
4. DRDO to Develop 'multi-patient ventilators' for Critical COVID-19

Patients

Prelims Syllabus: Governance

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Disaster and Disaster Management.

Why in News?

- The Health Ministry has asked the public sector unit to make about 10,000 ventilators. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a PSU under the Ministry of Defence, is expected to supply about 30,000 ventilators by June 2020.
- The initiative to invite corporates to make multi-patient ventilators is also being tried out by the United States, which currently has the maximum COVID-19 patients in the world

Highlights:

- The multi-patient ventilators will help support several patients through a single unit. The DRDO is developing the advanced ventilators to meet the demand in case the coronavirus outbreak goes out of control.
- The DRDO aims to produce around 5000 ventilators in the first months and 10,000 subsequently.
- Each of the critical care ventilators is expected to cost around Rs four lakh.
- The organisation has found some local alternatives to the supply of critical components.
- Around nine companies have been identified for design transfer and to produce the components of the ventilator. Anand Mahindra has been selected for the fabrication of components.
- As per reports, the government has reached out to five automobile companies- Honda Cars India, Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai Motor India, Mahindra and Mahindra and Tata Motors to explore the possibility of making ventilators at their plants.
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation is also developing personal protection equipment including five-layered N-99 face masks for the healthcare personnel of the country.
- The DRDO has offered the technology to the industry to produce the face masks on a large scale. The DRDO has also produced surgical face masks and distributed them to the Delhi Police.

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- The DRDO is also producing sanitizing vans in large numbers to supply to major cities and towns to sanitize people who enter the van.

Ventilators in India:

- India has a total of about 40,000 ventilators at present including about 8,500 in public hospitals.
- Kerala, which has the highest number of positive coronavirus cases has around 5000 ventilators, Mumbai has about 1,000, Tamil Nadu has around 1,500 and Madhya Pradesh has about 1,800 ventilator units.
- ✓ **The number of ventilators in some of the eastern states is less than 10.**

