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1. African swine fever

Let us start with a Question

1. Answer the following in context with African swine fever:

1. It does not affect humans directly but they can act as carriers of the virus.
 2. Its symptoms are similar to classical swine fever but both are caused from different viruses.
- A. Only 1
B. Only 2
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2

What is African swine fever virus?

- African swine fever virus (ASFV) is a large, double-stranded DNA virus in the Asfarviridae family.
- It is the causative agent of African swine fever (ASF).
- The virus causes a hemorrhagic fever with high mortality rates in domestic pigs.
- The disease has a case fatality rate (CFR) of almost 100 per cent.

Demographic Terms



[Link to the above video](#)

The Lifecycle of African swine fever Virus

- When ticks feed on the wild animals' blood.
- Domestic pigs can catch the virus through tick bites.
- Through contact with contaminated food or materials..
- By coming into contact with bodily fluids or carcasses of infected wild boar (also *Sus scofra*).



Ticks

What are routes of Transmission?

- Its routes of transmission include
 - ✓ Direct contact with an infected or wild pig (alive or dead)
 - ✓ Indirect contact through ingestion of contaminated material such as food waste, feed or garbage,
 - ✓ Through biological vectors such as ticks.

Does it affect Humans?

- ASF cannot be spread to humans and other non-swine animals and livestock and is not a threat to human health.
- However, humans can carry the virus on their clothing, shoes and equipment and can spread the disease unknowingly

Is it diff from Classical Swine fever?

- It is important that determination of ASF is made through laboratory testing and it is differentiated from Classical Swine Fever (CSF), whose signs may be similar to ASF, but is caused by a different virus for which a vaccine exists.
- ASF is caused by a virus that is unrelated to the classical swine fever virus and has a more complex genetic structure.
- Both ASF and CSF affect pigs only, and do not infect humans and other livestock.
- Note
 - ✓ SWINE FLU (affects both humans and pigs)

But has it also originated from China?

- The first outbreak was retrospectively recognized as having occurred in 1907 after ASF was first described in 1921 in Kenya.
- The disease remained restricted to Africa until 1957, when it was reported in Lisbon, Portugal.
- ASFV crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and outbreaks were reported in some Caribbean islands.
- Major outbreaks of ASF in Africa are regularly reported to the World Organisation for Animal Health.
- In 2018 the virus spread to Asia, affecting more than 10 percent of the total pig population in several countries, leading to severe economic losses in the pig sector.

How did the current outbreak start?

- As per the latest update issued by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the current outbreak of ASF has affected China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and Indonesia among others.
- In China, the first ASF outbreak was confirmed in August 2018 and since then more than 1 million pigs have been culled in the country.



Let's Talk about Outbreak in India?

- The current outbreak of ASF in India is the first time that the disease has been reported in the country.
- The pig farming sector in Assam has been hit hard by African swine fever which is a highly contagious viral disease that affects both domestic and wild pigs.
- The outbreak of African swine fever in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh was confirmed on May 1 by National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) in Bhopal after samples sent from those two states tested positive.

Exact origin in India

- Officials believe ASF came into India through Tibet into Arunachal Pradesh and then into Assam, the state with the highest population of pigs in the country.



- There is a province (in Tibet) which borders Arunachal Pradesh. It could have possibly travelled from there but that is suspected.

Steps Taken as Mentioned in News

- Since ASF has no vaccination, the infected pigs are culled.
- Currently, the dead pigs are undergoing deep burials, with salt and bleaching powder. However, cases of pig carcasses floating down rivers have been reported from districts in Assam.
- The authorities have advised all pig farmers to contain the spread through bio-security (This is one form of quarantine for the pigs,)
- Trying to create awareness about this.
- Note
 - ✓ All Northeast states should follow this and fight this together since the states have very porous borders,
 - ✓ Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has asked the Veterinary Department and Forest Department to work with the National Pig Research Centre of Indian Council of Agricultural Research,
 - ✓ To “draw a broad roadmap to save the state’s pig population from African swine fever.”

Now Let s answer the Question

1. Answer the following in context with African swine fever:

1. It does not affect humans directly but they can act as carriers of the virus.
 2. Its symptoms are similar to classical swine fever but both are caused from different viruses.
- A. Only 1
B. Only 2
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: C

2. Anti-Defection Law and the Rajasthan Crisis

Sachin Pilot Moves HC

- Sachin Pilot and 18 MLAs had moved the High Court last week, claiming that the disqualification notices issued to them by the Speaker of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly were an attempt to stifle their voices, which sought a leadership change within the party in the “most democratic manner”.
- They had challenged the correctness and validity of the notices.
- They had also challenged the Constitutional validity of Para 2(1) (a) of the Tenth Schedules, which is the anti-defection law.

- The High Court barred Rajasthan assembly Speaker C.P. Joshi from acting on the 14 July disqualification notices issued to Sachin Pilot and 18 other 'rebel' Congress MLAs.
- The Rajasthan High Court's decision agreeing to hear in detail the challenge against anti-disqualification laws made by 19 rebel Congress MLAs has opened up the debate on a law considered settled on the Tenth Schedule of Constitution.
- The HC has agreed to test whether disqualification of an MLA for dissent against the party violates the Constitution's basic structure and fundamental right to free speech
- Although the MLAs have not officially resigned from the Congress, actions perceived as "anti-party activities" are often inferred as voluntarily resigning from the party.

