

**GOVERNANCE****World NGO Day**

Every year, 27th February is observed as the World NGO day all over the world. India has over three million Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) that work across a range of arenas and play important roles of facilitator, catalyst or partner in bringing social transformation.

**What is the History of World NGO Day?**

- The day assumed its official status when 12-member countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum on 17th April 2010 formally recognised it. In 2012, the forum's Final Statement Resolution adopted the day.
- Although the day was recognised officially in 2010, it was only in 2014, that for the first time World NGO Day was observed by the United Nations.
- The main man behind this day was Marcis Liors Skadmanis, an UK-based social entrepreneur, who inaugurated the 2014 World NGO Day.
- The day was conceived to spread awareness of the tremendous contributions of NGOs all around the world and honour the relentless efforts of the social workers both in the public and private sectors.

**What is the Role of NGOs in Indian Democracy?****Bridging the Gap:**

- NGOs endeavour to plug gaps in the government's programmes and reach out to sections of people often left untouched by state projects. For example, providing aid to migrant workers in Covid-19 crisis.
- In the present scenario, when India is still combating Covid-19, non-profits have been on the ground, working tirelessly to directly supplement the government's efforts to bring relief and actively engage in vaccination drives to the most vulnerable communities.
- These NGOs also look into accelerating activities like
  1. Issues dealing with poverty alleviation, water, environment, women's rights and literacy.
  2. They have been dynamic in almost all sectors: Health, education, livelihood in rural and urban areas etc.

**Role of an Enabler:**

- Community-level outfits and self-help groups are critical for bringing any change in the ground.
- In the past, such grass roots organisations have been enabled by collaborations with bigger NGOs and research agencies that have access to foreign funding.

**Acting as a Pressure Group:**

- There are political NGOs that mobilise public opinion against government's policies and actions. To the extent such NGOs are able to educate the public and put pressure on public policy, they act as important pressure groups in a democracy.

**Role in Participative Governance:**

- Many civil society initiatives have contributed to some of the path-breaking laws in the country, including the Environmental Protection Act-1986, Right to Education Act-2009, Forests Rights Act-2006 and Right to Information Act-2005, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) Juvenile Justice, Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS).
- NGOs also partnered with the government to successfully implement major campaigns like Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan and Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan.

**Acting as a Social Mediator:**

- Social inter-mediation is an intervention of different levels of society by various agents to change social and behavioural attitudes within the prevailing social environment for achieving desired results of change in society. In Indian context wherein people are still steeped in superstition, faith, belief and custom, NGOs act as catalysts and create awareness among people.

**What are the issues Emanating from NGOs?****Lack of Credibility:**

- During the last few years, numerous organisations have mushroomed which claim to work for the cause of helping the poor. Under the garb of being an NGO, these NGOs often mint money from donors and are also involved in money laundering activities.

**Lack of Transparency:**

- India's disproportionate number of NGOs and the sector's lack of transparency and accountability is clearly an issue that needs reforms.
- Further the allegations of corruption against NGOs are ignored. In the past many NGOs were blacklisted after being found to have indulged in misappropriation of funds.

**What are the main Challenges NGOs Face?**

**Lack of Funds:**

- Many NGOs find it difficult to garner sufficient and continuous funding for their work. Gaining access to appropriate donors is a major component of this challenge.
- Earlier, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) cancelled the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010 registration of various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Suspension of FCRA licence means that the NGO can no longer receive fresh foreign funds from donors pending a probe by the Home Ministry. The FCRA is mandatory for associations and NGOs to receive foreign funds.

**Absence of Strategic Planning:**

- Many NGOs suffer from the lack of a cohesive, strategic plan that would facilitate success in their activities and mission, rendering them unable to effectively raise and capitalize on financial support.

**Poor Governance and Networking:**

- Many NGOs have a deficit of understanding as to why they must have a Board and how to set one up.
- Poor or disorganized networking is another major challenge, as it can cause duplicated efforts, time inefficiencies, conflicting strategies and an inability to learn from experience.
- Many NGOs do not maximize the use of current technologies that could facilitate better communication and networking.

**Limited Capacity:**

- NGOs often lack the technical and organizational capacity to implement and fulfill their mission, and few are willing or able to invest in training for capacity building.
- Weak capacity affects fundraising ability, governance, leadership and technical areas.

**Development Approaches:**

- Many NGOs favor a "hardware" approach to development through building infrastructure and providing services instead of empowering people and institutions locally.

