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18th May 2021

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Note -

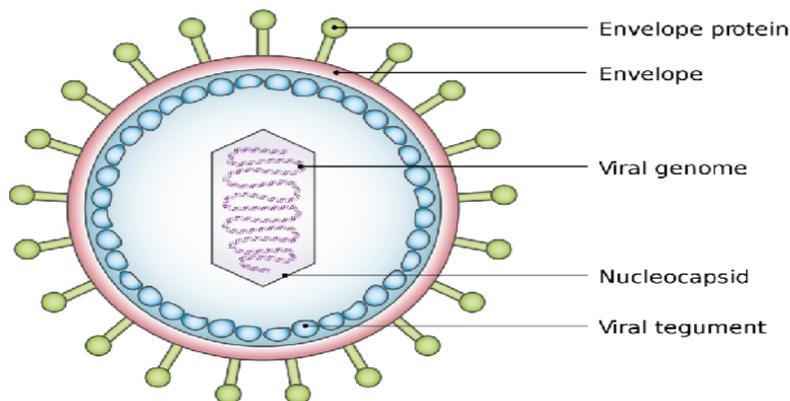
- The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.
- Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .

Click [here](#) to watch the following topics on YouTube

COVID 19 (Part 1)

Properties of Viruses

- Non-cellular organisms
- Do not grow, neither respire nor metabolize, but they reproduce.
- They are surrounded by a protein coat – capsid and have a nucleic acid core comprising DNA or RNA.
- Considered both as living and non-living things.



Naming of disease

- The disease will be called “COVID-19”; the “CO” stands for coronavirus, “VI” for virus and “D” for disease.
- The coronavirus itself is called “nCoV-2019”.
- WHO, in consultation with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), has identified best practices for naming new human diseases

Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)

- The term Public Health Emergency of International Concern is defined in the IHR (2005) as “an extraordinary event which is determined, as provided in these Regulations:
- to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease; and
- to potentially require a coordinated international response”.
- This definition implies a situation that: is serious, unusual or unexpected; carries implications for public health beyond the affected State’s national border; and may require immediate international action

Previously declared global public health emergencies:

- **Swine flu, 2009** - The H1N1 virus spread across the world in 2009, with death toll estimates ranging from 123,000 to 575,400
- **Polio, 2014** - Although closer than ever to eradication in 2012, polio numbers rose in 2013

- **Zika, 2016** - The WHO declared Zika a public health emergency in 2016 after the disease spread rapidly through the Americas
- **Ebola, 2014 and 2019** - The first emergency over the virus lasted from August 2014 to March 2016 as almost 30,000 people were infected and more than 11,000 died in West Africa. A second emergency was declared last year as an outbreak spread in DR Congo

Implications of a PHEIC being declared

- May lead to restrictions on travel and trade.

Pandemic declaration

What is the difference between Endemic, Epidemic and Pandemic?