The Tenth Schedule

- What does the Tenth Schedule say? And how has the Supreme Court interpreted the anti-defection law over the years?
 - ✓ The anti-defection law, enshrined in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India, was inserted in 1985 through the 52nd amendment to the Constitution to prevent political defections.
- It lists two situations for disqualification on the ground of defection.
 - ✓ Firstly, if an MP or an MLA "has voluntarily given up his membership of such political party" (clause 2(1)(a)).
 - ✓ Secondly, if he votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction issued by his party, that is if he violates the party whip in the House, without obtaining prior permission of such party and such act has not been condoned by the party within 15 days, (clause 2(1)(b)).

Exceptions to Defection

- Exceptions to the Disqualification on the Ground of Defection
 - ✓ If a member goes out of his party as a result of a merger of the party with another party.
 - ✓ If a member, after being elected as the presiding officer of the House, voluntarily gives up the membership of his party or rejoins it after he ceases to hold that office.

Powers of the Speaker

- Powers of Speaker with regard to Anti-Defection Law
 - ✓ Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the presiding officer of the House.
 - ✓ After the Kihoto Hollohan case (1992) the Supreme Court declared that the decision of the presiding officer is not final and can be questioned in any court. It is subject to judicial review on the grounds of malafide, perversity, etc.
 - ✓ As for the time that the Speaker can take to decide the disqualification proceedings, the Supreme Court held in January this year that the decision should ordinarily be taken within 3 months, "absent any exceptional circumstances".

Related Incident

- In 2017, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formed the government in Manipur after seven legislators of Congress joined the BJP.
- The Congress party asked the Speaker to disqualify these seven, but the petitions were kept pending.
- According to paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, an elected member of the house shall be disqualified from being a member if they win the election as a candidate of one party and then join another.
- Recently, a crisis in the ruling party emerged because the four MLAs (out of seven MLAs, who had in 2017 jumped to BJP) once again pledged their votes to the Congress and the rest three were disqualified.
- Citing the 2016 SA Sampath Kumar vs Kale Yadaiah and Others case relating to the disqualification of a Telangana MLA, the Supreme Court directed the Speaker of Manipur to rule on the disqualification within three months.
- The Manipur High Court also reasoned that since the remedy under Tenth Schedule is an alternative to moving courts and if the remedy is found to be ineffective due to deliberate inaction or indecision on the part of the Speaker, the court will have jurisdiction.

Pilot's Challenge

- What has Sachin Pilot alleged?
 - ✓ It is the first ground under clause 2(1)(a) that Pilot and the MLAs have challenged in the high court, asserting that the provision cannot be so widely construed that the very same fundamental freedom of speech and expression of a member of the House is jeopardised.
 - ✓ He said in his petition that “mere expression of dissatisfaction or even disillusionment against the party leadership cannot be treated to be conduct falling within the clause 2(1)(a) of the 10th Schedule of the Constitution of India”
 - ✓ They have, therefore, demanded that clause 2(1) (a) be declared ultra vires (outside the scope of) the basic structure of the Constitution, and the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1) (a).

Prior Incidents

- What does voluntarily giving up party membership mean?
 - ✓ In a 1994 judgment, the Supreme Court had held that voluntarily giving up membership does not necessarily mean that the legislator needs to formally resign, and that this can be inferred from the member's “conduct” as well.
 - ✓ The court had explained: “Even in the absence of a formal resignation from membership, an inference can be drawn from the conduct of a member that he has voluntarily given up his membership of the political party to which he belongs”.
- For instance, in 2007, the Supreme Court had upheld the disqualification of 13 Bahujan Samaj Party MLAs who had supported Mulayam Singh's claim to form the government in 2003.
- The MLAs had met the Governor along with the general secretary of the rival party and made a written request to him to invite the Leader of the Opposition to form the government as against their chief minister's advice to the Governor to dissolve the Assembly.

- On this, the Supreme Court had said: “An irresistible inference arises that the 13 members have clearly given up their membership of the BSP. No further evidence or enquiry is needed to find that their action comes within paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule.”
- However, in 2011, the Supreme Court had set aside the Karnataka Speaker’s order disqualifying 11 BJP MLAs.
- These MLAs had approached the Governor, saying that they had withdrawn their support to the government led by Yeddyurappa because he was corrupt and had lost the confidence of the people.
- Among other things, the Supreme Court had noted that the MLAs had continued to be members of the BJP, but were merely against Yeddyurappa.

Suggestions

- The Supreme Court has held that the Parliament consider taking a relook at the powers of the Speakers citing instances of partisanship.
- It has suggested independent tribunals to decide on disqualification.
- In Britain, the Speaker is strictly a non-party person. There is a convention that the Speaker has to resign from his party and remain politically neutral. .
- Hence, this mechanism can be adopted whereby Speakers need to renounce all political affiliations, membership and activity once they have been elected to the office.
- The Halim Committee on anti-defection law (1998) recommended that the words ‘voluntarily giving up membership of a political party’ be comprehensively
- The Law Commission, in its 170th report in 1999, suggested that provisions that exempt splits and mergers from disqualification to be deleted, pre-poll electoral fronts should be treated as political parties under the anti-defection law and political parties should limit issuance of whips only to instances when the government is in danger.
- The Venkatachaliah Commission (NCRWC, 2002) recommended that defectors should be barred from holding any ministerial or remunerative political office for the remaining term of the House. It also said that the vote of any defector should not be counted in a confidence or no-confidence motion.

