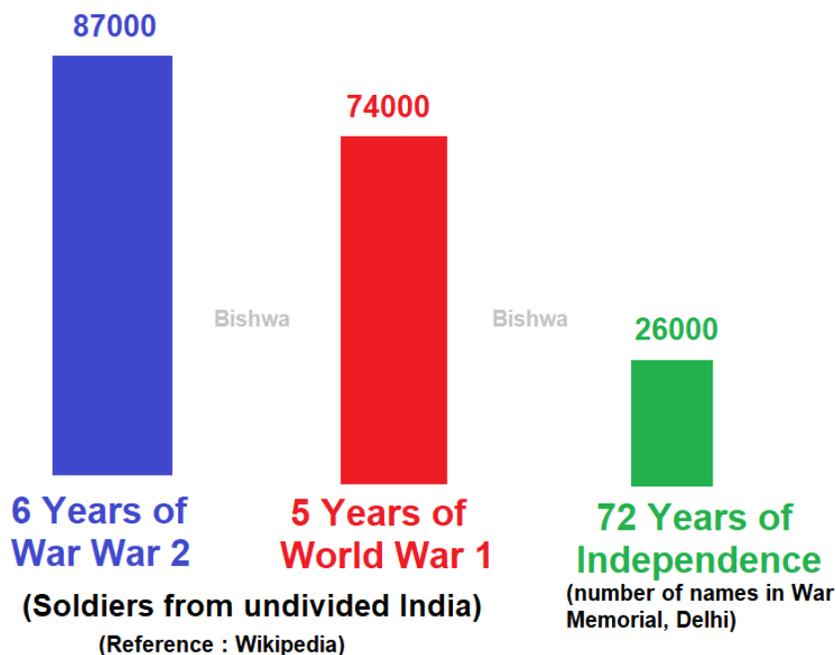
## ESSAY PAPER

### EDITORIAL

**Q- What is the recently brought to light incident finally acknowledged as the Raj's systemic prejudice against Indian Soldiers sacrifice?**

INTRODUCTION = Sometimes, even death isn't the great equaliser it is touted to be. For over 50,000 soldiers who lost their lives — a majority of them from undivided India — during World War I, their sacrifice was ignored by the British Empire which they fought to defend. **In 2019, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) created a special committee to investigate gaps in those that were commemorated for their sacrifice.**

### Indian Casualties Before and After Independence



Its findings — that thousands of the fallen were ignored — has led to the British government issuing an apology for the prejudice that this implies.

It is sometimes easy to forget just how much deep, divisive racism underpinned the entire project of colonialism. An essential aspect of maintaining this orientation towards inequality has been to invisibilise the massive contributions of the colonies and their people. Take the myth of “Britain standing alone” for a significant part of World War II, with Winston Churchill standing guard against fascism single-handed. Britain was only “alone” if the significant resources and manpower from the entire empire are ignored.

**The apology by the British government, however belated, is welcome. The sins of empires past, their bigotries that sought to justify systemic injustice, must be confronted wherever possible. But the unmarked graves, the forgotten names of soldiers who died for an empire in which they were not equal citizens must be just a first step. The reckoning with the injustices of history must be a constant, evolving process. And for the countries that emerged from the Raj, and kept many of its governance structures intact, they must do their best to ensure that the ideologies and politics of the day don't need an apology a century later.**

