
1. TRIFED

Why in News?

- TRIFED in collaboration with UNICEF & WHO launched digital campaign through webinar for SHGs to ensure that Tribal Gatherers carry on their work safely.

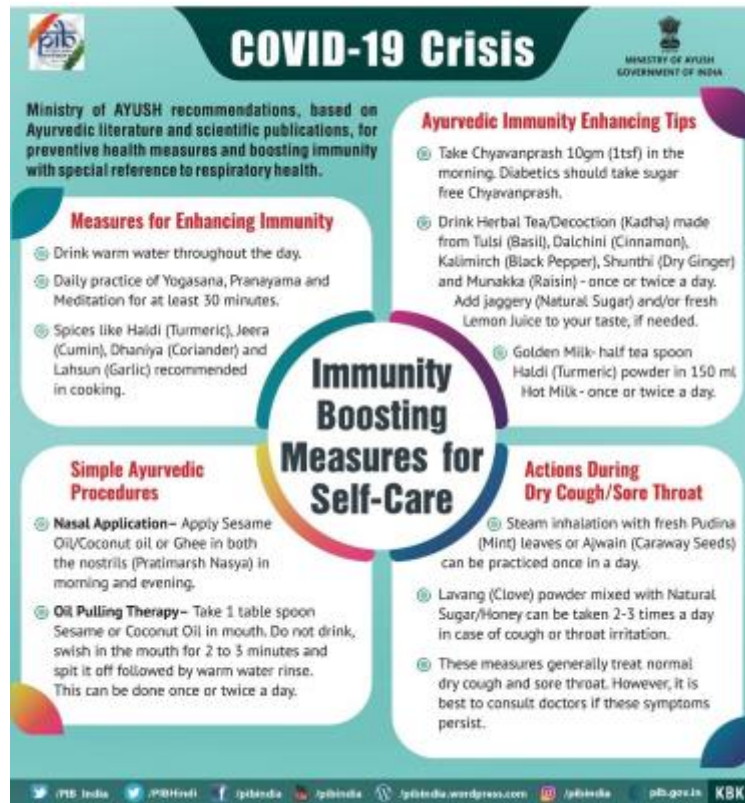
Highlights:

- TRIFED launched through a Webinar, Virtual training to its Trainers and Self Help Groups (SHGs) on basic orientation on Covid-19 response and key preventive measures to ensure tribal gatherers carry on their work safely.
- It is aimed to reach more than 18,000 participants and would cover tribal regions across all the 27 States.
- To ensure tribal gatherers carry on their work safely, TRIFED has collaborated with UNICEF and WHO for developing a digital communication strategy for promoting a digital campaign for Self Help Groups (SHGs) involved in this work, highlighting the importance of Social Distancing.
- UNICEF is providing the necessary support to the SHG Centres in the form of Digital Multimedia content, Webinars for Virtual trainings, Social Media campaigns (on social distancing, home quarantine, etc.) and Vanya Radio.
- Additionally, TRIFED has reached out to the Art of Living Foundation's #iStandWithHumanity Initiative with a Stand with Tribal Families component in providing the much-needed food and ration for survival of the tribal community.

2. AYUSH Reiterates Immunity Boosting Measures

Why in News?

- In the wake of the COVID 19 outbreak, entire mankind across the globe is suffering. Enhancing the body's natural defence system (immunity) plays an important role in maintaining optimum health.
- We all know that prevention is better than cure. While there is no medicine for COVID-19 as of now, it will be good to take preventive measures which boost our immunity in these times.
- Ayurveda's extensive knowledge base on preventive care, derives from the concepts of "Dinacharya" – daily regimes and "Ritucharya" – seasonal regimes to maintain a healthy life.



COVID-19 Crisis
 Ministry of AYUSH recommendations, based on Ayurvedic literature and scientific publications, for preventive health measures and boosting immunity with special reference to respiratory health.

Measures for Enhancing Immunity

- Drink warm water throughout the day.
- Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation for at least 30 minutes.
- Spices like Haldi (Turmeric), Jeera (Cumin), Dhaniya (Coriander) and Lahsun (Garlic) recommended in cooking.