3. Global Tiger Day

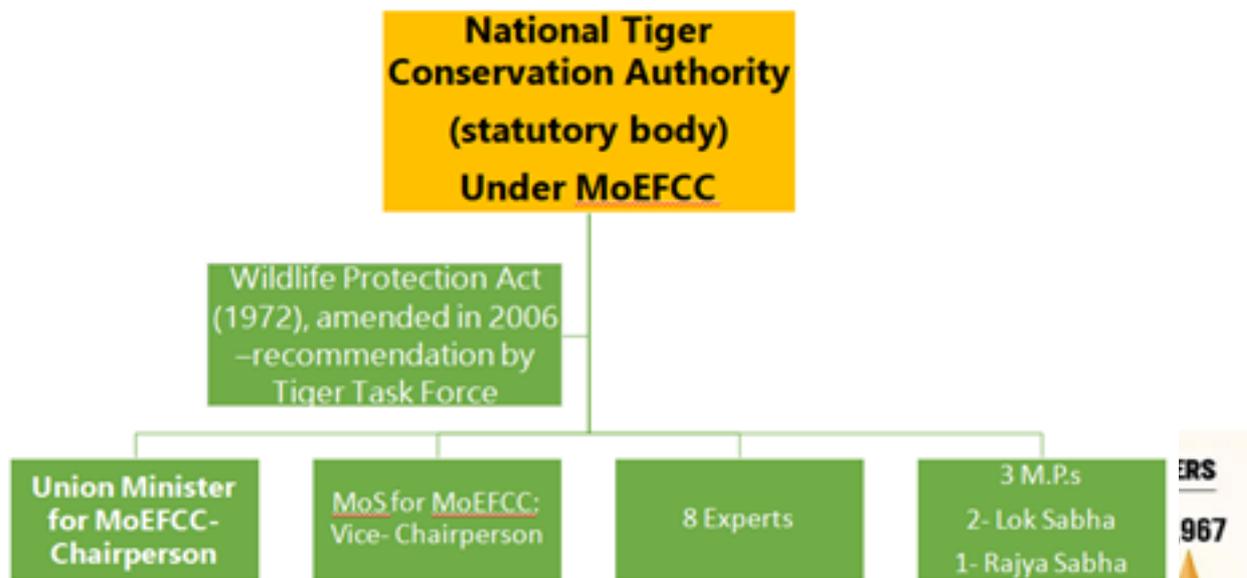
What is International/ Global Tiger Day?

- Global Tiger Day, often called International Tiger Day, is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29th July every year.
- It was established in 2010 at Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia to raise awareness about the decline of wild tiger numbers, leaving them in the brink of extinction and to encourage the work of Tiger conservation.
- In the Summit, a declaration was made that governments of tiger populated countries had vowed to double tiger population by 2020.
- The 13 countries having tiger population, apart from India, include Russia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

India and Tiger Conservation

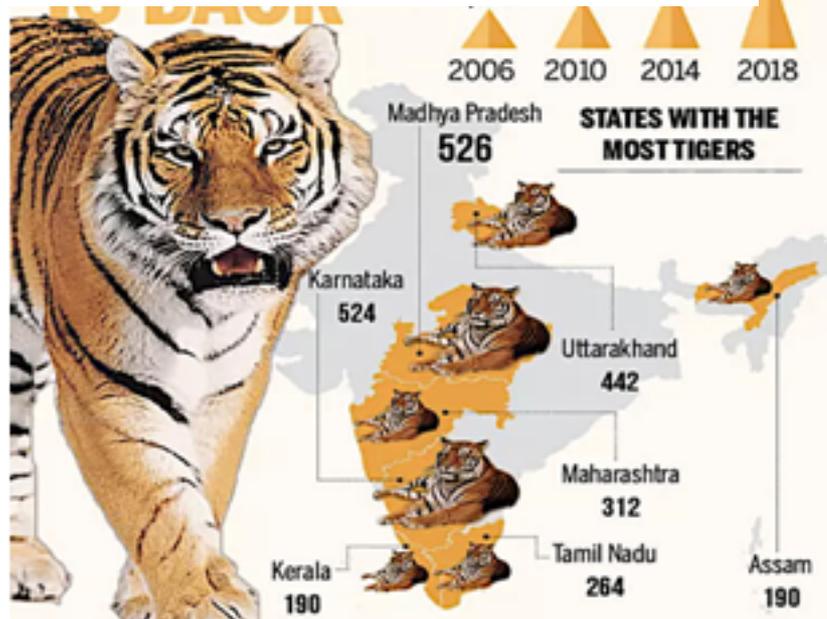
- The Indian government launched an ambitious project in 1973 to establish ranger-protected havens in national parks. Called 'Tiger Protection Program'-Project Tiger, It aimed to boost the number of tigers by conserving their dwindling habitats and ecosystems.
- Initially 9 Tiger Reserves had been setup in the country - Manas, Palamau, Simlipal, Corbett, Ranthambore, Kanha, Melghat, Bandipur and Sundarban Tiger Reserves.
- Presently, the number of Tiger Reserves has increased from 9 to 50 in the country.
- There are 50 Tiger Reserves spread in 18 States of the country covering 72,749 sq. km., which is 2.21% of the geographical area of our country.

The 50 Tiger Reserves have been divided into five landscape clusters for management, conservation and evaluation representing geographical and vegetation of tiger habitats.

