Stay not so vigilant against COVID-19 threat, Modi

Migrant workers faced the worst of the pain during this period, he says

What the experts say
A look at some of the recommendations by health practitioners, researchers and academics to the government to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic:

- A panel of health experts and social scientists at Central, State and district levels should be constituted to address the health and humanitarian crises
- Comprehensive data, including test results, should be made available in the public domain
- The nationwide lockdown needs to be replaced with cluster specific restrictions
- Routine health services at primary, secondary and tertiary levels should be ensured
- Extensive surveillance should be conducted to ensure adequate protection for health workers
- Rapid scaling up of public health services and research should be done with allocation of 5% of GDP to health expenditure at the Central and State levels

‘Indefinite lockdown is more harmful’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A group of public health experts, two of whom are part of a government-constituted advisory committee to contain the pandemic, have said that enforcing the lockdown "indeterminately" would be too disruptive and "overtake lives saved due to the lockdown-mediated slowing of the COVID-19 pandemic".

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Sunday extended the COVID-19 lockdown till June 30, but announced significant relaxations from June 1 while splitting the State into eight zones for the purpose of resumption of public transport. Bus services (see page 2) will be resumed in a limited way from Monday except in Chennai, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu.

Places of worship, the hill stations in the Nilgiris, Kodaikanal and Yercaud, malls, cinemas, amusement parks, beaches, auditoriums, restaurants, shopping malls, and beauty parlours can operate without air-conditioners and in line with the standard operating procedures.

For the rest of T.N., limited bus services from today; dine-in from June 8

Cases breach 1,000-mark

Tamil Nadu on Sunday saw 1,149 patients testing positive for COVID-19, breaching the 1,000-mark in a day for the first time - taking the tally to 22,333.

Chennai accounted for 804 of the new patients. While the State recorded 13 deaths, 757 persons were discharged after treatment. The number of active cases stood at 9,400, including 6,700 persons admitted to isolation wards. The new cases included 95 persons who returned from abroad and other States.
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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; H – Hyderabad; T – Thiruvananthapuram

The Hindu News Analysis – 1st June 2020 – Shankar IAS Academy
It's time for a universal basic income programme in India

Providing unconditional regular pay checks, at least till the economy normalises, is the need of the hour

ANIL K. ANTHONY

The ongoing crisis is creating changes that could end up dividing society into pre- and post-COVID-19 days. These changes are also likely to exacerbate the novel challenges accompanying the fourth industrial revolution.

Today, disruptive technologies like artificial intelligence are ushering in productivity gains that we have never seen before. They are also steadily reducing human capital requirements, making jobs a premium. A microcosm of these trends can be seen in Silicon Valley. The region is home to five of the world's eight most valuable companies. These giants, all technology companies, have a cumulative market cap of over $4 trillion, yet they together directly employ just 1.2 million people.

Too little to eradicate poverty

Many consider a universal basic income (UBI) programme to be a solution that could mitigate the looming crisis caused by dwindling job opportunities. UBI is also deliberated as an effective poverty-eradication tool. Supporters of this scheme include Economics Nobel Laureates Peter Diamond and Christopher Pissarides, and tech leaders Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk.

UBI in its true sense would entail the provision of an unconditional fixed amount to every citizen in a country. Nevertheless, countries across the world, including Kenya, Brazil, Finland, and Switzerland, have begun to think into this concept and begun controlling UBI pilots to supplement their population.

India's huge capacity and infrastructure-building requirements will support plenty of hands in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, even before the pandemic, India was struggling to find enough opportunities well off top quartile of the population as an effective means of alleviating poverty and hunger. The fiscal cost of a UBI pegged at 17,620, at 7% universality, was 4.9% of the GDP. A UBI on par with the numbers suggested by the Economic Survey could lead to targeted household incomes increasing by almost 40,000 per annum, since the average Indian household size is approximately five.

The political will was nonetheless tepid due to the costs involved. Requirements to trim some of the existing subsidies to balance the resultant deficit were also difficult political minefields for the then government. So the proposition was finally shelved.