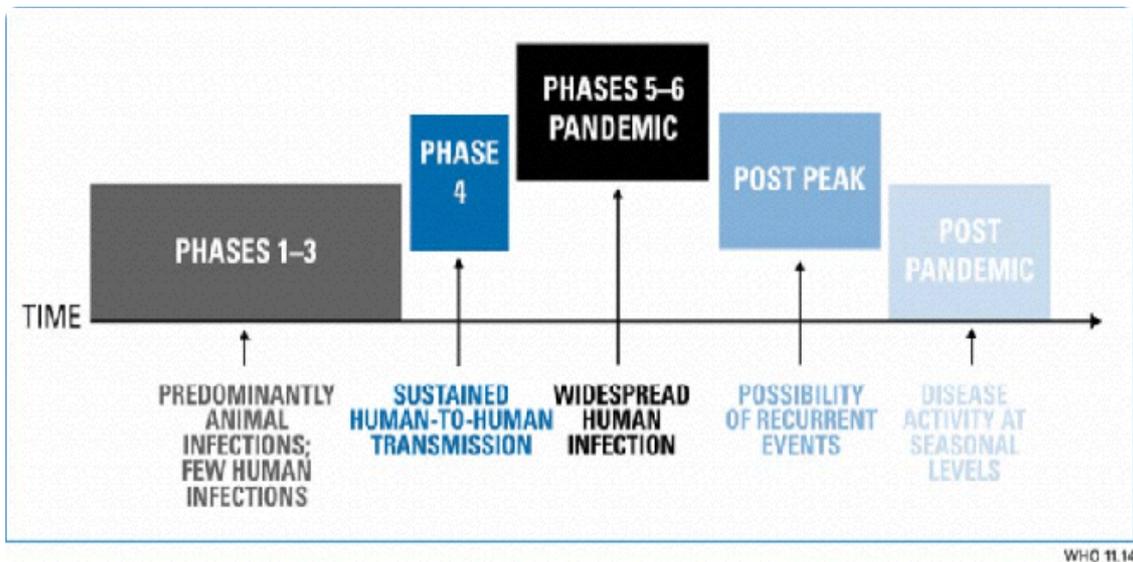


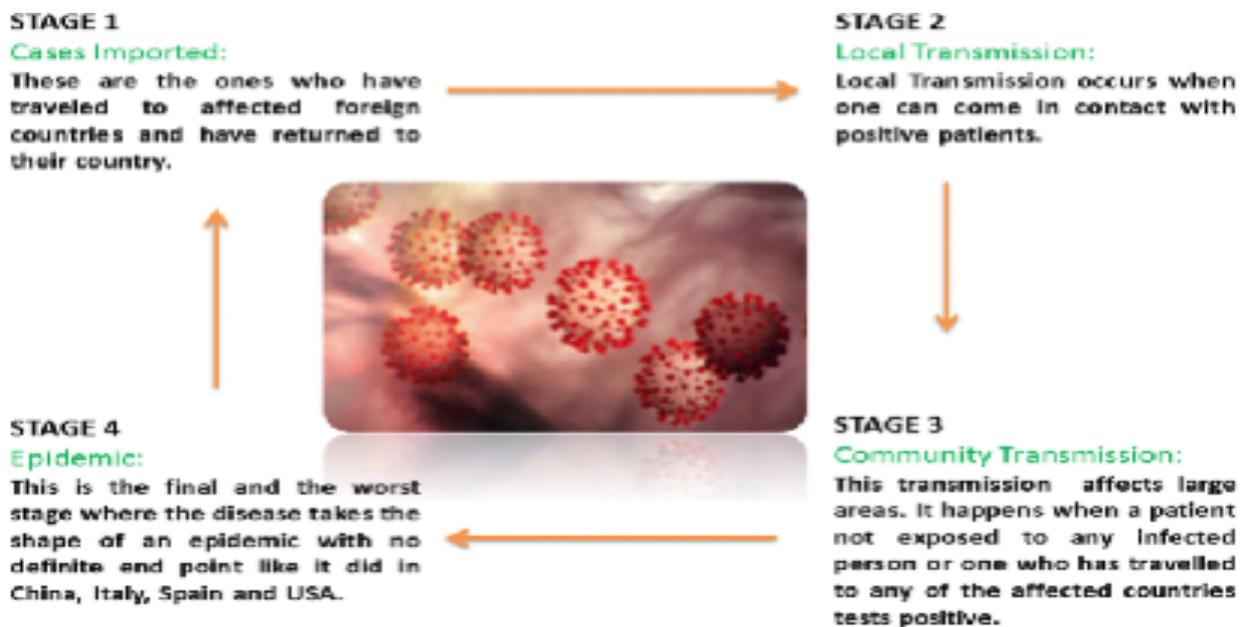
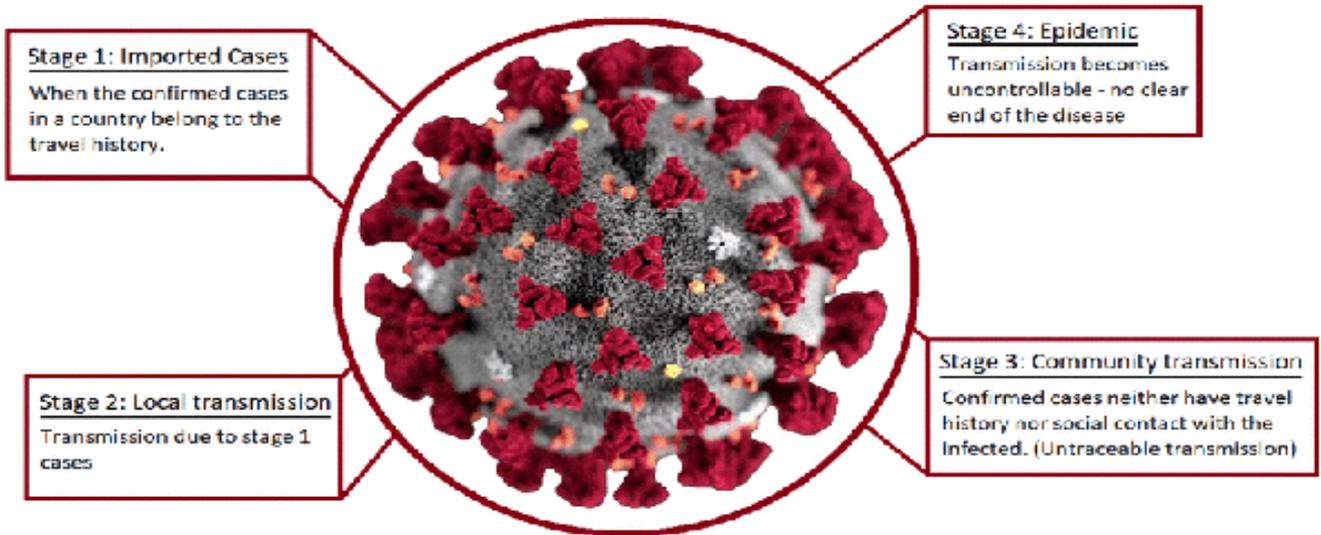
ENDEMIC
The disease is present in a community at all times but in relatively low frequency.