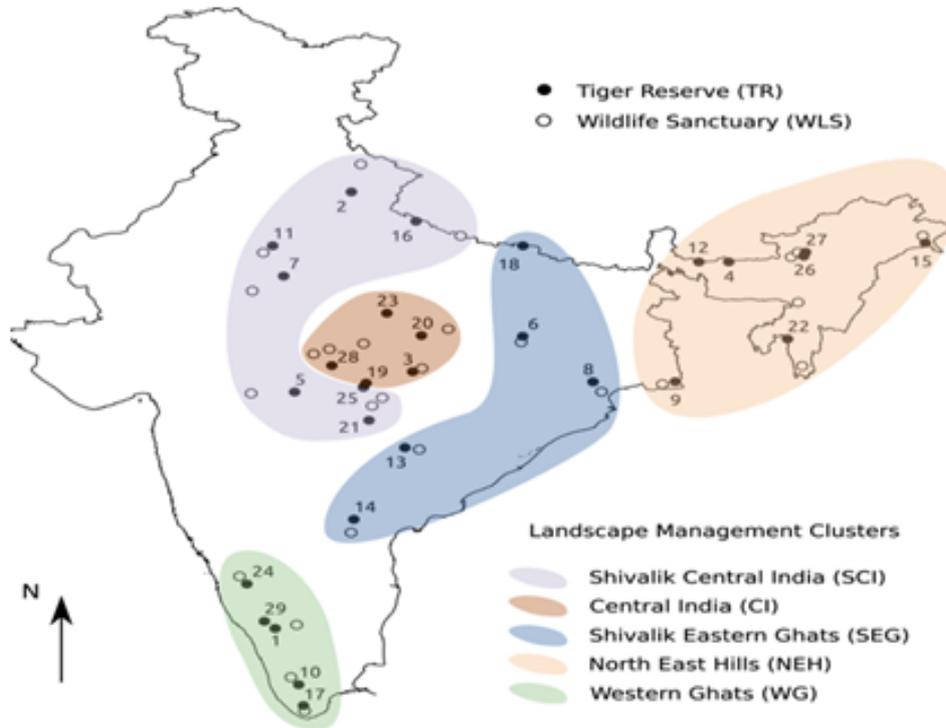


Tiger Census in India

- The national tiger census, or the All India Tiger Estimation, is done quadrennially and is steered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority, along with the Wildlife Institute of India and is implemented by the state forest departments.
- During the first census, conducted in 2006, the count was 1,411. The numbers have risen steadily with each census - 1,706 in 2010 and 2,226 in 2014.

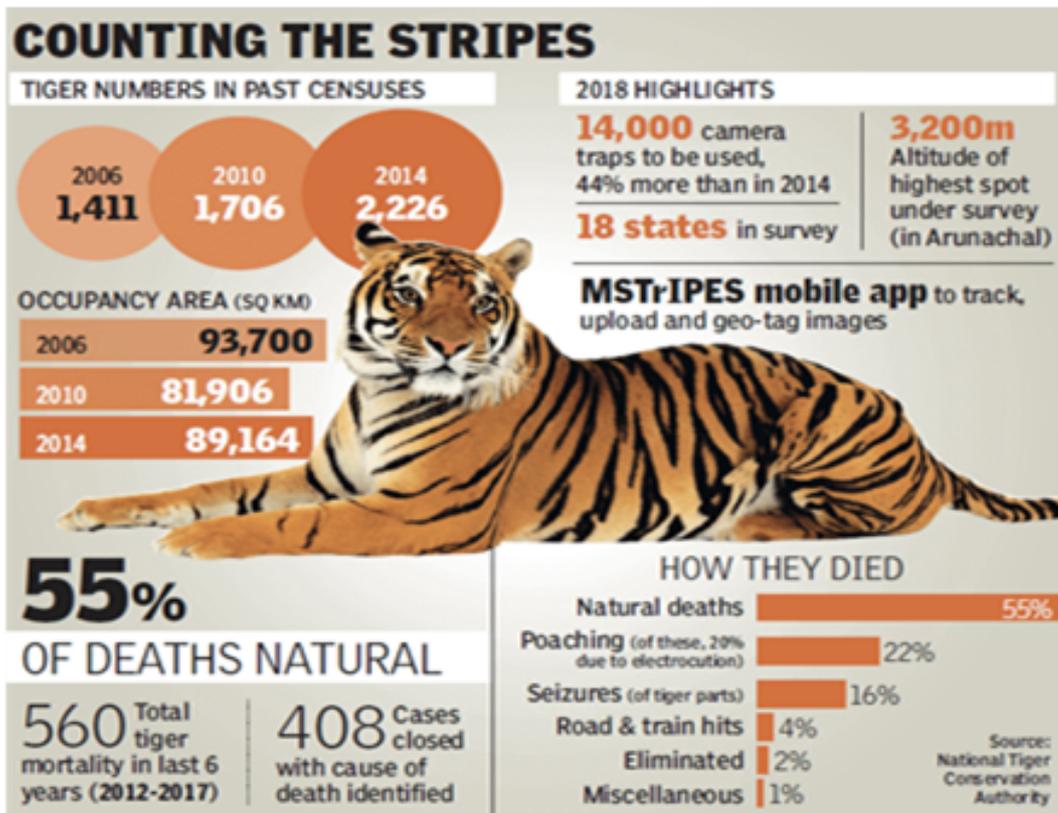


- India had released the results of the fourth cycle of All India Tiger Estimation - 2018 on the occasion of Global Tiger Day-2019.
- Union Environment Minister, Shri Prakash Javadekar released of the detailed report of Tiger Census (2018) on the eve of Global Tiger Day in New Delhi.
- The detailed report of the 4th All India Tiger Estimation is unique in the following ways;





