

**GOVERNANCE****Assistance to Disabled Persons Camp**

Recently, the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has virtually inaugurated an Assistance to Disabled Persons (ADIP) Camp for free distribution of assistive aids and devices to Divyangjan or Divyang.

These are Hindi word meaning the ‘one with a divine body’. The Prime Minister decided that persons with disabilities should no longer be referred to as disabled persons or viklang (someone with non-functional body parts).

**Key Points**

- The camp was organized by the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Kanpur.
- ALIMCO is a not-for-profit Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) established in 1972 and it works under the aegis of the Department of Empowerment of Person with Disability (DEPwD).
- Assistance to Disabled Persons Scheme:
- It is in operation since 1981.

**Definition:**

- The scheme follows the definitions of various types of disabilities as given in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) (PWD) Act 1995.
- PWD Act was replaced by the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

**Objective:**

- To assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhance their economic potential.

**Grants:**

- Grants-in-aid are released to various implementing agencies (Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India, National Institutes, Composite Regional Centres, District Disability Rehabilitation Centres, State Handicapped Development Corporations, NGOs, etc.) for purchase and distribution of aids and assistive devices.

**Assistance:**

- Aids/appliances which do not cost more than Rs. 10,000 are covered under the Scheme for single disability. However, in some cases the limit would be raised to Rs.12,000. In the case of multiple disabilities, the limit will apply to individual items separately in case more than one aid/appliance is required.
- Full cost of aid/appliance is provided if the income is up to Rs. 15,000 per month and 50% of the cost of aid/appliance is provided if the income is between Rs. 15,001 to Rs. 20,000 per month.

**Other Related Government Initiatives:****Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016:**

- "Person with disability" means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.

**Accessible India Campaign: Creation of Accessible Environment for PwDs:**

- A nation-wide flagship campaign for achieving universal accessibility that will enable PwDs to gain access for equal opportunity and live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life in an inclusive society.

**Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme:**

- Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to NGOs for providing various services to PwDs, like special schools, vocational training centres, community-based rehabilitation, pre-school and early intervention etc.

**National Fellowship for Students with Disabilities:**

- It aims to increase opportunities for students with disabilities for pursuing higher education and grants 200 fellowships per year to students with disability.

**Unique Disability Identification Project:**

- It aims to create a national database for PwDs and issuing Unique Disability Identity (UDID) Card along with disability certificate.

- Once the project covers all persons with disabilities, UDID Cards will be made mandatory for availing various government benefits.
- Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/fitting of Aids and Appliances:
- It aims at helping the disabled persons by bringing suitable, durable, scientifically-manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances within their reach.

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities:**

- It is celebrated worldwide on 3rd December and was proclaimed in 1992 by United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3.
- It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

**Initiatives for Mental Health:**

- National Mental Health Programme, which was launched in 1982 to improve the status of mental health in India.
- KIRAN: Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline for addressing mental health issues, coordinated by the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPM), Tamil Nadu and National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR), Madhya Pradesh.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY****Influenza and Bacterial Infection**

Recently, researches at Sweden's Karolinska Institute have come out with findings on superinfections and have also highlighted that influenza makes people more susceptible to bacterial infections.

**Key Points**

- Superinfections: These are infections occurring after or on top of an earlier infection, especially following treatment with broad-spectrum antibiotics. It is an overgrowth of an opportunistic pathogen from the bacterial or yeast imbalance of systemic antibiotics.
- For example, influenza is caused by a virus, but the most common cause of death in influenza patients is secondary pneumonia, which is caused by bacteria.
- However, the reason behind influenza infections leading to an increased risk of bacterial pneumonia is not known.

**Case study of Spanish Flu:**

- It was an influenza pandemic that swept across the world in the year 1918–1920.
- It disproportionately hit young healthy adults and important reason for this was superinfections caused by bacteria, in particular pneumococci.
- Pneumococcal infections are the most common cause of community acquired pneumonia and a leading global cause of death.
- A prior influenza virus infection is often followed by a pneumococcal infection.

**Findings of the Research:**

- When an individual is infected by influenza different nutrients and antioxidants, such as vitamin C, leak from the blood.
- The absence of nutrients and antioxidants creates a favourable environment for bacteria in the lungs.
- The bacteria adapt to the inflammatory environment by increasing the production of an enzyme called High temperature requirement A (HtrA).
- The presence of HtrA weakens the immune system and promotes bacterial growth in the influenza-infected airways.
- The ability of pneumococcus to grow seems to depend on the nutrient-rich environment with its higher levels of antioxidants that occurs during a viral infection, as well as on the bacteria's ability to adapt to the environment and protect itself from being eradicated by the immune system.

