

April - 13

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **UNSC meeting on COVID-19**

- ❖ The United Nations Security Council met for the first time to discuss COVID-19 pandemic on April 9, 2020.
- ❖ The virtual meeting, hosted by the current chair Dominican Republic, took place after nine of the council's ten non-permanent members requested for a meeting to discuss the current crisis.
- ❖ China urged UNSC to reject any acts of stigmatization and politicization.
- ❖ This follows statements by US President Donald Trump, who had labeled the coronavirus the "Chinese virus" last month.
- ❖ The UN Security Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security.
- ❖ However, its member states disagreed on whether the COVID-19 pandemic comes under the UNSC mandate or not.
- ❖ While Germany described the pandemic as an "international peace and security issue," several other nations such as China, Russia and South Africa stated that health matters were not part of the Security Council's brief.
- ❖ China, which was the chair of the UNSC in March 2020, had blocked all discussion on COVID-19 pandemic stating that it didn't come under the mandate of the body.

### **State of the World's Nursing**

- ❖ The WHO, along with the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the Nursing Now campaign, has released a report titled, "State of the World's Nursing".
- ❖ Globally, there are roughly 36.9 nurses per 10,000 people
- ❖ There are almost 10 times more nurses in the Americas than in the African region.
- ❖ The largest shortfall in absolute numbers is in the South-East Asian region.
- ❖ In the Americas and Europe, the problem is different since they are facing an ageing nursing workforce.
- ❖ An overwhelming majority of the nurses are women — 88 per cent in India.



# STATE OF THE WORLD'S NURSING **2020**



## **Bernie Sanders - USA**

- ❖ Bernie Sanders Drops Out of 2020 Race for President Election from the Democratic party.
- ❖ Now Joe Biden from the Democratic party will be the official nominee for the 2020 President Election.
- ❖ He will contest against the Republican party nomination of Donald Trump.
- ❖ Joe served as the 47th vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017.

## **Wuhan in China**

- ❖ Wuhan has lifted its 76-day lockdown measures.
- ❖ It is the Chinese city where the first coronavirus case was recorded last December.
- ❖ It is the capital city of Hubei province in the People's Republic of China.

## **World Food Program (WFP) report**

- ❖ The WFP released its new report "COVID-19: Potential impact on the world's poorest people: A WFP analysis of the economic and food security implications of the pandemic".
- ❖ It said that the rapidly-spreading coronavirus pandemic is so far having little impact on the global food supply chain.
- ❖ But that could be changed into the worse soon - if anxiety-driven panic by major food importers takes hold.



- ❖ WFP is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- ❖ Its headquarters is in Rome.
- ❖ It is a member of the United Nations Development Group.



## World Food Programme

### ECONOMY

#### Long Term Repo Operation (LTRO)

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said it has received Rs 1.13 lakh crore worth of bids in the targeted long term repo operation (LTRO).
- ❖ The LTRO is a tool under which the central bank provides one-year to three-year money to banks at the prevailing repo rate, accepting government securities with matching or higher tenure as the collateral.
- ❖ While the RBI's current windows of liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) and marginal standing facility (MSF) offer banks money for their immediate needs ranging from 1-28 days, the LTRO supplies them with liquidity for their 1- to 3-year needs.
- ❖ LTRO operations are intended to prevent short-term interest rates in the market from drifting a long way away from the policy rate, which is the repo rate.

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

#### Plasma Therapy

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) approved clinical trial protocol to be administered for critically ill COVID-19 patients for conducting convalescent plasma therapy for the treatment of critically ill COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ Kerala gets nod for trial of plasma therapy.

- ❖ The ICMR has given its nod to the state government for the first-of-its-kind project, initiated by the prestigious Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) in Kerala.
- ❖ Drugs Controller General's approval and institutional ethics committee approval would have to be there before the treatment can be administered.
- ❖ The therapy takes antibodies from the blood of a person who has recovered from a virus.
- ❖ It transfuses those antibodies into a person sick with that virus.
- ❖ Those antibodies that are secreted by immune cells known as B lymphocytes, are found in plasma, or the liquid part of blood that helps the blood to clot when needed and supports immunity.
- ❖ Once a person has had the virus and recovered, that person has developed antibodies that will stay in their blood waiting to fight the same virus should it return.
- ❖ Those antibodies, when injected into another person with the disease, recognize the virus as something to attack.
- ❖ The scientists say antibodies attack the spikes on the outside of the virus, blocking the virus from penetrating human cells.
- ❖ Convalescent plasma is also known as passive antibody therapy, meaning that while it can immediately provide a person with antibodies to fight a virus, those antibodies only last a short period of time in the recipient's body.

**Promising treatment**

**What is convalescent plasma?**

Convalescent plasma therapy involves transfusing certain components from the blood of people who have recovered from a virus attack into people who are very sick with the virus or people who are at high risk of getting the virus.

**How does it work**

- As people fight the virus, they produce antibodies that attack it. Those antibodies, proteins that are secreted by immune cells known as B lymphocytes, are found in plasma or the liquid part of blood that helps the blood to clot and supports immunity.
- Once a person recovers, that person has developed antibodies that will stay in their blood waiting to fight the same virus. Those antibodies, when injected into another person with the disease, recognise the virus as something to attack.
- In the case of coronavirus disease, scientists say antibodies attack the spikes on the outside of the virus, blocking the virus from penetrating human cells.



## **Hydroxychloroquine**

- ❖ While India has agreed to lift an export ban on this drug, US President Donald Trump has called this drug as a "game-changer" in the fight against coronavirus.
- ❖ India is one of the world's largest manufacturers of hydroxychloroquine.
- ❖ It is very similar to chloroquine, one of the oldest and best-known anti-malarial drugs.
- ❖ Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL) has emerged as the only Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) in India which has been manufacturing the currently most sought after anti-malaria drug 'Chloroquine Phosphate' since decades.
- ❖ BCPL was founded in 1901 by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray.
- ❖ It is India's first pharmaceutical company.
- ❖ Prafulla Chandra Ray was known as "Father of Indian Chemistry".

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Uranium in Drinking Water**

- ❖ A new study conducted by the University of Manchester, UK and Mahavir Cancer Institute and Research Centre, Phulwarisharif in Patna has found uranium contaminating the groundwater in 10 districts of Bihar.
- ❖ The Indian Standard IS 10500: 2012 for Drinking Water specification has specified the maximum acceptable limits for radioactive residues as alpha and beta emitters.
- ❖ As per Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), maximum permissible limit of Uranium is 0.03 mg/l (as per WHO provisional guidelines) in all drinking water standards.
- ❖ A report brought out by Duke University, USA in association with Central Ground Water Board and State Ground Water departments states that the Majority states in India have localised the occurrence of Uranium concentration.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **India's 10 Richest Billionaires 2019**

- ❖ It is a list compiled by the Forbes magazine annually.



- ❖ The total number of Indian billionaires has fallen to 102 in 2019, versus 106.
- ❖ Mukesh Ambani, with a net worth of \$36.8 billion, retained his title as the richest Indian.
- ❖ He remains the richest Indian for the 12th year in a row.