Ayurvedic Immunity Enhancing Tips

- Take Chyavanprash 10gm (1tsf) in the morning. Diabetics should take sugar free Chyavanprash.
- Drink Herbal Tea/Decoction (Kadha) made from Tulsi (Basil), Dalchini (Cinnamon), Kalimirch (Black Pepper), Shunthi (Dry Ginger) and Munakka (Raisin) - once or twice a day. Add jaggery (Natural Sugar) and/or fresh Lemon Juice to your taste, if needed.
- Golden Milk- half tea spoon Haldi (Turmeric) powder in 150 ml Hot Milk - once or twice a day.

Simple Ayurvedic Procedures

- Nasal Application** - Apply Sesame Oil/Cocunut oil or Ghee in both the nostrils (Pratimarsh Nasya) in morning and evening.
- Oil Pulling Therapy** - Take 1 table spoon Sesame or Coconut Oil in mouth. Do not drink, swish in the mouth for 2 to 5 minutes and spit it off followed by warm water rinse. This can be done once or twice a day.

Immunity Boosting Measures for Self-Care

Actions During Dry Cough/Sore Throat

- Steam inhalation with fresh Pudina (Mint) leaves or Ajwain (Caraway Seeds) can be practiced once in a day.
- Lavang (Clove) powder mixed with Natural Sugar/Honey can be taken 2-3 times a day in case of cough or throat irritation.
- These measures generally treat normal dry cough and sore throat. However, it is best to consult doctors if these symptoms persist.

3. Operation SHIELD

Why in News?

- The Delhi government will carry out 'Operation SHIELD' at 21 locations identified as containment zones in the Delhi. Operation SHIELD includes sealing, identifying and quarantining people in containment zones, doorstep delivery of essential items and door-to-door chec-king of people in those areas.



How containment takes place
Operation S.H.I.E.L.D.

- S** Sealing of the immediate area or surroundings after geographical marking
- H** Home quarantine of all the people living in the area
- I** Isolation and Tracing of people who have been first and second contacts
- E** Essential Supply of commodities is ensured
- L** Local Sanitisation of the area by authorities
- D** Door 2 Door health checks of everyone living in the area

4. Ivermectin Drug

Why in News?

- Few scientists testing head lice drug Ivermectin found that it could be possible treatment to kill SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- While countries across the world are leaning on Hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug to cure COVID-19, researchers are trying to find other possible drugs.

Highlights:

- Researchers says a single dose could remove all viral RNA within 48 hours. The drug which is on the initial stages on testing, is yet to tested on COVID-19 patients.
- The drug prevents the replication of SARS-CoV-2. When tested, the virus came to a rest within 24-48 hours after it was exposed to Ivermectin.
- Levels of the virus declined by 99.8% in 48 hours and completely within three days. Researchers also say that there was even a significant reduction within 24 hours.
- The drug helps in stopping the processes that allow proteins to move within the virus. It has also been proven that Ivermectin tackles other viruses such as HIV, dengue, influenza and Zika replicating, at least in the laboratory.
- Ivermectin was developed as a veterinary drug in the 1970s but is now used to treat head lice.
- It is also effective against parasites that cause other infections. Another interesting thing to note is, Ivermectin has already been approved by the World Health Organization as an “essential medicine.”

Ivermectin:

- Ivermectin is a medicine used to kill parasites. Used since 1980s, the drug is mainly used in creams and lotions for head lice.
- Besides this, it is also used in a tablet form to cure roundworm infection and second-line treatment for scabies and rosacea, a skin condition that results in redness and causes pus-filled bumps on the face.
- The drug needs to be consumed with a glass of water on an empty stomach at least an hour before a meal. It is usually taken as a single dose or series of doses, as per the directions of the doctor.
- The drug may cause tiredness, loss of energy, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, dizziness, drowsiness and itchiness.

- In case of a skin or an eye infection, the medicine may lead to joint pain and swelling, swollen and tender lymph nodes, itching, rashes, fever and eye problems.
- Some of the serious side effects include low blood pressure, inability to breathe and can also lead to liver damage.