**Significance:**

- The results could be used to find new therapies for double infections between the influenza virus and pneumococcal bacteria.
- A possible strategy can therefore be use of protease inhibitors to prevent pneumococcal growth in the lungs.
- The information can contribute to the research on Covid-19.

- However, it is still not known if Covid-19 patients are also sensitive to such secondary bacterial infections.

### Influenza

- It is a viral infection that attacks the respiratory system i.e. nose, throat and lungs and is commonly called the flu.

**Symptoms:** Fever, chills, muscle aches, cough, congestion, runny nose, headaches and fatigue.

### Common Treatment:

- Flu is primarily treated with rest and fluid intake to allow the body to fight the infection on its own.
- Paracetamol may help cure the symptoms but Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) should be avoided. An annual vaccine can help prevent the flu and limit its complications.
- Young children, older adults, pregnant women and people with chronic disease or weak immune systems are at high risk.

### Pneumonia

It is an infection that inflames the air sacs in one or both lungs. The air sacs may fill with fluid or pus.

**Cause:** Variety of organisms, including bacteria, viruses and fungi.

**Symptoms:** Cough with phlegm or pus, fever, chills and difficulty breathing.

**Treatment:** Antibiotics can treat many forms of pneumonia. Some forms of pneumonia can be prevented by vaccines.

The infection can be life-threatening to anyone, but particularly to infants, children and people over 65.

## INDIAN ECONOMY

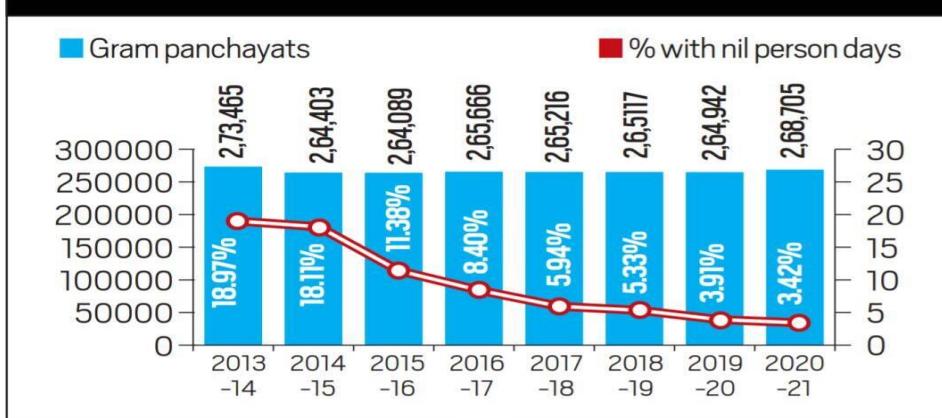
### Rise in NREGS Demand

A recent analysis of data available up to November on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) portal shows that demand for work has been at all time high.

### Key Points

- The NREGS is a demand-based scheme and has emerged as a safety net during the pandemic for jobless migrant workers returning to their villages
- Despite a progressive relaxation in Covid-19 curbs to revive the economy, 96% gram panchayats have logged work under the scheme in the financial year (2020-21) as compared to previous seven years.

## PANCHAYATS WITH ZERO PERSON DAYS WORK



- The number of gram panchayats generating nil person days of work (panchayats with zero person days work) during the current financial year are at an eight-year low of only 3.42% of the 2.68 lakh gram panchayats across the country.
- In 2019, the number of gram panchayats generating nil person days during the entire period was 3.91% of the total 2.64 lakh gram panchayats.
- Over 96% of gram panchayats across the country have registered demand for work under NREGS from April till November-end.
- Over 6.5 crore households, covering 9.42 crore individuals, have availed NREGS till November 2020, which is an all-time high.

- Over 265.81 crore person days have been generated, which is higher than 265.44 crore generated in 2019.
- 1.98 crore households availed the scheme in October 2020, which is 82% higher than 2019.
- Highest number of demand for work came from Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- The wage expenditure has also reached an all-time high of Rs. 53,522 crore during this period.
- Tamil Nadu has reported the highest figure of households that availed the NREGS across the country, since July and has been followed by West Bengal.
- These two states were not covered under the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan.