EPIDEMIC
The sudden, and rapid spread of an infectious disease within a short period of time affecting a large number of people within a region or a group.

PANDEMIC
The phenomenon when an epidemic becomes very widespread and affects a continent, or the entire world.

JVS MONTESSORI SCHOOL, INC.
Executive Director: Melissa L. Carter





India resists 'community transmission' tag despite soaring cases (14 May 2021)

- Inspite of adding the highest number of cases in the world every day, India continues to label itself as a country with no community transmission (CT), opting instead for the lower, less serious classification called 'cluster of cases', according to the latest weekly report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on May 11.

No cases	No confirmed cases in the country.
Sporadic cases	One or more cases, imported or locally detected.
Clusters of cases	Cases are clustered in time, geographic location and by common exposure.
Community transmission	Larger outbreaks of local transmission, determined through an assessment of multiple factors, including large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains; large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance; multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the territory.

- Countries such as the **United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, France** labelled themselves as being in 'community transmission'
- Among the 10 countries with the most number of confirmed cases, only **Italy and Russia** do not label themselves as being in 'community transmission'.
- Both countries have been on a declining trajectory for at least a month and together contribute less than 20,000 cases a day – **about 5% of India's daily numbers.**

Community transmission

- Broadly, CT is when **new cases in the last 14 days can't be traced to those who have an international travel history**, when cases can't be linked to specific cluster.

Subcategories of CT.

- CT-1 implying Low incidence of locally acquired, widely dispersed cases and low risk of infection for the general population
- CT-4 suggesting Very high incidence of locally acquired, widely dispersed cases in the past 14 days. Very high risk of infection for the general population.

Cluster of cases

- Cases detected in the past 14 days are predominantly **limited to well-defined clusters** that are not directly **linked to imported cases**
- It is assumed that there are a number of unidentified cases in the area.
- This implies a **low risk of infection to others** in the wider community if exposure to these clusters is avoided

1. Science & technology

1.1. Zeolites

- Recently Air India Airlifts 35 Tonnes of Zeolite Used in Oxygen Production Plants from Rome

Zeolites

- Zeolites are crystalline solids structures made of silicon, aluminum and oxygen that form a framework with cavities and channels inside where cations, water and/or small molecules may reside. They are often also referred to as molecular sieves

Application

- **Adsorption:** Zeolites are used to adsorb a variety of materials. This includes applications in drying, purification, and separation. They can remove water
- Zeolite is used in oxygen production plants that are based on pressure swing adsorption (PSA) technology
- **Catalysis:** Zeolites are extremely useful as catalysts for several important reactions involving organic molecules
- **Ion exchange:** Hydrated cations within the zeolite pores are bound loosely to the zeolite framework, and can readily exchange with other cations when in aqueous media. Applications of this can be seen in water softening devices, and the use of zeolites in detergents and soaps.
- Other