- ✓ Abundance index of co-predators and other species has been carried out which hitherto was restricted only to occupancy
- ✓ Sex ratio of tigers in all camera trap sites has been carried out for the first time.
- ✓ Anthropogenic effects on tiger population have been elaborated in a detailed manner.
- ✓ Tiger abundance within pockets in tiger reserves has been demonstrated for the first time.
- The Ministry is working on a programme in which efforts would be made to provide water and fodder to animals in the forest itself to deal with the challenge of human-animal conflict which is causing deaths of animals.
- For this LIDAR based survey technology will be used for the first time. Lidar is a method for measuring distances by illuminating the target with laser light and measuring the reflection with a sensor.
- As per the report, India has 70 percent of world's tiger population.
- "Tigers and other wild life are a kind of soft power India has to show on the international front."
- Madhya Pradesh has the largest number of tigers -526. There are regional imbalances - Mizoram doesn't have a single tiger, and tigers have vanished from Buxa, Bampa and Palamau, and the population in Orissa has shrunk from 45 to 28 since 2006. However, Kerala recorded a 313 per cent rise in population for the same period, its present number is at 190.



4. Rafale-The Birds Have Arrived

- Everything you need to know about Rafale, Mig, sukhoi.

Why Discussing This Today

- India received its first batch of new multi-role combat fighter aircraft in nearly two decades with the arrival of five Rafale jets.

Who makes Rafale

- French aerospace major Dassault Aviation.
- We already use Mirage-2000 built by them.

Quick info about Rafale

- Brings IAF's squadron strength to 31 (required 42).
- A top speed of 1.8 Mach.
- Rafale has seen war under the French Air Force for its missions in Afghanistan, Libya, Mali, Central African Republic, Iraq and Syria.

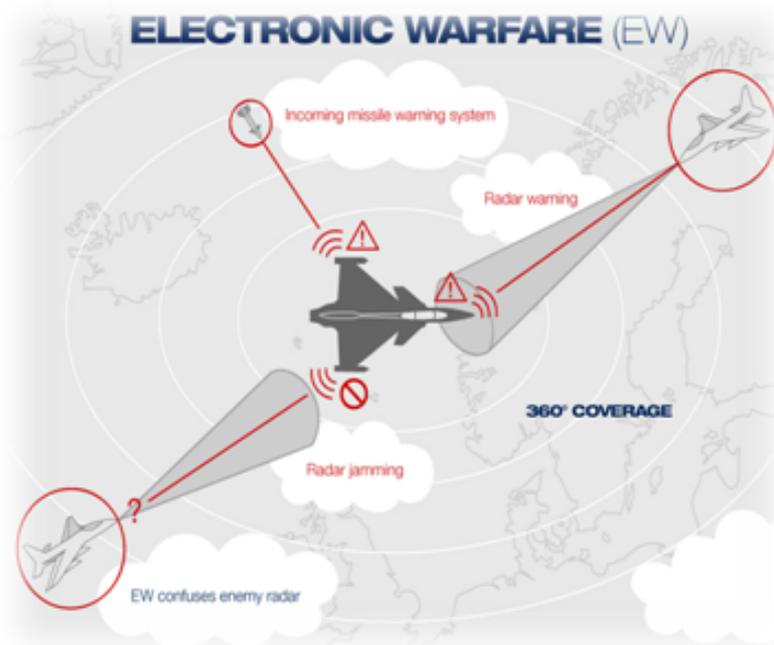
Rafale comes equipped with

- Meteor missiles
 - ✓ Air-to-Air missiles
 - ✓ Beyond Visual Range (BVR) of over 100 km
 - ✓ A top speed of Mach 4
- SCALP missiles
 - ✓ Also called Storm Shadow (in UK)
 - ✓ Air-to-ground
 - ✓ Cruise missile
 - ✓ Range over 300 km
- MICA missiles
 - ✓ Air-to-air
 - ✓ Used in dog fighting
 - ✓ Also used on Mirage 2000
- HAMMER
 - ✓ Highly Agile and Maneuverable Munitions Extended Range
 - ✓ A precision-guided munition
 - ✓ Air-to-ground precision guided missile
 - ✓ Can be used against bunker-type hardened targets

Comparison with China's Chengdu J20

- Also known as Mighty Dragon
- Called fifth generation combat jets (Rafale being 4.5 generation)
- J20 have no actual experience of war.
- Rafale can carry more fuel
- Rafale can carry more weapons

Rafale can do Electronic warfare



- Electronic warfare (EW)
- It is any action involving the use of the electromagnetic spectrum (EM spectrum) or
- Directed energy to control the spectrum
- Attack an enemy, or
- Impede enemy assaults.
- Deny the opponent the advantage of, and ensure friendly unimpeded access to, the EM spectrum.

About Mirage-2000

- Also made by French Dassault Aviation.
- First commissioned in 1985.
- Single seater, single engine
- Maximum speed of 2,495 km/hr (Mach 2.3).

About SU-30 MKI

- Russian

- Advanced fighter jets
- Inducted in 2002
- Primary air-to-air and air-to-ground strike machines.
- It is a twin seater twin engine multirole fighter.
- It has a maximum speed of 2,500 km/hr (Mach 2.35).