Different times

The times now are very different. IMF has projected global growth in 2020 to be 3.0%, the worst since the Great Depression. India is projected to grow at 1.9%. The U.S. economy is expected to fall by 5.9%. The unemployment rate and unemployment claims in the U.S., since President Donald Trump declared a national emergency, is the highest since the Great Depression. Unfortunately, India does not have even comparable data.

Lockdowns in some format are expected to be the norm till the arrival of a vaccine. With almost 90% of India's workforce in the informal sector without minimum wages or social security, micro-level circumstances will be worse in India than anywhere else. The frequent sight of several thousands of migrant labourers undertaking perilous journeys on foot in inhumane conditions is a disgraceful blight on India. One way to ensure their sustenance throughout these trying times is the introduction of unconditional regular pay checks at maximum universality, at least till the economy normalises. If universal

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Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)  Duration: Two hours

- Indian Polity and Governance—Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.
- Economic and Social Development—Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

Part B—Main Examination

General Studies-I: Indian Heritage and Culture, History and Geography of the World and Society.

- History of the world will include events from 18th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, redrawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization, political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.—their forms and effect on the society.

General Studies—II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.
- Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

General Studies—III: Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.
- Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.
• COVID-19 crisis – creating changes in the society and economy – exacerbate the new challenges accompanying the fourth industrial revolution.

✓ Industry 4.0

➢ Indicates the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies.

➢ Characterized by the increasing digitalization and interconnection of products, value chains and business models.

➢ Driven by an amalgamation of emerging technologies like data volumes, computational power, IoT, augmented reality, AI, simulation, advanced robotics, sensor based technologies, cyber-physical systems etc. – revolves around disruptive technologies.

➢ Enormous productivity gains.

✓ Diminishing need for human capital – less availability of jobs or require extraordinary skill-set.

Example – Silicon valley – tech giants have a cumulative market capitalization of over Rs. 4 trillion, yet they together directly employ just 1.2 million people.

• Less number of people are employed – more number of people falling into poverty.

• Tool to eradicate poverty – Universal Basic Income (UBI) programme.
Universal Basic Income (UBI)

- A just society needs to guarantee to each individual a minimum income which they can count on and provides necessary material foundation for a life with access to basic goods and dignity.
- Requires that every person should have a right to a basic income to cover their needs, just by virtue of being citizens.
- Three components – universality, unconditionality, and agency.
- Deliberated as an effective poverty-eradication tool.

- Supporters of the scheme – Economics Nobel Laureates Peter Diamond and Christopher Pissarides, Tech leaders Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk etc.
- Provision of an unconditional fixed amount to every citizen in a country.
- Kenya, Brazil, Finland, and Switzerland have started controlled UBI pilot programme.
- Provision of cash transfers to rich, trumps the idea of equity and state welfare for the poor, and increases fiscal cost.
• The 2016-17 Economic Survey and IMF had proposed quasi-basic income schemes.
  ✓ Leaves out the well-off top quartile of the population.
  ✓ 2016-17 Economic Survey calculated the fiscal cost
    ➢ After adjusting to inflation ₹ 7,620 per year for an individual (for 2016-17).
    ➢ At target quasi-universality rate of 75%, the fiscal cost amounted to 4.9% of the GDP.
    ➢ De jure universality, de facto quasi-universality.
  ✓ Lack of political will due to cost.

Author's View

• COVID-19 crisis seems to be the best time to implement UBI.

• Reasons
  ✓ IMF projected global growth in 2020 is -3.0%
    - India is projected to grow at 1.9%.
  ✓ Unemployment rate will increase.
  ✓ Continuation of lockdown in some format – informal sector workforce and migrant labourers will be affected.

Conclusion

• For ensuring sustenance of vulnerable workforce and migrant labourers in this pandemic – introduce unconditional regular pay checks at maximum universality through UBI.
SpaceX's spacecraft successfully docks with ISS

It marks the dawn of a new age in commercial space travel; it is a great day for the country, says Trump

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON
SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft with two NASA astronauts on Sunday successfully docked with the International Space Station (ISS) after a historic launch from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, marking the dawn of a new age in commercial space travel.

Elon Musk’s SpaceX company confirmed the successful docking of NASA astronauts Bob Behnken, 49, and Doug Hurley, 53, with the ISS, the orbiting laboratory. “Docking confirmed – Crew Dragon has arrived at the space station”, the California-headquartered company announced on Twitter. NASA also took to Twitter to announce the docking.