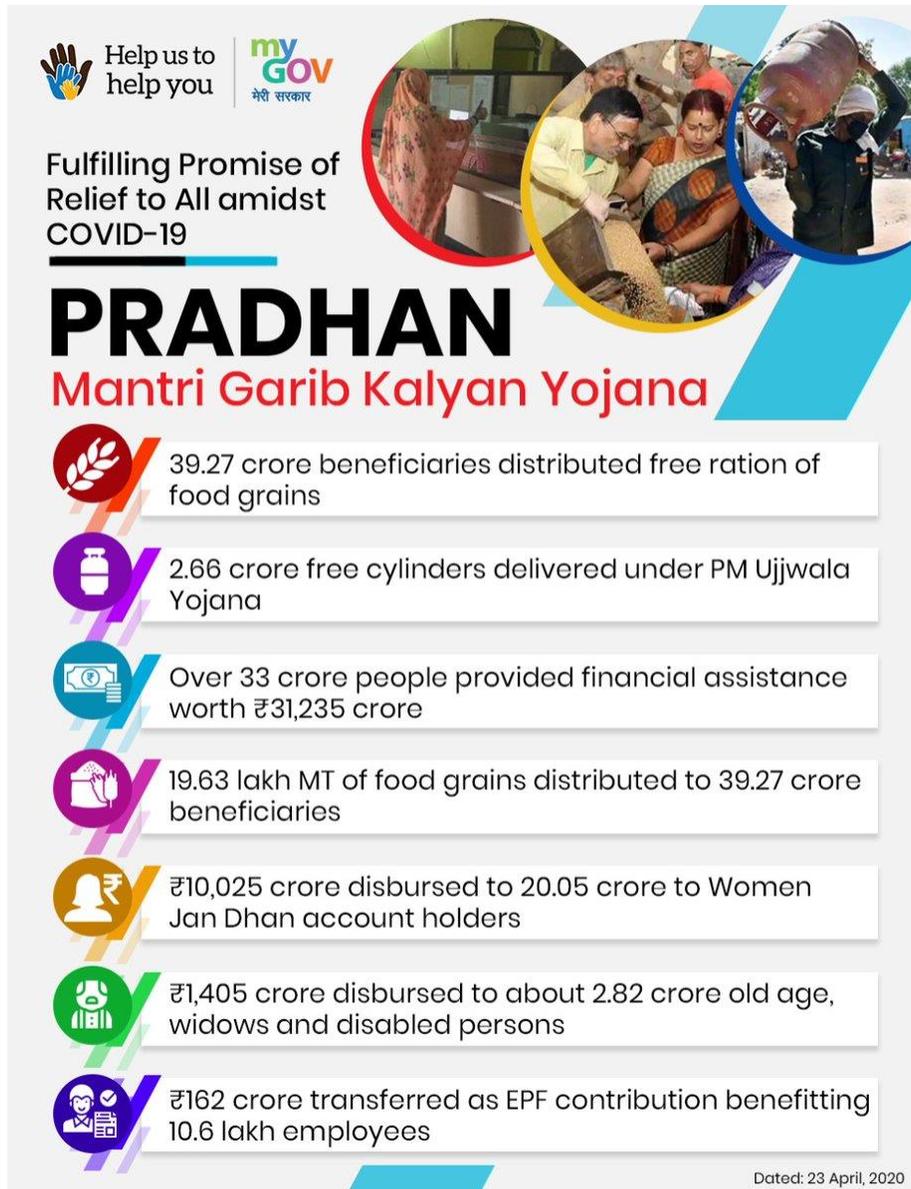
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**GS 2****❖ Social Justice**

**Q- Discuss the new initiative taken by the central government under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) adding to the Covid-19 reliefs?**

**BACKGROUND** = The Union government announced that –

- 5 kg of foodgrains would be provided to 80 crore beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) in May and June as many States were undergoing curfews and the high rates of COVID-19 infections had led to a slowdown in economic activity.
- The outlay for the free grain programme has been pegged at ₹26,000 crore.



- All resources, including those of the Railways and the Indian Air Force, were being deployed to reach oxygen to different corners of the country. Also the IAF was flying in empty tankers for oxygen to reduce turnaround time on supplies.

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- The States are strictly instructed to crack down on hoarding and black marketing of essential drugs and injections.
- Also the Centre would be providing COVID-19 vaccines acquired by it to the States free, as earlier.

#### **Bias to be addressed -**

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel made a strong demand that vaccines be provided at the same rates for both the Centre and the States.

The Serum Institute of India has announced that it would be providing the Covishield vaccine, which it currently sells at ₹150-₹200 a dose to the Centre, at ₹400 per dose to the State governments and ₹600 a dose to private entities. "Please provide an action plan for vaccine availability to the States for running vaccination drive for those above 18 years of age from May 1

### **GS 3**

#### ❖ **Science & Technology**

**Q- What is the significance of the anti-viral "Virafin" that has recently acquired emergency use approval status?**

BACKGROUND = The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) granted **emergency use approval for pharma major Zydus Cadila's antiviral drug 'Virafin'** to treat **moderate COVID-19 in adults**.