✓ Aquaculture: Ammonia filtration in fish hatcheries

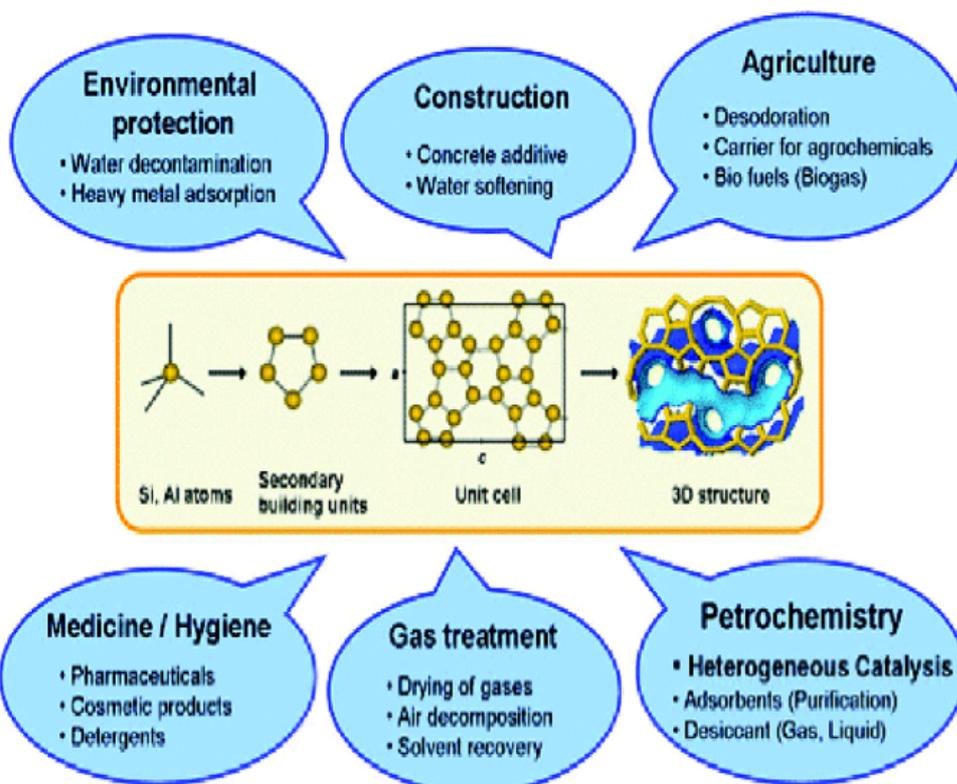
✓ Agriculture: Odour control

✓ Household : odour control

- Domestic uses related primarily to the odour and liquid adsorbing characteristics of zeolite.

- A range of gases including formaldehyde, hydrogen sulphide has been shown to be adsorbed by zeolite.

- It can be used to dry sports shoes, reduce moisture in wardrobes and is commonly used to adsorb cigarette odours

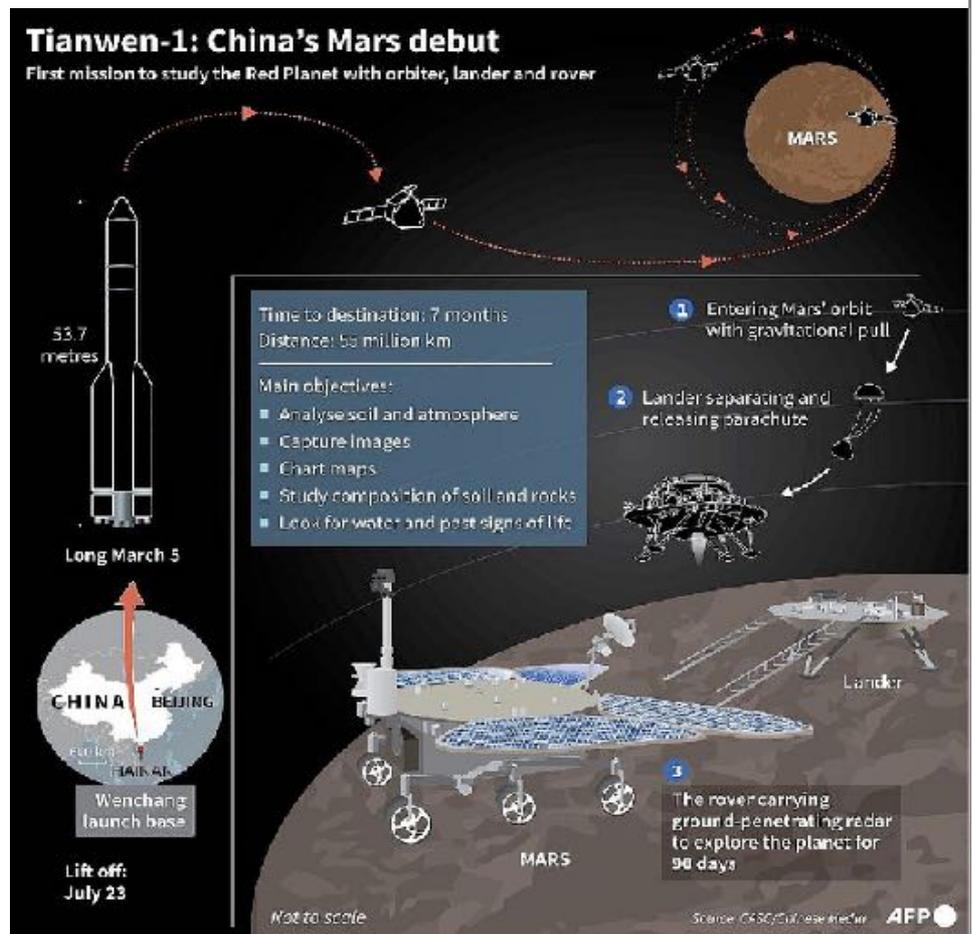


1.2. Tianwen-1 Mission

- China's Tianwen-1 spacecraft lands on Mars, will now deploy Zhurong rover on the surface
- The lander carrying Zhurong completed the treacherous descent through the Martian atmosphere using a parachute to navigate the "seven minutes of terror" as it is known, aiming for a vast northern lava plain known as the Utopia Planitia
- It makes China the first country to carry out an orbiting, landing and roving operation during its first mission to Mars -- a feat unmatched by the only other two nations to reach the Red Planet, the US and Russia.
- This is not the first time China has attempted to send a spacecraft to Mars.
- Nearly ten years ago, the country launched the Yinghuo-1 mission, which ultimately failed after the spacecraft burnt while still in the Earth's atmosphere after the Russian rocket that was carrying it failed in flight.