The crew will be welcomed aboard the ISS, where they will become members of the Expedition 63 crew, which includes NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy.

The liftoff also assumes significance as it marks the launch of humans into orbit from the U.S. soil for the first time in nearly a decade. The SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft, carrying astronauts Behnken and Hurley, lifted off on Saturday atop the company’s Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Complex 39A at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center. With the liftoff, SpaceX became the first private company to launch people into the orbit, a feat achieved previously by only three governments: the U.S., Russia and China.

The launch, postponed early this week due to inclement weather, gave Americans something to cheer about as in the last three months they have lost over 1,000,000 of their countrymen due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has brought the economy to its knees. More than 40 million people have lost jobs.

Top U.S. leadership including President Donald Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, and thousands of curious Americans had gathered to watch the launch live on a bright Sunday afternoon. Congratulating Mr. Musk, NASA and the astronauts, Mr. Trump described the launch day as a great day for the country.

The President said he spoke with Mr. Musk, whom he called one of the “great brains”. He also spoke with the two NASA astronauts prior to the takeoff.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks) Duration: Two hours

- Current events of national and international importance.
- General Science.

Part B—Main Examination


- Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.
- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.
SpaceX

• SpaceX designs, manufactures and launches the world’s most advanced rockets and spacecrafts—founded in 2002 by Elon Musk.

• Aim: To revolutionize space transportation, with the ultimate goal of making life multiplanetary.

• Historic milestones:
  ✓ It is the only private company ever to return a spacecraft from low-Earth orbit—achieved in 2010.
  ✓ 2012: Its Dragon spacecraft attached to the International Space Station, exchanged cargo payloads, and returned safely to Earth.
**News:**
- For the first time in history, NASA astronauts have launched from American soil in a commercially built and operated American crew spacecraft.
- The spacecraft used is SpaceX’s Dragon spacecraft.
- **Significance:**
  - Marks the dawn of a new age in commercial space travel.
  - SpaceX became the first private company to launch people into the orbit.

**Dragon Spacecraft**
- Capable of carrying up to 7 passengers to and from Earth orbit and beyond.
- Only spacecraft currently flying that is capable of returning significant amounts of cargo to earth.

**Falcon 9**
- A reusable, two-stage rocket designed and manufactured by SpaceX.
- **Aim:** Reliable and safe transport of people and payloads into Earth orbit and beyond.
- It is the world’s first orbital class reusable rocket.
- **Advantage:** Reusability allows SpaceX to re-fly the most expensive parts of the rocket, which in turn brings down the cost of space access.
International Space Station (ISS)

- ISS is a large spacecraft in orbit around Earth— a unique science laboratory and serves as a home to crews of astronauts and cosmonauts.
- ISS is located in the low Earth orbit (LEO) and orbits Earth every 90 minutes.
- ISS is an international partnership of space agencies— space agencies of the United States, Russia, Europe, Japan, and Canada.
SHRC directs DCP to file report on ‘manhandling’

STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Human Rights Commission took up the case of a man who claimed to have been assaulted by the police while in detention, and directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police (West Zone) to file a report.

The petitioner, identified as Mohammed Ismail (30), who is a resident of Tappa Chabutra, said that a group of people had assaulted his brother Mohammed Akbar Ali late in the night on May 27 after which he sustained injuries. The petitioner said that when we went to file a complaint at the Tappachabutra police station, he was detained and alleged that two constables and a police van driver abused and beat him. He alleged that they did not accept his complaint. The TSHRC directed the DCP to file a report by July 21.
State Human Rights Commission

- Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993
- Can inquire into violation of Human rights only with respect to subjects mentioned in the State list (List II) and the Concurrent list (List III) of the 7th Schedule of the Constitution

Composition of SHRC

- Chairperson – A retired Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court
- Two members –
  - A serving or retired judge of a High Court or a District Judge in the state with a minimum of seven years of experience as District Judge
  - A person having knowledge or practical experience with respect to human rights

- Appointed by the Governor
  - on the recommendations of a committee
    - the Chief Minister as its head
    - the state home minister
    - the speaker of the Legislative Assembly
    - the leader of the opposition in the Legislative Assembly
  - If bicameral legislature, includes
    - the Chairman of the Legislative Council
    - the leader of opposition in the Council
• The Chairperson and members hold office for a
term of three years or until they attain the
age of 70 years, whichever is earlier, and
eligible for re-appointment.