About MiG-29

- Russian
- Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau
- Introduced in 1970s to counter US' F-Series planes like F-15 and F-16
- Commissioned by IAF in 1985
- The MiG29 forms the second line of defence after the Sukhoi Su-30MKI
- Twin engine, single seater
- Maximum speed of 2,445 km per hour (Mach-2.3)

About MiG-27

- Russian origin
- Designed by Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau
- Manufactured by HAL under a license agreement.
- Single engine, single seater
- Tactical strike fighter aircraft
- Maximum speed of 1,700 km/hr (Mach 1.6)

About Jaguar

- Developed together by British Royal Air Force and French Air Force.
- Twin-engine, single seater
- Maximum speed of 1,350 km /hr (Mach 1.3)

About MiG-21 Bison

- Russian
- Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau
- Opted by IAF in 1961
- Single engine, single seater
- Forms the back-bone of the IAF.
- Max speed of 2,230 km/hr (Mach 2.1)

Future Orders of IAF

- From Russia:
 - ✓ 21 MiG-29
 - ✓ Up gradation of 59 existing MiG-29
 - ✓ Procurement of 12 Su-30MKI
 - ✓ Majority of which will be license-manufactured by HAL
- Domestic:
 - ✓ 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk-1A (Tejas)
 - ✓ LCA Mk-2 is under development
 - ✓ Fifth generation advanced medium combat aircraft (AMCA) is also under development

Deals to Remember

- 36 Rafale jets from France
- S-400 air defence systems from Russia
- Apache attack helicopters and Chinook heavy lift helicopters from the U.S

5. National Education Policy 2020

Introduction

- First new education policy in 34 years has been approved by the Union Cabinet.
- A panel headed by former ISRO chief K. Kasturirangan submitted a draft in December 2018, which was made public and opened for feedback after the Lok Sabha election in May 2019.
- Revision of the 1986 National Education Policy was long due.

Important As

- It provides for major reforms in higher education, increased focus on non-academic skills and increased inclusion through language diversity and course fluidity.
- It enables a paradigm shift towards a more imaginative and broad-based liberal education as a foundation for holistic development of all students with rigorous specialisation in chosen disciplines

Aims To

- Achieve 100 per cent youth and adult literacy in India.

Learning plan
A look at the key features of the new education policy:
- R.V.S. PRASAD

Public spending on education by States, Centre to be raised to 6% of GDP
Ministry of Human Resource Development to be renamed Ministry of Education
Separate technology unit to develop digital education resources

- To increase the public investment in the education sector from the current 4.3 per cent to reach 6 per cent of GDP at the earliest.

School Education

Universal Access

- The NEP 2020 has provisions to ensure universal access to school education at all levels- pre school to secondary.
- Provisions include
 - ✓ Infrastructure support,
 - ✓ innovative education centers to bring back dropouts into the mainstream,
 - ✓ tracking of students and their learning levels,
 - ✓ facilitating multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and non-formal education modes and
 - ✓ Association of counselors or well-trained social workers with schools.
- The NEP 2020 also provides for open learning for classes 3, 5 and 8 through NIOS and State Open Schools, secondary education programs equivalent to Grades 10 and 12, vocational courses, adult literacy and life-enrichment programs.
- Through NEP 2020, the Centre hopes to bring back about 2 crore out of school children into main stream.

Introduction of the 5+3+3+4 Structure

- Break-down of the existing 10+2 structure and introduction of the 5+3+3+4 structure of School Education.
- The policy aims at transforming circular and pedagogical structure from the existing 10 years + 2 years to a more inclusive foundational to secondary stage transition.
- While the actual system would not change, in terms of the years a child spends within the formal education system in the country at school level, the new structure brings into fold the already existing play schools within the ambit of 'formal education'.
- This will bring the uncovered age group of 3-6 years under school curriculum, which has been recognised globally as the crucial stage for the development of mental faculties of a child.
- The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/pre-schooling.
- NCERT will develop a framework of the early childhood education of children up to the age of 8. (National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE)

Attaining Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

- A National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be set up by the MHRD.
- States will prepare an implementation plan for attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy in all primary schools for all learners by grade 3 by 2025.

- A National Book Promotion Policy will also be formulated.

Reforms in School Curricula and Pedagogy

- The school curricula and pedagogy will aim for holistic development of learners by equipping them with the key 21st century skills, reduction in curricular content to enhance essential learning and critical thinking and greater focus on experiential learning.
- Students will have increased flexibility and choice of subjects.
- There will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams.
- Vocational education will start in schools from the 6th grade, and will include internships.
- A new and comprehensive National Curricular Framework for School Education, NCFSE 2020-21, will be developed by the NCERT.

Multilingualism and the Power of Language

- The NEP 2020 advocates for mother tongue/local language/regional language as the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond.
- Sanskrit to be offered at all levels of school and higher education as an option for students, including in the three-language formula.
- Other classical languages and literatures of India also to be available as options.
- No language will be imposed on any student.
- Several foreign languages will also be offered at the secondary level.
- Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardized across the country and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment.

Assessment Reforms

- With NEP 2020, the Centre hopes to shift from summative assessment to a more competency-based regular assessment which tests analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity.
- All students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5, and 8.
- Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued, but redesigned with holistic development as the aim.
- A new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), will be set up as a standard-setting body.

Equitable and Inclusive Education

- NEP 2020 provides for setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund and also Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.
- Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the foundational stage to higher education, with support of educators with cross-disability training, resource centers, accommodations, assistive devices, appropriate technology-based tools and other support mechanisms tailored to suit their needs.