**Way Forward**

- India is committed to SDGs till 2030 and a long-term strategy is important to keep the focus while also pursuing sustainable growth and development.
- It is, however, important to note that success of a long-term strategy depends not only on the lessons learnt from implementing the short- or medium-term development strategies, but also cooperation and coordination from various sectors — the government, India Inc and NGOs.
- Capacity building and training can help to provide crucial new skills. NGOs can then more readily train staff and cultivate the necessary skills within the organization to address challenges going forward.
- It is necessary to regulate corrupt NGOs, however excessive regulation on foreign contribution may affect working of the NGOs which are helpful in implementing government schemes at the grassroots.

**Operation Ganga**

The Government of India has launched a 'multi-pronged' initiative named 'Operation Ganga'. A dedicated Twitter handle 'OpGanga Helpline' to assist Indian evacuation from Ukraine has also been announced.

The tensions between Russia and Ukraine are currently heightened, with war erupting in Ukraine after the Russian military launched a series of attacks recently.

**What is Operation Ganga?**

- It is an evacuation mission to bring back all the Indian nationals who are currently stranded in Ukraine.
  1. There were around 20,000 Indians including students stuck in Ukraine.
  2. Till now, three Air India flights have been able to bring back more than 900 Indians from Ukraine to India.

- The Indian evacuation flights are operating from neighbouring countries like Romania and Hungary.
- The government is also facilitating evacuation of stranded Indians from its borders crossing Romania, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

**What are the Evacuation Operations carried out by India?****Operation Ganga (2022):**

- It is an evacuation mission to bring back all the Indian nationals who are currently stranded in Ukraine.
- The tensions between Russia and Ukraine are currently heightened, with war erupting in Ukraine after the Russian military launched a series of attacks recently.

**Vande Bharat (2020):**

- When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world, the Centre launched the Vande Bharat Mission to bring back Indian citizens stranded in foreign countries.
- In the multiple phases of the operation, about 60 lakh Indians were brought back as on 30th April, 2021

**Operation Samudra Setu (2020):**

- It was a naval operation as part of the national effort to bring home Indian citizens from overseas during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- It successfully brought back 3,992 Indian citizens to their homeland by sea.
- Indian Naval ships Jalashwa (Landing Platform Dock), and Airavat, Shardul and Magar (Landing Ship Tanks) participated in this operation which lasted over 55 days and involved traversing more than 23,000 km by sea.

**Evacuation from Brussels (2016):**

- In March 2016, Belgium was hit by terrorist strikes at Brussels Airport in Zaventem, and one at Maalbeek Metro station in central Brussels.
- A total of 242 Indians, including 28 crew members, returned to India in a Jet Airways flight.

**Operation Raahat (2015):**

- In 2015, a conflict raged between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels.
- Thousands of Indians were stranded and Yemen was not accessible by air due to a no-fly zone announced by Saudi Arabia.
- Under Operation Raahat, India evacuated nearly 5,600 people from Yemen.

**Operation Maitri (2015):**

- It is the joint relief and rescue operation by the Indian government and the Indian Armed forces in the aftershock of the 2015 Nepal earthquake.
- The joint Army-Air Force operation brought over 5,000 Indians back from Nepal by Air Force and civilian planes. The Indian army successfully evacuated 170 foreign nationals from the US, the UK, Russia and Germany.

**Operation Safe Homecoming (2011):**

- India launched 'Operation Homecoming' to bring back Indian citizens stranded in conflict-torn Libya.
- Under the operation, India evacuated 15,400 Indian nationals.
- The air-sea operation was conducted by the Indian Navy and Air India.

**Operation Sukoon (2006):**

- As Israel and Lebanon broke into military conflict in July 2006, India rescued its stranded citizens by launching this operation, which is now famously known as the 'Beirut Sealift'.
- It was the largest naval rescue mission since the 'Dunkirk' evacuation.
- The task force evacuated about 2,280 people including some Nepalese and Sri Lankan nationals between 19th July and 1st August 2006.

**1990 Kuwait Airlift (1990):**

- In 1990, when 1,00,000 Iraqi soldiers armed with 700 tanks marched into Kuwait, the royals and VIPs had fled to Saudi Arabia.
- The general public was left behind to fend for themselves.
- Over 1,70,000 of those stranded in Kuwait were Indians.
- India kicked off the evacuation process in which over 1,70,000 Indians were airlifted and repatriated to India.