• Can be removed only by the President.

• The salaries, allowances and other conditions of
service - determined by the state government.

• SHRC has all the powers of a civil court and
its proceedings have a judicial character.

• Recommendatory in nature and not binding on
the state government or authority.
Functions of State Human Rights Commission

- Inquire suo motu or on a petition presented to it, by a victim, or any person on his be into complaint of
  - Violation of human rights or abetment thereof;
  - negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.
- Intervene in any proceeding involving any allegation of violation of human rights, pending before a Court with the approval of such Court.
- Visit under intimation to the State Government, any jail or any other institution under the control of the State Government where persons are detained or lodged for purposes of treatment, reformation or protection to study the living conditions of the inmates and make recommendations thereon.

- Review the safeguards provided by or under the constitution of any law for the time being in force for the protection of human rights and recommend measures for their effective implementation.
- Review the factors, including acts of terrorism that inhibit the enjoyment of human rights and recommend appropriate remedial measures.
- Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights.
- Spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for the protection of these rights through publications, the n seminars and other available means.
- Encourage the efforts of Non-Governmental organisations and institutions working in the field of human rights.
- Such other functions as it may consider necessary for the promotion of human rights.
Researchers at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have found a rare fish in the Gulf of Mannar.

CMFRI

Established by GoI in 1947 under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
Later joined the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) family in 1967.
Emerged as a leading tropical marine fisheries research institute in the world.
Scorpaenopsis neglecta

• A type of Scorpionfish – one of the most colourful and spectacular reef fishes.
• Also called as Yellowfin Scorpionfish.
• Belongs to the family Scorpaenidae.

✓ Exhibit variegated colour patterns and thus merge well with their surroundings.
✓ Enables to remain undetected by the prey and predators.
✓ Characteristic feature – venomous spines that contain neurotoxic venom for defense mechanism – fatal to other animals and extremely painful to humans.
• Distribution – Indo-West Pacific region.
• Species is solitary and only congregate for mating.
• Habitat – open sand and mud bottoms.
• This species is of no interest to fisheries – but often taken as bycatch.
• IUCN Red List – Least Concern.
PM Modi to share his vision with India Inc.

NEW DELHI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will share his vision on ‘Getting Growth Back’ with India Inc. during an address at the annual session of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Tuesday, sources said. He will deliver the inaugural address at the day-long virtual event to mark 125 years of the CII since its inception in 1895, said sources in the industry chamber. PTI

Part A—Preliminary Examination
Paper I - (200 marks) Duration : Two hours
- Current events of national and international importance.
- Economic and Social Development - Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

Part B—Main Examination
General Studies- II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.
- Development processes and the development industry — the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders.
India Inc.

- A London-based media house that produces incisive content and events on investment, trade and policy matters relating to India's increasingly globalised economic and strategic agenda.
- Publication: 'India Global Business'
- Organises several high impact events such as UK-India Week 2019
- Founded in 2011 by strategist and entrepreneur Manoj Ladwa

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

- A non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization founded in 1895
- Objective: To create and sustain conducive environment for the development of India, by partnering with various stakeholders such as industry, Government and civil society.
- Five priority areas: employment generation, rural-urban connect, energy security, environmental sustainability and governance.
Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes

- Main difference is based on the pattern of funding and the modality for implementation.

1. Central Sector Schemes

- They are 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the Central Government machinery.
- Mainly formulated on subjects from the Union List.
- Also includes certain programmes which are directly implemented by various Central Ministries implements in States and UTs.

Bihar asks Centre to bear entire cost of schemes

The State’s revenue collection has dropped drastically, says Sushil Kumar Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

Bihar has sent an SOS to the Centre urging that it bear the State’s share of all 66 Centrally sponsored schemes for the next one year owing to the low tax collections because of the extended COVID-19 lockdown.

Bihar has registered a drop in tax collection from its own resources by 85% in April this year.

