

April - 01

NATIONAL

Invoking of Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- ❖ Sections 269 & 270 IPC are being invoked against persons who malignantly do any act which is likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life.
- ❖ While Section 269 provides for a jail term of six months and/or fine, Section 270 provides for a jail term of two years and/or fine.
- ❖ In Section 270, the word 'malignantly' indicates a deliberate intention on the part of the accused.

Railway's isolation beds

- ❖ The Indian Railways until 31 March, 2020 has modified 20,000 coaches to accommodate 3.2 lakh people.
- ❖ The Indian Railway coaches have been converted into isolation wards to fulfil the isolated quarantine requirements to treat COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ One single coach is expected to support 16 beds of isolation.
- ❖ The coaches will also have nurses cabins.
- ❖ Only non-AC coaches are being converted into quarantine coaches.
- ❖ There are around 18 railway zones in the country.



Stranded in India

- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism had launched “Stranded in India”, a portal aimed to support foreign tourists.
- ❖ The portal aims to disseminate information to the foreign tourists stuck far away from their homeland amidst COVID-19 threats and Lock Down.

INTERNATIONAL

Exercise Red Flag

- ❖ The U.S. Air Force has cancelled Phase-I of its flagship multilateral air exercise, Red Flag, scheduled in Alaska from April 30.
- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) was to take part in the exercise with its Sukhoi Su-30 fighter jets.
- ❖ Only countries considered friendly towards the United States take part in Red Flag exercises.

Nuclear Restrictions

- ❖ The USA renewed four nuclear restrictions imposed on Iran.
- ❖ The restrictions were imposed to prevent Iran from building its nuclear programme.
- ❖ Sanctions and hinderances to trade in Iran will affect India’s oil imports greatly.
- ❖ It also affects India’s plan to reach Central Asia through Iran by developing Iran’s Chabhar Port.
- ❖ The USA and Iran signed Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that aimed at curbing nuclear programme of Iran in 2015.
- ❖ Under the deal, most of Iran’s Uranium were shipped out of the country.
- ❖ Several operational nuclear operations of Iran were brought under international inspection.



ECONOMY

The COVID-19 Shock to Developing Countries

- ❖ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) made this new analysis.
- ❖ The world economy is to go into recession in 2020-21 in spite of the G20 countries infusing 5 trillion USD.
- ❖ The report also says that India and china are to stay out of these global recessions.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NIDHI program

- ❖ A new technology has been adopted by the Maharashtra hospitals in the fight of COVID-19 fight.
- ❖ The technology was developed by a Pune based Start Up.
- ❖ The product is named “Scitech Airon”.
- ❖ It is a Negative Ion Generator.
- ❖ The technology has been developed under the NIDHI PRAYAS program initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- ❖ The Scitech Airon ionizer machine generates negatively charged ions at approximately hundred million per 8 seconds (10 ions per sec).

- ❖ The negative ions generated by the ionizer form clusters around microparticles such as airborne mould, corona or influenza viruses, mite allergens, bacteria, pollens, dust and so on.
- ❖ The negative ions render them inactive through a chemical reaction by creating highly reactive OH groups called “hydroxyl radicals and H O”.
- ❖ These are highly reactive and known as atmospheric detergents.
- ❖ The detergent property generated by the ion generator helps in the breakdown of the outer protein of the allergens, viruses, and bacteria, which helps in controlling airborne diseases.
- ❖ It increases the body’s resistance to infections and harmful environmental factors.
- ❖ This resistance could be helpful for the next 20-30 days outside the ion atmosphere.
- ❖ It also decomposes gaseous pollutants like Carbon Monoxide (1000 times more harmful than Carbon dioxide), Nitrogen dioxide, and Volatile Organic Compounds.
- ❖ This technology helps to control the virus, bacteria, and other fungal infections in a closed environment and could help purify the air and disinfect areas around COVID-19 positive cases and suspects.

About

- ❖ Department of Science & Technology has launched a NIDHI program (National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations) under which programmes for setting up of incubators, seed fund, accelerators and ‘Proof of concept’ grant for innovators and entrepreneurs have been launched.
- ❖ Under NIDHI, PRAYAS (Promoting and Accelerating Young and Aspiring innovators & Startups) programme has been initiated.



ENVIRONMENT

Peak Hour Pollution

- ❖ In Indian big cities, the peak hour pollution in the morning and evening flattened due to the lock down.
- ❖ It has brought down particulate matter of sizes less than 2.5 microns greatly.
- ❖ According to the Central Pollution Control Board, around 92 cities in the country have recorded pollution level of “Good” from “Satisfactory”.

Air Quality Index

- ❖ The pollution levels is categorized as Good when the AQI is between 0 and 50.
- ❖ The other categories are poor (201-300), very poor (301-400) and severe (401-500).

Air Quality Index - Particulate Matter	
301 – 500	Hazardous
201 – 300	Very Unhealthy
151 – 200	Unhealthy
101 – 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
51 – 100	Moderate
0 – 50	Good

STATES

FRBM Act and Kerala

- ❖ The Chief Minister of Kerala has urged the Centre to provide Kerala with flexibility under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act.
- ❖ It is to ensure that the State’s finances are not adversely impacted in the rest of the financial year starting on April 1.
- ❖ To help fund the emergency relief package, Kerala proposes to borrow as much as Rs 12,500 crore from the market in April itself.
- ❖ The law does contain what is commonly referred to as an ‘escape clause’.

About FRBM



- ❖ The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBM Act), 2003, establish financial discipline to reduce fiscal deficit.
- ❖ The Act's long-term objective is for India to achieve fiscal stability and to give the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) flexibility to deal with inflation in India.
- ❖ Under the Act, the Centre can exceed the annual fiscal deficit target citing grounds.
- ❖ The reasons include national security, war, national calamity, collapse of agriculture, structural reforms and decline in real output growth of a quarter by at least three percentage points below the average of the previous four quarters.

Rapid Test

- ❖ The Kerala government has announced 'rapid tests' that will ensure speedy results within half an hour.
- ❖ It was taken to tackle suspicions of whether the novel coronavirus has spread into the community.
- ❖ A rapid test is conducted to determine whether there has been any kind of recent viral infection in a person's body.
- ❖ When a pathogen enters a human body, specific antibodies are released as a response to the virus.
- ❖ A rapid test can detect the presence of such antibodies in blood, serum or plasma samples quickly, indicating a viral infection.
- ❖ Rapid testing is conducted usually to check for community transmission of a virus during an epidemic.
- ❖ It is a simple test that can be done with a person's blood sample and will give out results within 10-30 minutes.
- ❖ It is also a low-cost test.