Which other countries have managed to send rovers to Mars?

- Apart from China, only the United States has been able to deploy rovers to study the surface of the Red Planet.
- The first successful landing was made by NASA in July 1976, when the Viking 1 rover touched down on Mars. Shortly after that, Viking 2 arrived on the Red Planet.
- In the decades that followed, the US successfully sent the Opportunity and Spirit rovers to explore Mars.
- In 1971, the former Soviet Union managed to launch a Mars probe, however, communication was lost within seconds of it landing.
- The 'Zhurong' rover is slightly heavier than NASA's Spirit and Opportunity rovers, but only one-fourth the weight of Perseverance and Curiosity
- The target was to land on Utopia Planitia – which is also where NASA's Viking-2 touched down in 1976.



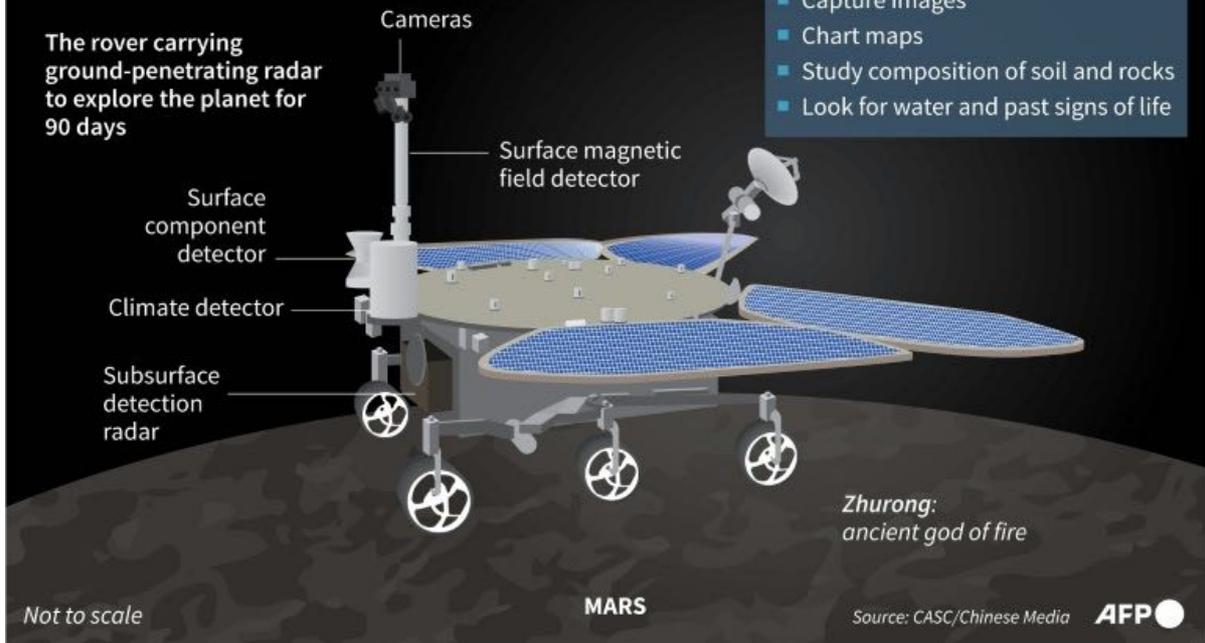
Zhurong: China's Mars surface debut

First Chinese rover sent to the Red Planet

The rover carrying ground-penetrating radar to explore the planet for 90 days

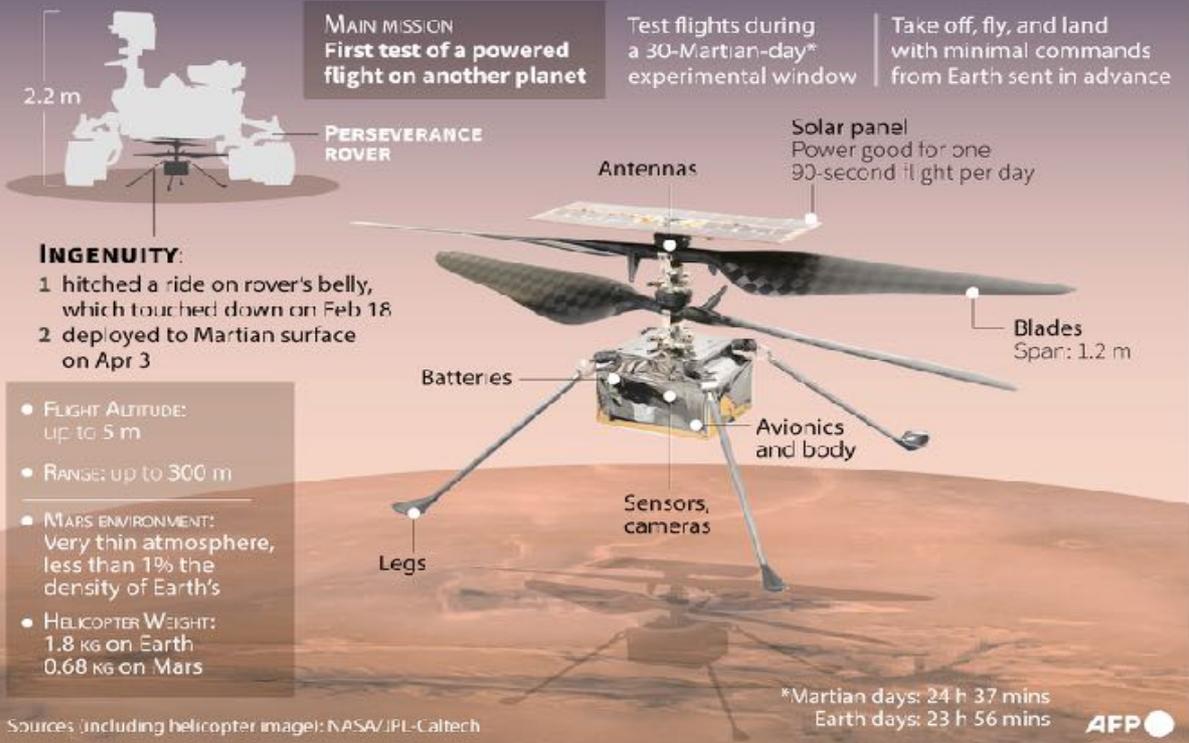
Main objectives:

- Analyse soil and atmosphere
- Capture images
- Chart maps
- Study composition of soil and rocks
- Look for water and past signs of life



NASA's Ingenuity helicopter: first powered flight on Mars

Expected to make its first flight attempt no earlier than April 19



2. Geography

2.1. Tauktae cyclone

- Cyclone Tauktae began the process of landfall on the Gujarat coast.
- Earlier in the day, six persons were reported killed in Maharashtra, as the “extremely severe cyclonic storm” ran parallel to the Maharashtra coast and wound its way to Gujarat.
- The storm is expected to whittle down to a “very severe cyclonic storm” – still rustling up wind speeds of up to 170 kmph – and by early Tuesday become a “severe cyclonic storm”. Wind speeds are expected to remain around 100 kmph during Tauktae’s track over land for most of Tuesday.

**India Meteorological Department
Tropical Cyclone Intensity Scale**

Category	Sustained winds (3-min average)
Super Cyclonic Storm	≥120 kt ≥221 km/h
Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm	90–119 kt 166–220 km/h
Very Severe Cyclonic Storm	64–89 kt 118–165 km/h
Severe Cyclonic Storm	48–63 kt 89–117 km/h