- Every state/district will be encouraged to establish “BAL Bhavans” as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in art-related, career-related, and play-related activities.
- Free school infrastructure can be used as Samajik Chetna Kendras

Robust Teacher Recruitment and Career Path

- Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes.
- Promotions will be merit-based, with a mechanism for multi-source periodic performance appraisals and available progression paths to become educational administrators or teacher educators.
- A common National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education by 2022, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers and expert organizations from across levels and regions.

School Governance

- Schools can be organized into complexes or clusters which will be the basic unit of governance and ensure availability of all resources including infrastructure, academic libraries and a strong professional teacher community.

Standard-Setting and Accreditation for School Education

- NEP 2020 envisages clear, separate systems for policy making, regulation, operations and academic matters.
- States/UTs will set up independent State School Standards Authority (SSSA).
- Transparent public self-disclosure of all the basic regulatory information, as laid down by the SSSA, will be used extensively for public oversight and accountability.
- The SCERT will develop a School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF) through consultations with all stakeholders.

Higher Education

Increase Ger To 50% By 2035

- NEP 2020 aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 per cent (2018) to 50 per cent by 2035.
- At least 3.5 crore new seats will be added to higher education institutions.

Holistic Multidisciplinary Education

- The policy introduces broad-based, multi-disciplinary, holistic undergraduate education with flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education and multiple entry and exit points with appropriate certification.
- UG education can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period. For example, certificate after 1 year, advanced diploma after 2 years, Bachelor’s degree after 3 years and Bachelor’s with research after 4 years.
- An Academic Bank of Credit is to be established for digitally storing academic credits earned from different institutes so that these can be transferred and counted towards final degree earned.

- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
- The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.

Regulation

- Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education.
- HECI will function through faceless intervention through technology, and will have powers to penalise higher education institutions for not conforming to norms and standards.
- Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

Rationalised Institutional Architecture

- The definition of the university will allow a spectrum of institutions that range from Research-intensive universities to teaching-intensive universities and autonomous degree-granting colleges.
- Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.
- Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an autonomous degree-granting college, or a constituent college of a university.

Financial Support for Students

- Efforts will be made to incentivise the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs.
- The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to support, foster, and track the progress of students receiving scholarships.
- Private HEIs will be encouraged to offer larger numbers of free ships and scholarships to their students.

Open and Distance Learning

- This will be expanded to play a significant role in increasing GER.
- Measures such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs, etc, will be taken to ensure it is at par with the highest quality in-class programmes.

Online and Digital Education

- A dedicated unit for the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.

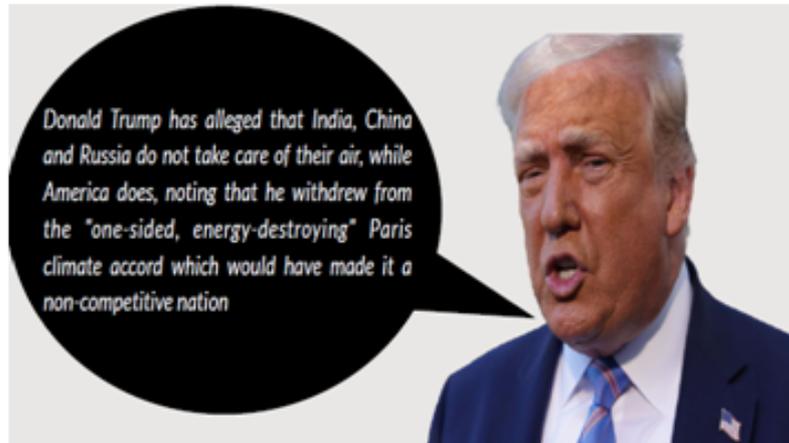
Technology in Education

- An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.

- Appropriate integration of technology into all levels of education will be done to improve classroom processes, support teacher professional development, enhance educational access for disadvantaged groups and streamline educational planning, administration and management.

6. Air pollution in India and Donald Trump

Trump's Allegation



Air Pollution across the World

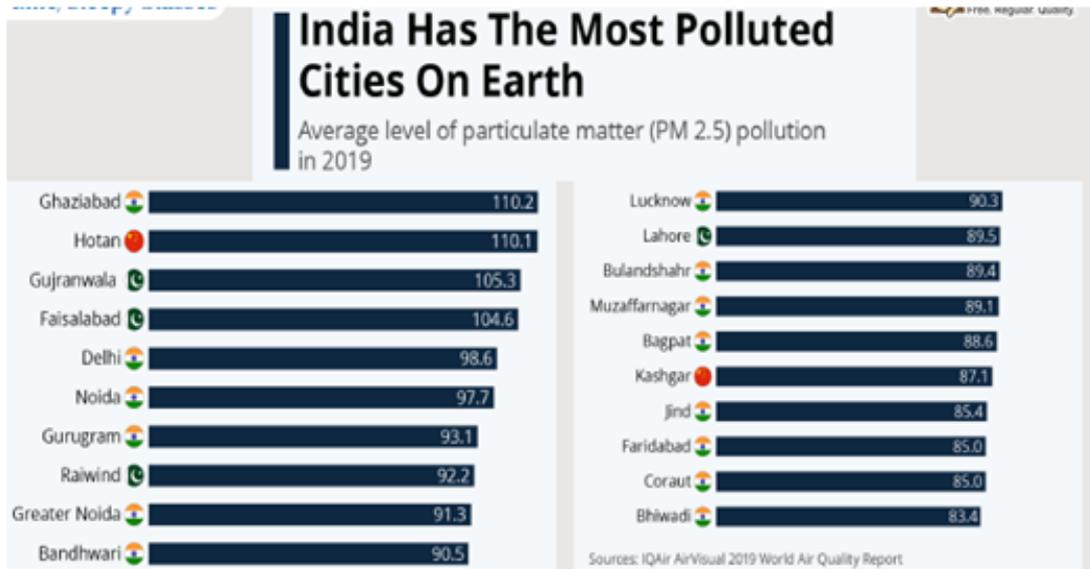


Air Pollution in India

- A quarter of India's population is exposed to pollution level not seen in any other country: Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) by Energy Policy Institute of the University of Chicago (EPIC)
- An average India's life is cut short by more than five years, relative to what it would be if the WHO guidelines are met
- Particulate pollution in India has increased by 42% in the last two decades and was the greatest risk to human health before covid-19
- 84% of Indians live in areas where the pollution levels exceed the country's own air quality standards,

