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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; T – Thiruvananthapuram; D – Delhi
Island of hope in the midst of global measles resurgence

Sri Lanka has become free of the viral infection

On July 5, Sri Lanka became the fourth country in the Asian region – after Bhutan, the Maldives and Tuvalu – to eliminate measles. Amidst all praise in the medical community, however, Sri Lanka’s success is considered as an encouraging development, especially in a country where measles cases were reported from all 25 districts. While global coverage for the first dose of vaccine has remained stagnant at 81%, and for the second dose, it is still at 47%, the coverage for Sri Lanka has been above 95% for both the first and second doses. This was possible with the country’s National Immunisation Programme.

Measles

* highly contagious disease
* caused by Measles virus
* Human to Human transmission - through droplets from nose, mouth or throat of infected persons
* Serious complications - more common among
  → Children below 5 years of age
  → adults over 30 years of age
* Severe measles - most likely among
  → poorly nourished young children
  → Insufficient Vitamin A
  → Children having weak immune systems
* Vaccination on schedule - Safest way to prevent infection

Recent increase in Measles infections in Europe

* Europe → ‘European Region’ according to WHO
* 2018 → highest number of incidence reported in 10 years
* 2019 → Reported infections may become higher than 2018

Reasons: 1. Non-Uniform Vaccination

→ Pockets of low coverage → accumulation of susceptible individuals

2. Vaccination - not able to ensure ‘herd immunity’

Sri Lanka

→ Island of hope in the midst of global measles resurgence
→ One of the four countries in Asian region to have eliminated measles
→ How Sri Lanka managed to accomplish?
  * Better vaccination coverage for both 1st and 2nd dose, compared to global coverage
  * Periodical mass vaccination campaigns
  * Strong surveillance
  * Management despite setbacks
→ becomes an exemplar for other nations to achieve elimination of Measles.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to Measles.

1. Measles is a Non-communicable disease.
2. It is transmitted by Mosquitoes.
3. The children under the age of 5 years are more commonly infected by Measles.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  

b) 1 and 2 only  

c) 3 only  

d) 1, 2 and 3

India rises in global innovation ranking

India has climbed five places in the Global Innovation Index 2019, up from the 25 it held in last year’s rankings. It ranks 21st, up from 26th last year, which translates to 71 in 2018, 95 in 2017 and 109 in 2016.

“The performance improvement of India is quite impressive, brought about by the Indian Patent Office, the World Intellectual Property Organization, DST and the CBIC,” said G. K. Pillai, chairman of the Indian Patent Office.

India continues to be the most innovative economy in central and southern Asia—increasing its global rank in the index from 93 to 84. India continues to score in the fields of science and engineering, and also in innovation and scientific research, according to the report.

Global Innovation Index - 2019

* By WIPO, Cornell University, INSEAD
* Ranks 129 countries
* Based on 80 indicators
* R&D Investment
* International – patent
* high tech exports
* mobile app creation

Top 3 positions
Switzerland, Sweden, USA

Bottom 3 positions
Niger, Togo, Yemen
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Global innovation index is released by
   a) World Economic Forum.
   b) WIPO, INSEAD, and Cornell university.
   c) Global innovation policy centre and SIPRI
   d) International energy agency

Key findings – India

→ One among the top countries in ICT services export, gross capital formation
→ India:
   Country’s size should uphold = True impact on global progress in innovation
→ Top country in Central and Southern Asian region
   from 2011

Editorial

* Kashmir Issue – Regarding India’s territorial integrity
* Structural trends in South Asia have been changing over the past several years

India – Pakistan Relations

* Both India & Pakistan think that they have some advantageous position at the international level
* India → Strong Central Govt. → Stable bilateral relations

* Pakistan

⇒ Pakistan – China

   * China has assured strategic commitments
   * Help develop Pakistan economy
Pakistan - USA
* US → Military alliance with Pakistan since 1950s
* Changing cycle of bilateral engagements
* US discreetly engages with Pakistan without offending India

Afghan Factor
* US, China & Russia have recognised the role of Pakistan in ensuring peace in Afghanistan
* Advantage to Pakistan
* Author: India has to play a balanced role for a successful foreign policy

Pakistan’s Polity
* World Powers’ Interests on Pakistan
  * Stability in the region and also to avoid a major subcontinental conflict
  * India → Pakistan should transform its domestic politics and external behaviour

* Author
  * USA’s & China’s Interests → Strong Pakistan
    * Army + Competent civil govt. + group of elite
  * USA’s interest → Pakistan Army
    * Military angle
  * China’s Interest → Pakistan as a partner
    * Economic angle

Shift in Strategic Concerns
* India is strong in policy and economy
* But, Pakistan is unstable → Negative → Strategic Role Concerns
* India’s statecraft necessary for the world powers to align with India again

Author’s Suggestions
* India must display its right and capacity in case of terror attacks by striking back
  * World Power can realign their interests
  * Pakistan may constructively engage with India

* If India asks the intervention of third parties, it should only be for stopping the proxy war of Pakistan in Kashmir region

Once peace is established, India should persuade Pakistan to accept Loc as ‘final territorial settlement’ as offered in 1972 Shimla negotiations
Animals 'reclaim' abandoned quarries

- 'Illegal' stone mining in Karbi Anglong Hills
- Noise pollution, contamination of river streams
- Supreme court order on 'closure' of quarries
- Floods in Kaziranga National Park (KNP)
- Karbi Anglong hills - natural refuge for animals of KNP
- Malori Animal Corridor
- Manas National Park
- Japanese Encephalitis and floods in Assam

Sand mining: SC seeks reply from Centre and five States

- Supreme Court → Centre + 5 states
  → T.N, Maharashtra, A.P, Punjab & M.P
- Rampant illegal beach and river sand mining
  → Severe ecological imbalance
  → Lowering of Ground water Table
  → Land degradation
  → Damage to land use patterns
- Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines, 2016

Cattle smuggling along eastern border dips

- Border between India and Bangladesh - 4096 km
- Cattle Smuggling decreased by 50% since 2016
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros.

1. The population of the animal is the highest in the state of Assam.
2. The animal is protected under the Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and is listed as ‘Endangered’ in the IUCN Red list, as the population trend is decreasing.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to Measles.

1. Measles is a Non-communicable disease.
2. It is transmitted by Mosquitoes.
3. The children under the age of 5 years are more commonly infected by Measles.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 1 and 2 only
c) 3 only
d) 1, 2 and 3

Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Global innovation index is released by

a) World Economic Forum.
b) WIPO, INSEAD, and Cornell university.
c) Global innovation policy centre and SIPRI
d) International energy agency
Q3. Consider the following statements with reference to the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros.

1. The population of the animal is the highest in the state of Assam.
2. The animal is protected under the Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and is listed as ‘Endangered’ in the IUCN Red list, as the population trend is decreasing.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

Practice Questions – Prelims Answers
25th July 2019

1. Option ‘c’ – 3 only
3. Option ‘a’ – 1 only