Cyclonic Storm	34–47 kt 63–88 km/h
Deep Depression	28–33 kt 51–62 km/h
Depression	17–27 kt 31–50 km/h

Tropical cyclones (2nd April DND)

- are developed in the regions between the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer.
- They are caused by atmospheric disturbances around a **low-pressure area** distinguished by swift and often destructive air circulation

History of naming cyclones

Early 19th century

- People named storms after the **places they hit**, names of the saints on whose day the hurricane occurred, or simply the year of their occurrence.
- The practice of naming tropical cyclones is said to be **initiated by well-known meteorologist Clement Wragge during the late 19th century.**

20th Century

- During the mid 20th century, western meteorologists started naming cyclones using some **common women names** for ease of identifying when there are multiple systems over a particular ocean basin.
- Fortunately, this seemingly gender-biased system came to an end by 2000 after several protests. In 1997, **Hong Kong proposed using local names for regional cyclones** rather than using European and American names.
- In 2000, the **World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) agreed to start assigning names for cyclones over the North Indian Ocean basin** using a list of names suggested by the countries surrounding the ocean basin.
- Initially, India expressed reservations to naming cyclones and after four years of continuous deliberations, the **India Meteorological Department (IMD) initiated the naming of the North Indian Ocean storm with Cyclone On in September 2004.**

Process of naming

- There are six **regional specialised meteorological centres (RSMCs)** and five regional Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs) across the globe to monitor cyclogenesis, issue advisories and name cyclones.
- **IMD's RSMC in New Delhi is one among them that provide advisories to 13 countries** in the north Indian Ocean basin: **Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.**
- RSMC, New Delhi is, therefore, responsible for naming cyclones over the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea based on the suggested names from all these countries.