- A single dose subcutaneous regimen of the antiviral Virafin [a pegylated interferon alpha-2b (PegIFN)] will make the treatment more convenient for the patients.
- When administered early on during COVID, Virafin will help patients recover faster and avoid much of the complications.
- Virafin will be available on the prescription of a medical specialist for use in hospital/institutional setup.



**Zydus receives Emergency Use Approval from DCGI for the use of Pegylated Interferon alpha-2b, 'Virafin' in treating moderate COVID-19 infection in adults**

- A single dose of the antiviral Virafin administered subcutaneously early on shows significant clinical and virological improvement in moderate COVID-19 adult patients
- 91.15% of patients treated with PegIFN were RT-PCR negative by day 7.
- The treatment significantly reduces the hours of supplemental oxygen in the patients

**Virafin**  
Peginterferon alpha-2b (80/100 mcg/0.5 ml)

#### **Safety profile of the drug -**

The drug's safety profile is already well known as it is **used in treating people with chronic hepatitis B and C**. The drug has been repurposed for treating moderate COVID-19 disease.

In the phase-3 trials, the drug was able to achieve "better clinical improvement in the patients suffering from COVID-19". A "higher proportion (91.15%) of patients administered the drug were RT-PCR negative by day seven as it ensures faster viral clearance".

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According to an April 5 company press release, the drug reduced the duration for supplemental oxygen to 56 hours from 84 hours in moderate COVID-19 patients.

❖ **Economic Development**

**Q- Why is the road ahead for the rupee likely to be complicated by rising inflation and faltering economic fundamentals?**

**BACKGROUND = Current Scenario -**

The rupee's near-term fortunes may directly be influenced by the Reserve Bank of India's intent on preventing any further depreciation in the currency as the surge in COVID-19 cases hits jobs and growth. The rupee has already lost 2.6% against the dollar so far this month, putting it on the cusp of marking its worst month since the pandemic hit the country early last year.

**The rupee closed at 75.01 to the dollar, and traders said they expect it to stay in the 74.50 to 76.00 range against the greenback in the near-term.**

India reported 3,32,730 new daily cases recently, the highest single-day tally anywhere globally. Rising cases have been one of the main factors behind the recent fall in the rupee, but the RBI's decision to commit to large bond purchases has added to downside momentum.

The RBI has committed to buying ₹1 trillion worth bonds in the April-June period in its effort to temper the rise in bond yields to help the government borrow its budgeted ₹12.06 trillion from the market at low interest rates. It said it would do more going forward, and this would be alongside its regular open market bond purchases and special open market operations — the simultaneous sale and purchase of government securities over different tenors — the equivalent of the U.S. Operation Twist.

“We also believe the RBI's policy priority of keeping a lid on G-sec (government bond) yields is more pressing than arresting INR depreciation,” economists at ANZ wrote. The road ahead for the rupee is likely to be complicated by rising inflation and faltering economic fundamentals.

The RBI has stressed it intervenes to smooth volatility in the forex market. It aggressively bought dollars last year as investors flocked to India but economists are unsure if the intervention on the downside will be as strong.

A weaker rupee helps exports and the RBI may prefer it, said economists. Negative real interest rates, potential GDP and earnings downgrades and rising inflation have also become headwinds. “The INR could continue to weaken in the absence of a strong anchor from the RBI”

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**Consider the following statements regarding capital receipts:**

1. It comprises income generated by the Government through taxes and non-tax sources.
2. They generate liability or decrease the financial assets of the government.

**Which of the above given statements is/are correct?**

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



**Consider the following statements:**

1. The higher value of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) indicates low dissolved oxygen (DO) content of water.
2. The higher amount of waste decreases the rates of decomposition and O<sub>2</sub> consumption.
3. Water pollution by organic wastes is measured in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD).

**Which of the above given statements is/are correct?**

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. All the above

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:** The higher amounts of waste increases the rates of decomposition and O<sub>2</sub> consumption, thereby decreases the DO content of water. The demand for O<sub>2</sub> is directly related to increasing input of organic wastes and is expressed as biological oxygen demand (BOD) of water. Water pollution by organic wastes is measured in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD). BOD is the amount of dissolved oxygen needed by bacteria in decomposing the organic wastes present in water. It is expressed in milligrams of oxygen per litre of water. The higher value of BOD indicates low DO content of water. Since BOD is limited to biodegradable materials only. Therefore, it is not a reliable method of measuring pollution load in water.

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