**National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 was notified by the Government of India on September, 2005 and was made effective in February 2006. Under it, the NREGS was introduced.
- The Act aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members (at least 18 years of age) volunteer to do unskilled work.
- The central government bears the full cost of unskilled labour, and 75% of the cost of material (the rest is borne by the states).
- It is a demand-driven, social security and labour law that aims to enforce the 'right to work'.
- Ministry of Rural Development in association with state governments, monitors the implementation of the scheme.

**Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan**

- It was launched in June 2020 to empower and provide livelihood opportunities to the returnee migrant workers and rural citizens who had returned to their home states due to the lockdowns.
- It worked in mission mode for 125 days with an outlay of Rs. 50,000 crore.
- A total of 116 districts across six states, namely Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Odisha were chosen for the campaign.
- These districts covered the maximum number (about 2/3) of such migrant workers who had returned.
- The chosen districts include 27 Aspirational Districts, districts which are affected by poor socio-economic indicators. These are aspirational in the context, that improvement in these districts can lead to the overall improvement in human development in India. It is a NITI Aayog's Programme.

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS****SCO Online International Exhibition**

Recently, the Vice President of India has launched the first ever SCO Online Exhibition on Shared Buddhist Heritage.

The launch happened during the 19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of Government (SCO CHG), held in New Delhi.

India highlighted that the crossborder terrorism is the biggest challenge for the SCO countries.

**Key Points****SCO Online International Exhibition:**

- Developed by: First ever of its kind the exhibition was developed and curated by the National Museum, New Delhi, in active collaboration with SCO member countries.
- Participants: Museums from India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

**Significance:**

- Buddhist Connection: Buddhist philosophy and art of Central Asia connects SCO countries to each other and presents an excellent opportunity for visitors to access, appreciate and compare Buddhist art antiquities from SCO countries on a single platform.
- Knowledge about Different Schools of Buddhism: The visitors can explore the Indian Buddhist treasures from the Gandhara and Mathura Schools, Nalanda, Amaravati, Sarnath, etc. in a 3D virtual format.
- Artistic Wealth and Excellence: The international exhibition gives a glimpse of the artistic wealth displayed in various museums across Asia and also represents the artistic excellence embedded within an eclectic historical timeline.

**Highlights:**

- The Pakistan Hall depicts the life of Gautama Buddha and buddhist art through a collection of impressive Gandhara art objects including fasting Siddhartha and footprint of Buddha from Sikri, meditating Buddha from Sahri Bahlo, miracle of Sravasti from Gandhara, etc.
- The State Oriental Art Museum, Moscow contributed objects which depict the Buddhist Buriyat Art of Russia through icons, ritual objects, monastery traditions etc.
- The Dunhuang Academy of China contributed a rich digital collection on buddhist art which include ingenious architecture, resplendent murals, decorative designs, costumes etc.

**India on Terrorism:**

- India raised the issue of terrorism at the meeting and highlighted it as the enemy of humanity. It expressed its concerns on the state sponsored terrorism and in particular crossborder terrorism.
- India supports the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
- Recently, India's annual resolution on the issue of counter-terrorism was adopted by consensus in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
- India also criticised Pakistan for using terrorism as a instrument of state policy and called upon the members of SCO to fight it collectively.

**Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**

- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation and a Eurasian political, economic and military organisation aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region created in 2001.
- The SCO is widely regarded as the "Alliance of the East", due to its growing centrality in Asia-Pacific, and has been the primary security pillar of the region.
- It is the largest regional organisation in the world in terms of geographical coverage and population, covering three-fifths of the Eurasian continent and nearly half of the human population.

**Members:** Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

**Observer states:** Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia.

**Dialogue Partners:** Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka.

**IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM****World AIDS Day 2020**

The World AIDS Day is observed on 1st December every year all over the world.

**Key Points**

- It was founded in 1988 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and was the first ever global health day with a motto of raising public awareness about Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- AIDS is a pandemic disease caused by the infection of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which damages the human immune system.
- In 2019, 6,90,000 people died from HIV-related causes and 1.7 million people were newly infected, with nearly 62% of these new infections occurring among key populations and their partners.

**Theme for 2020:** "Global solidarity, resilient HIV services."

On World AIDS Day 2020, WHO is calling on global leaders and citizens to rally for "global solidarity" to overcome the challenges posed by Covid-19 on the HIV response.

- HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care services are all being disrupted particularly in countries with fragile health systems.
- Slowing progress means the world will be missing the "90-90-90" targets for 2020, which were to ensure that: 90% of people living with HIV are aware of their status, 90% of people diagnosed with HIV are receiving treatment, and 90% of all people receiving treatment have achieved viral suppression.
- Any slowing down in provision of these services will leave many vulnerable populations at greater risk of HIV infection and AIDS-related deaths and missing these intermediate targets will make it difficult to achieve the target of elimination of AIDS by 2030.
- In 2020, the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, it is a call for more protection and support to these health workers who have long been on the frontline of HIV service delivery.

**Significance:**

- It reminds the public and government that HIV has not gone away and there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education.
- It is an opportunity to show solidarity with the millions of people living with HIV worldwide.

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns India needs to harvest quantum technology for strategic and economic development. Discuss.  
(250 words)**

Ans:

Quantum Technology is based on the principles of Quantum mechanics, developed in the early 20th century to describe nature at the scale of atoms and elementary particles. The first phase of the quantum revolution led to an understanding of the physical world leading to the development of technologies like lasers. Currently, the focus is upon quantum computing. Such technology will prove beneficial for the strategic and economic development of India.

**Advantages of such technologies for India**

- It will help establish secure satellite communication which will help strengthen cyber, military security as demonstrated by China.
- It can help researchers in numerous fields like the Genome-India Project where huge data needs to be analysed and bring efficiencies in other sectors as well like medical science, agriculture towards the development of novel, sustainable and cheap solutions.
- It can help in better prediction models which are needed in disaster management, climatic prediction and also in managing supply chains in numerous economic activities.
- The pharmaceutical industry can benefit from reducing the time frame of the discovery of new molecules and related processes to a few days from the present 10-year slog that scientists put in.
- Above all, it will quicken the adoption of 4th Industrial Revolution based technologies like the Internet of Things and help smoothly integrate into present architecture.

**Challenges associated with the application of such technology**

- Harnessing the properties of quantum superposition in a highly controlled manner can be a challenge.
- Creating algorithms and applications for quantum computers will require newer types of hardware.
- It will also open the domain of conflict in military and strategic fields among nations.

**To overcome such issues and harness the technology, India has taken following steps:**

- Research projects across 51 organisations under QUEST – Quantum Enabled Science and Technology.
- Union Budget 2020-21 proposed to spend ₹8,000 crore (\$ 1.2 billion) on the newly launched National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications (NMQTA). The mission seeks to develop quantum computing linked technologies amidst the second quantum revolution and make India the world's third-biggest nation in the sector after the US and China.

**Conclusion**

Further steps like collaboration with the private sector, increased funding towards research, involvement of scientists and other stakeholders at the strategic level can propel India towards quickly harnessing the technology for its advantage as China and USA have been doing.

**DAILY QUIZ**

1. Consider the following statements about the Peacock Soft-Shelled Turtle:

1. The species is confined to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh only.
2. The species is found in rivers, lakes, and ponds with mud or sand bottoms.
3. The turtle species is listed as near threatened in the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme, consider the following statements:

1. The central government bears the full cost of unskilled labour employed under this scheme.

2. It provides livelihood security for people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year.

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

3. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Influenza is a bacterial infection that attacks the respiratory system.
- 2. Superinfection is infection occurring after or on top of an earlier infection.

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

4. Which of the following initiatives are launched to tackle HIV/AIDS?

- 1. Project Sunrise
- 2. The Red Ribbon
- 3. 90-90-90 Target

Choose the correct answer using code given below:

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

5. With reference to Person with Disability (Pwd), consider the following statements:

- 1. Person with a disability means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments.
- 2. International Day of Persons with Disabilities is celebrated worldwide on 3rd December
- 3. Accessible India Campaign envisages for achieving universal accessibility to help PwD.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



  
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## VST : TEST CENTRES

BHUBANESWAR, CUTTACK, BERHAMPUR, SAMBALPUR, KOLKATA

Syllabus	No. of Questions
History of Modern India	5
Geography of India	5
General Science	8
Environment & Ecology	7
Indian Constitution	8
Indian Economy	7
Current Affairs	10

### TEST PATTERN: OBJECTIVE TYPE OFFLINE TEST

Total Marks	:	100
Total Questions	:	50 Q
Time Duration	:	1 Hour
Per Question	:	2 Marks
Negative Marking	:	0.66 Marks

- Ex. Vanik Students refers to those students who were previously enrolled in classroom courses like Banking, SSC, Banking+SSC+Railway, OSSC, ASO, CT/B.Ed batches.
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