Guidelines

- If these guidelines are following, the name is accepted by the panel on tropical cyclones (PTC) that finalises the selection:
 - ✓ The proposed name should be **neutral** to (a) politics and political figures (b) religious believes, (c) cultures and (d) gender
 - ✓ Not hurt the **sentiments of any group** of population over the globe.
 - ✓ It should **not be very rude** and cruel in nature
 - ✓ It should be short, easy to pronounce and should **not be offensive** to any member
 - ✓ The maximum length of the name will be **eight letters**
 - ✓ The proposed name should be **provided with its pronunciation and voice over**
 - ✓ The names of tropical cyclones over the **north Indian Ocean will not be repeated.**
 - ✓ Once used, it will **cease to be used again.** Thus, the name should be new.
- As per the WMO guidelines, if a cyclone is particularly **deadly or costly**, the name is retired and **never used again** for any other hurricane.
- As per the WMO records, infamous storm names such as Mangkhut (the Philippines, 2018), Irma and Maria (the Caribbean, 2017), are some of the names of hurricanes that are retired now.

What will be the next cyclone called?

- The next cyclone in the region will be called '**Yaas**', a name given by Oman, while the one after that will be called '**Gulab**' as recommended by Pakistan. At present the first list is in use. Once the names in the first list are exhausted, the second list of the names in the table will be used, and so on.
- RSMC, New Delhi is, therefore, responsible for naming cyclones over the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea based on the suggested names from all these countries. Out of several criteria for naming cyclones, some very important ones are: names should be politically and culturally neutral, should not be rude and cruel and should be short, easy to pronounce. The maximum permissible length of the cyclone names is eight letters.
- As per the WMO guidelines, a list of 64 names was drawn in 2004 using the suggested names from eight countries in the region. Exactly a year ago, in May 2020, Cyclone Amphan became the last cyclone to get its name from the old list.

3. Polity

3.1. Legislative Council

- The West Bengal Government will set up a Legislative Council, or a Vidhan Parishad. A decision on setting up the council was taken up at a State Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday.

Creation of legislative council

- **Under Article 169**, a Legislative Council can be formed “if the Legislative Assembly of the State passes a resolution to that effect by a **majority of the total membership of the Assembly and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Assembly** present and voting”. Parliament can then pass a law to this effect.

Composition

- Article 171 of the constitution of India defines the composition of the councils.
- The strength of any council shall **not exceed 1/3rd of the strength** of the state assembly.
- But for **smaller states, the minimum strength of the council can be forty (40)**.
- The members of the Legislative Councils comprise of people elected through five different constituencies.
- Thus, **5/6 of the total number of members of a legislative council are indirectly** elected and 1/6 are nominated by the governor.
- **Eligibility criteria:** Indian citizen who is at least 30 years of age
- The states with bicameral legislature include Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. These states have both the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

Composition of a Legislative Council	
Constituency	Number of Members to be elected
Graduates	One-Twelfth (1/12th)
Teachers	One-Twelfth (1/12th)
Local Authorities	Nearly One-Third (1/3rd)
Assembly Members	Nearly One-Third (1/3rd)
Nomination by Governor	Remaining

3.2. Malerkotla - 23rd district of Punjab

- On May 14, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh declared Malerkotla the 23rd district of the State
- **Section 5 of the Punjab Land Revenue Act, 1887** says the “State government may, by notification, vary the limits and alter the numbers of tehsils, districts and divisions into which the State is divided”.

How are new districts carved?

- The power to create new districts or alter or abolish existing districts **rests with the State governments**.
- This can either be done through an **executive order** or by passing a **law in the State Assembly**.

- Many States prefer the executive route by simply issuing a notification in the official gazette.

Does the Central government have a role to play here?

- The Centre has no role to play in the alteration of districts or creation of new ones. States are free to decide.

Procedure to change name of district

- The **Home Ministry** comes into the picture when a State wants to change the name of a district or a railway station.
- The **State government's request is sent to other departments** and agencies such as the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Intelligence Bureau, Department of Posts, Geographical Survey of India Sciences and the Railway Ministry seeking clearance.
- A **no-objection certificate** may be issued after examining their replies.

Significance

- States argue that smaller districts lead to better administration and governance.
- For example, in 2016, the Assam government issued a notification to upgrade the Majuli sub-division to Majuli district for "administrative expediency".

What has been the trend?