**INTERNATIONAL RELATION**

**UN Resolution Condemning Russian Aggression**

Recently, the United Nation Security Council voted on the draft resolution by the US and Albania that sought to condemn Russian aggression and called for the immediate cessation of violence and withdrawal of Russian military from Ukraine.

**What was the Resolution About?**

- The Council’s resolution reaffirmed its commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.
- The resolution “deplores in the strongest terms Russia’s aggression against Ukraine” and decides that Russia “shall immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and shall refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any UN member state”.The original version was too strong, as it invoked UN Chapter VII, which authorises the use of force against Russian troops in Ukraine.

**How much of Ukraine does Russia control?**



- It also asked Russia to “immediately and unconditionally reverse the decision related to the status of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine”.
- The resolution did not pass since the permanent member and President of the Security Council for the month of February Russia, used its veto.
- The resolution received 11 votes in favour and three abstentions. China and India both abstained.

**What is India’s Stand on the Current Crisis?**

- India is deeply disturbed by the recent turn of developments in Ukraine. India urged that all efforts shall be made for the immediate cessation of violence and hostilities.
- Dialogue is the only answer to settling differences and disputes, however daunting that may appear at this moment. It is a matter of regret that the path of diplomacy was given up.
- With this India has managed to hold its balancing act again, despite the considerable pressures from the West to vote against Russia, as well as pressures from Russia to support it. Earlier in January 2022, India abstained from a vote on whether to hold a discussion on the Ukraine situation, and also indicated support for Russia’s legitimate security interests.
- India has been in touch with all sides, urging parties concerned to return to the negotiating table.

**What is India’s Dilemma?**

- India’s strategic ambivalence at this big turning point in world geopolitics is born out of its friendships and strategic partnerships on both sides.

- Russia is India's biggest and time tested supplier of defence weapons. Despite its growing friendship with China, Russia has boosted India's defence capabilities with the S-400 air defence system.
- India's Defence Minister visited Russia at the height of India's crisis with the Chinese Army at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in June 2020. And Russia has stood behind India at the UNSC on all issues.
- At the same time, India has a deep partnership with the United States, which includes defence pacts, trade and investment, technology, and not least, a huge connection through the Indian diaspora and people to people contacts. With thousands of students leaving Indian shores every year to study in American universities.
- The same with Europe. Additionally, France as one of the P-5 (Permanent Five) is a vital friend of India in the UN Security Council. India needs all these friends as it deals with China's moves at the LAC.

#### **What is the Need of the Hour for India?**

- Dealing first-hand with the consequences of Chinese expansionism and adventurism on its own borders, and a South Asian region suddenly vacated by America's military presence in Afghanistan.
- India needs both the US and Russia to fend off a Chinese strategic and geo-economic threat in Asia.
- If the India-Russia partnership is critical on land in Asia, the QUAD - an alliance between America, Japan, Australia and India - is imperative when it comes to countering Chinese maritime expansionism in the Indian Ocean region.
- The imperative to counter China remains a cornerstone of Indian foreign policy, everything-including Delhi's position on Russian action in Ukraine- flows from that.
- Within India's foreign policy establishment, there is ongoing debate on what India might gain or lose by its neutrality and the consequences of siding with the West.
- There is also the thinking that the West cannot afford to cut away from India at this point, as it needs India's markets, and India's heft as a democracy as it seeks partners to contain China.
- But there is an inbuilt tension in this realist position that speaks about rules violations in one part of the world but does not call it out in another.
- Therefore, India's position may have to be calibrated constantly as the situation evolves especially if confronted by growing casualties in Ukraine.

#### **PRELIMS FACT**

##### **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana**

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will distribute 4,800 daily living aids and assistive devices among 895 senior citizen beneficiaries under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY).

##### **What is Rashtriya Vayoshree Yojana?**

###### **About:**

- It was launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It is a central sector scheme funded from the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund. The fund was notified in the year 2016. All unclaimed amounts from small savings accounts, PPF and EPF are transferred to this fund.

###### **Aim:**

- It aims to provide aids and assistive living devices to senior citizens belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) category who suffer from age-related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and locomotor disabilities.
  1. The aids and assistive devices, viz walking sticks, elbow crutches, walkers/crutches, tripods/quad pods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries.
  2. As per the Census figures of 2011, the population of senior citizens in India is 10.38 crore. More than 70% of the population of senior citizens live in rural areas of the country. A sizeable percentage (5.2%) of the senior citizens suffers from some sort of disabilities related to old age.