In the financial year of 2019-20 the State government had spent ₹10,000 crore as its share for 66 Centrally sponsored schemes but, due to extended lockdown the State’s own revenue collection has dropped drastically and the government is not in a position to generate funds for bearing its share, said Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, who also holds the Finance portfolio, said on Saturday.

The implementation of Centrally sponsored schemes such as MNREGA, the PMAY (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna), mid-day meal and others could even be suspended in case the Central government did not bear the “entire cost of these 66 schemes”, Mr. Modi added.

“Most of schemes have 60-40 ratio, however, in some schemes the ratio is even 50-50,” he said.

However, Mr. Modi thanked Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, for allocating ₹9,263 crore as State’s share in Central taxes for the current fiscal year.

Bihar is currently facing a massive reverse migration of its workers and the State government is grappling with the problem of generating employment for them.
2. Centrally Sponsored Schemes

• A certain percentage of the funding is borne by the States and the implementation is by the State Governments.

• The ratio of fund sharing can be in the ratio of 50:50, 70:30, 75:25 or 90:10.

• Formulated in subjects from the State List to encourage States to prioritise in areas that require more attention.

• In 2016, they were rationalized and restructured based on the recommendations of Sub-Group of Chief Ministers.

• All the Centrally Sponsored Schemes were classified into 3 lists – Core of the Core (CoC), Core and Optional schemes.

• CoC and Core schemes have compulsory participation of states; but States have discretion over optional schemes.

Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Core of the Core Schemes are a category of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, which mandates compulsory participation of the States.

2. Atal Bhujal Yojana and MGNREG Programme are some of the Core of the Core Schemes.

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
Prelims Question – 2015

Q. With reference to 'fly ash' produced by the power plants using coal as fuel, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Fly ash can be used in the production of bricks for building construction.
2. Fly ash can be used as a replacement for some of the Portland cement contents of concrete.
3. Fly ash is made up of silicon dioxide and calcium oxide only, and does not contain any toxic elements.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

(a) 1 and 2 (Correct answer)
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 3 only

Styrene is a flammable liquid primarily used in the production of plastic containers, packaging, synthetic marble, and so on. It is stored in factories as a liquid at temperatures below 20°C to prevent its evaporation. It has been in the news, last month, due to an industrial accident in a south Indian coastal city known for the ship-building industry, submarine museum, beaches. Name this city that is also nicknamed the 'Jewel of East Coast'.

(a) Visakhapatnam
(b) Chennai
(c) Mumbai
(d) Kolkata
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Which of the following best describes ‘Styrene’?

(a) It is a flammable liquid.
(b) It is used primarily in the production of plastic containers, packaging, synthetic marble, etc.
(c) It is stored in factories at temperatures below 20 degree Celsius to prevent its evaporation.
(d) All the above.
PRACTICE QUESTIONS
DISCUSSION
Q. With reference to ‘Scorpionfish’, sometimes seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. They have a characteristic feature of venomous spines for defense mechanism.

2. It is listed as critically endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which among the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only  
(b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Core of the Core Schemes are a category of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, which mandates compulsory participation of the States.

2. Atal Bhujal Yojana and MGNREG Programme are some of the Core of the Core Schemes.

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
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to ‘State Human Rights Commission (SHRC)’:

1. It is a Constitutional body for the promotion and protection of human rights.

2. The orders of SHRC are legally binding on appropriate State Governments.

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
Q. Consider the following statements with reference to ‘Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)’:

1. It is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.

2. It was established before Indian independence and aims to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, by partnering industry, Government and civil society.

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
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The International Space Station is a large spacecraft located in the Low Earth orbit, and orbits earth every 90 minutes.

2. Recently, the Dragon spacecraft of SpaceX became the first private spacecraft to take humans to the International Space Station.

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
Answers

1. Option ‘a’ – 1 only
2. Option ‘a’ – 1 only
3. Option ‘d’ – Neither 1 nor 2
4. Option ‘c’ – Both 1 and 2
5. Option ‘c’ – Both 1 and 2
Q. How far do you agree with the view that Universal Basic Income (UBI) programme is an effective poverty-eradication tool? Critically evaluate the pros and cons. (250 words, 15 marks)
LIKE, COMMENT & SHARE

SUBSCRIBE