- According to the **2011 Census**, there were 593 districts in the country.
- The Census results showed that **between 2001-2011, as many as 46 districts were created by States.**
- Though the 2021 Census is yet to happen, Know India, a website run by the Government of India, says **currently there are 718 districts in the country.**
- The surge in number is also due to bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into A.P. and Telangana in 2014. Telangana at present has 33 districts and A.P. has 13 districts.

3.3. Indicative Notes

- Recently CJI Ramana launches new SC mobile app; 'Indicative Notes' on landmark judgements on its website
- The Indicative Notes would aim to provide **concise summaries of landmark judgments in an easy-to-understand format.**
- It will serve as a useful resource for media persons and the general public who wish to be better informed about the rulings of the court.

4. International Relation

4.1. Diplomatic immunity

- Recently Diplomatic immunity row sparked by Belgian envoy's wife 'hitting' two in Seoul

Diplomatic immunity

- It is a **privilege of exemption from certain laws and taxes granted to diplomats** by the country in which they are posted.
- The custom was formed so that **diplomats can function without fear, threat** or intimidation from the host country.

Diplomatic agents

- The Vienna Convention states that "diplomatic agents" **including "the members of the diplomatic staff, and of the administrative and technical staff and of the service staff of the mission"** should be granted immunity

Basis of Diplomatic immunity

- It is granted on the basis of two conventions, popularly called the **Vienna Conventions** – the Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, and the Convention on Consular Relations, 1963.
- They have been ratified by 187 countries
- While diplomats granted immunity are ensured safe unfettered travel and are **generally not susceptible to lawsuits or criminal prosecution under the laws of the host country**, they can still be expelled from the host country.
- They also enjoy **immunity from civil proceedings unless the case involves property or business interests** unrelated to their diplomatic duties.

What is the extent of this immunity?

- According to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, the **immunity enjoyed by a diplomat posted in the embassy is "inviolable"**.
- The diplomat cannot be arrested or detained and his house will have the same inviolability and protection as the embassy.
- It is possible for the **diplomat's home country to waive immunity** but this can happen **only when the individual has committed a 'serious crime'**, unconnected with their diplomatic role or has witnessed such a crime.
- Alternatively, the home country may prosecute the individual.
- While diplomatic immunity is intended to "insulate" diplomats from harm, it **does not insulate their countries from a bad reputation and a blow to bilateral ties**.
- The privilege of diplomatic **immunity is not for an individual's benefit**.
- If a diplomat acts outside his business of conducting international relations, a question arises over whether his immunity still applies.

Is this immunity the same for all diplomats and their families?

- No. The Vienna Convention classifies diplomats according to their posting in the embassy, consular or international organisations such as the UN. A nation has only one embassy per foreign country, usually in the capital, but may have multiple consulate offices, generally in locations where many of its citizens live or visit.
- **Diplomats posted in an embassy** get immunity, along with his or her family members.
- While **diplomats posted in consulates** also get immunity, they can be prosecuted in case of serious crimes, that is, when a warrant is issued. Besides, their **families don't share that immunity**.

Full year Current Affairs Revision through MCQs

International Relation-Day 2

1. Recently Asaf, arak, fordo seen in news are:

- A. Oil refineries in Saudi Arabia
- B. Places attacked by Hamas
- C. Nuclear sites in Iran
- D. Sites captured by Taliban

2. Recently Quds, grad, fajr seen in news are:

- A. Oil refineries
- B. Missile system
- C. Uranium sites
- D. Greenland glaciers

3. Consider the following matches:

- 1. Demchok Himachal Pradesh
- 2. Kauri Ladakh
- 3. Barahoti Uttarakhand
- 4. Asaphila Arunachal Pradesh

Select the correct answer code:

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 1, 3 and 4 only
- C. 3 and 4 only
- D. 2, 3 and 4 only

5. Arrange the following from north to south:

1. Galwan valley
2. Shaksgam valley
3. Chushul
4. Hot springs

Select the correct answer code:

- A. 2, 4, 1, 3
- B. 4, 2, 1, 3
- C. 2, 1, 4, 3
- D. 4, 1, 2, 3

5. Recently Dagu, Jiexu, Zangmu seen in news are:

- A. Dams on Indus river
- B. Dams on Brahmaputra
- C. Indo-Bhutan Hydro project
- D. None of the above

Current affairs Worksheet (18th May 2021)

Factual sheet for Quick revision

Topic	Description	Update
COVID 19	Properties of Viruses	
	Naming of disease	
	Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)	
	Pandemic declaration	
	Transmission stages	
	Cluster of cases	
Sc n Tech	Zeolite	
	Tianwen-1	
Geograp hy	Tauktae cyclone	
	Naming of cyclone	
Polity	Creation of legislative council	
	Creation of dist	
	Indicative Notes	
	Diplomatic immunity	