while the entire population is exposed to levels that exceed the WHO guidelines

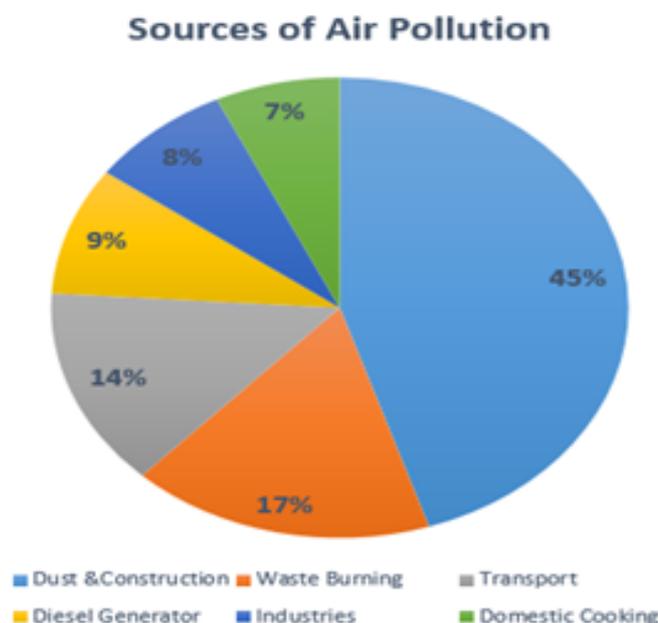
- 21 of the world’s 30 cities with the worst air pollution are in India according to World Air Quality Report, with six in top 10
 - ✓ Ghaziabad is the world’s most polluted city



Major Air Pollutants in India

- Nitrogen Oxides (NOx): NOx leads to the formation of secondary particulate pollution and cannot be filtered by air purifiers
- PM 2.5 and PM 10
- Sulphur Dioxide: India is becoming the world's top sulphur dioxide emitter. While China's sulphur dioxide emission fell by 75 per cent since 2007 India's has increased by 50 per cent. Sulphur dioxide emissions come from coal-fired power plants as this pollutant is produced predominantly when coal is burned to generate electricity

Air Pollution Mix

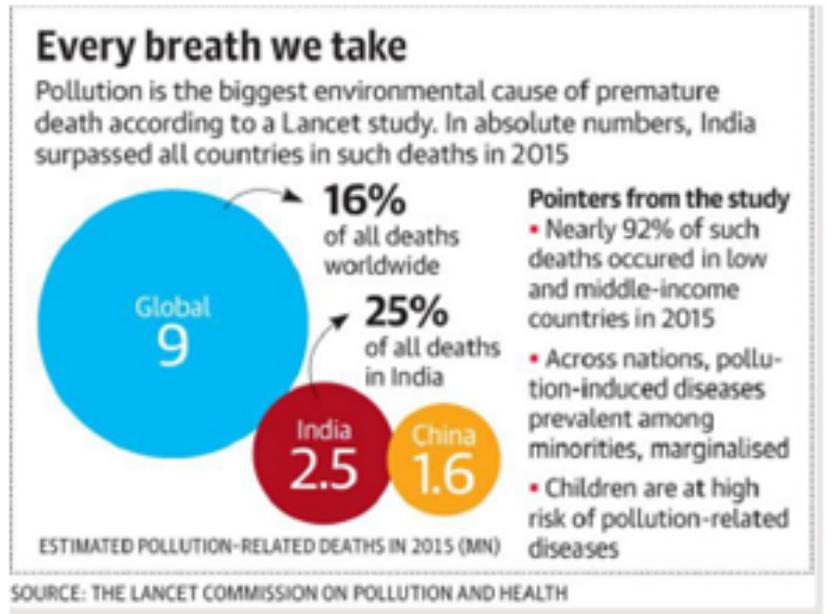


National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

- In 2019, the Centre had declared a “war on pollution” with the launch of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)
- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aims to reduce PM 2.5 and the bigger particulate PM 10 air pollution in 102 cities by 20-30% by 2024 compared to 2017 levels
- NCAP’s goals are non-binding, but if India does achieve and sustain this reduction, it would lead to remarkable health improvements

Impact of Air Pollution

- As per WHO, it causes an estimated 7 million premature deaths a year globally, mainly as a result of increased mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancers and respiratory infections
- Extreme air pollution episodes affect millions of people in densely populated regions who are exposed to thick, toxic smog
- Burning of fossil fuels, which cause air pollution, also emit greenhouse gases which are key driver to climate change



Ray of Hope

- National air pollution in India decreased by 20% from 2018 to 2019, with 98% of cities experiencing of varying levels of improvement
- Countries are increasing their air quality monitoring, with the number of monitoring stations increasing by more than 200% since last year