###### **Implementation:**

- The Scheme is being implemented by the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a PSU (Public Sector Undertaking) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

**What are the other Schemes Related to Elderly?**

1. SAMPANN Project
2. SACRED Portal for Elderly
3. Elder Line: Toll-Free Number for Elderly
4. SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) Initiative
5. Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP)
6. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS).
7. The Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana
8. Vayoshreshtha
9. Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPC) Act, 2007

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns. Improper disposal of antibiotics by pharma companies is a serious matter of concern as it could lead to antibiotic resistance due to source pollution. Examine. (150 words, 10 marks)**

**Introduction**

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of a microorganism (like bacteria, viruses, and some parasites) to stop an antimicrobial (such as antibiotics, antivirals and antimalarials) from working against it. As a result, standard treatments become ineffective, infections persist and may spread to others. Antibiotic resistance is specifically related to bacteria resisting an antibiotic against it while treating a bacterial infection.

**Body****Reasons for growing antibiotic resistance**

- Effluent from pharma companies: Direct emissions from the pharma industry are a hotspot of antibiotic residues since they are discharged in larger concentrations than other indirect sources.
- Antibiotic resistance occurs naturally, but misuse of antibiotics in humans and animals is accelerating the process. Poor infection prevention and control further accelerate it.
- While in humans' antibiotics are primarily used for treating patients, they are used as growth promoters in animals, often because they offer economic shortcuts that can replace hygienic practices.
- In their quest for survival and propagation, common bugs develop a variety of mechanisms to develop antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
- The indiscriminate use of antibiotics is the greatest driver in selection and propagation of resistant bugs. It has the potential to make fatal even minor infections.
- Wrong diagnosis: Doctors sometimes prescribe antimicrobials "just in case," or they prescribe broad-spectrum antimicrobials when a specific drug would be more suitable. Using these medications in this way increases the risk of AMR.
- Inappropriate use: If a person does not complete a course of antimicrobial drugs, some microbes may survive and develop resistance to the drug. Also, antibiotics recommended by quacks or pharmacist contribute to magnify the issue.

**Impact of Antibiotic resistance**

- Antibiotics have saved millions of lives till date. Unfortunately, they are now becoming ineffective as many infectious diseases have ceased to respond to antibiotics.
- Antibiotic Resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria develop the ability to defeat drugs which have been specifically designed to kill them.
- Infections caused by such resistant germs are very difficult and often impossible to treat and it can affect humans at all stages of life.
- AMR is occurring across the globe and is severely affecting the treatment of infectious diseases.
- Even though antimicrobial resistance is a natural process, the misuse of antibiotics in humans and animals is accelerating the process.
- A large number of infections such as tuberculosis, pneumonia and gonorrhoea are becoming very difficult to treat since the antibiotics used for their treatment are becoming less effective.
- Globally, use of antibiotics in animals is expected to increase by 67% by 2030 from 2010 levels. The resistance to antibiotics in germs is a man-made disaster.
- Irresponsible use of antibiotics is rampant in human health, animal health, fisheries, and agriculture.

- Complex surgeries such as organ transplantation and cardiac bypass might become difficult to undertake because of untreatable infectious complications that may result post-surgery.

**Conclusion**

Antimicrobial resistance is a global crisis that threatens a century of progress in health and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Unless the world acts urgently, antimicrobial resistance will have disastrous impact within a generation.

**DAILY QUIZ**

Q1. Consider the following about Panna Tiger Reserve:

1. It is situated in the Vindhya mountain range in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh.
2. It is one of the natural habitats of Sambar deer and Sloth bear.

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

Q2. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):

1. It was founded in 1972 following the landmark UN Conference on the Human Environment.
2. It aims to help the world meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
3. It is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.

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**

Q3. Recently, 'Xinjiang' was in news, is an autonomous territory in:

- a. Russia
- b. Myanmar
- c. Vietnam
- d. **China**

Q4. Consider the following statements:

1. Pink hydrogen is generated through electrolysis powered by nuclear energy.
2. Grey Hydrogen is produced from natural gas, where the emissions are captured using carbon capture and storage.
3. Blue Hydrogen is produced from natural gas where the associated emissions are released to the air.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

Q5. 'Syngas' is a fuel gas mixture consisting primarily of:

1. Hydrogen
2. Carbon monoxide
3. Carbon dioxide
4. Methane

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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