5. Revamp of Swachhata App

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched a revised version of the existing Swachhata-MoHUA App in order to handle the queries specific to Covid-19.

Key Points:

- Swachhata-MoHUA is the official platform for Swachh Bharat Mission built in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The app enables a citizen to post a civic-related issue (eg; a garbage dump, public toilets not cleaned, etc.) which is then forwarded to the city corporation concerned and thereafter assigned to the sanitary inspector of the particular ward.
- Swachh Bharat Mission is being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and by the Ministry of Jal Shakti for urban and rural areas respectively

Significance of the App:

- It serves as an effective digital tool (e-governance) enabling citizens to play an active role in the Swachhata of their cities and increase accountability on the part of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- The revised version includes Covid-19 related support requests including fogging/sanitation, food, shelter and reporting violation of quarantine/lockdown, suspected cases of Infection.

6. Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

Why in News:

- The EPFO has recently processed nearly 1.37 lakh claims and disbursed an amount of Rs 279.65 crore since the launch of the online facility allowing advance withdrawal on March 29, 2020.

About EPFO:

- It is a government organization that manages provident fund and pension accounts for the workforce engaged in the organized sector in India.
- It implements the **Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952**.
- The Act provides for the institution of provident funds for employees in factories and other establishments.
- It is administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India.
- It is one of the World's largest Social Security Organisations in terms of clientele and the volume of financial transactions undertaken.

Highlights:

- It allows advance withdrawal from EPF accounts was notified in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.
- It allows withdrawal not exceeding the basic wages and dearness allowances for three months or up to 75% of the PF balance, whichever is less. The government also relaxed withdrawal conditions from EPF accounts.
- As part of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, that the government will bear the cost of the provident fund contributions, both of the employer and employees—12% each—for the three months (April - June) for those establishments which have up to 100 employees and 90% of whom are earning less than ₹15,000 per month as salary.

7. Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary

Context:

- Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary is recently seen in News.

About Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary:

- It is the **only** sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh with a population of Asian elephants.
- It is covered by southern tropical dry deciduous and thorn forests.
- It consists of some of the important flora such as Albizia amara, Acacia, Lagerstroemia, Ficus, bamboo, and a species which is a regeneration of Santalum album.
- sloth bear, panther, cheetal, chowsingha, sambar, porcupine, wild boar, jungle cat, jackal, jungle fowl, starred tortoise and slender loris are the other animals found here

About Asian Elephant:

- The three subspecies of Asian elephant are found in the Indian, Sumatran and Sri Lankan.
- The African elephants are listed as “**vulnerable**” and Asian elephants as “**endangered**” in IUCN Red List of threatened species. They have been accorded the highest possible protection under the Indian wildlife law through its listing under **Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) status- **Appendix I**, which lists the species that are the most endangered among CITES-listed Animals and plants.

Government Initiatives:

- The **Project Elephant** launched by the Government of India in the year 1992 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- The “World Elephant Day” (August 12) to help conserve and protect elephants in India and improve their welfare. Elephant census is conducted once in 5 years under the aegis of Project elephant. The ‘**Gaj Yatra**’ a nationwide awareness campaign to celebrate elephants and highlight the necessity of securing elephant corridors.
- The **Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)**, had come out with a publication on the right of passage in 101 elephant corridors of the country in 2017.
- The **Monitoring the Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme** launched in 2003 is an international collaboration that tracks trends in information related to the illegal killing of elephants from across Africa and Asia, to monitor effectiveness of field conservation efforts.

8. Long-term repo operations (LTROs)

Context:

- Recently, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has received Rs 1.13 lakh crore worth of bids in the targeted long term repo operation (TLTRO) conducted for an amount of Rs 25,000 crore with a three-year tenor.

About LTRO:

- It 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.

-
- In LTRO the banks get long-term funds at lower rates, their cost of funds falls, which leads to reduce of interest rates for borrowers.
 - It helps RBI to ensure that banks reduce their marginal cost of funds-based lending rate, without reducing policy rates.
 - It also showed the market that RBI will not only rely on revising repo rates and conducting open market operations for its monetary policy, but also use new tools to achieve its intended objectives.
 - Its 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. It supplies them with liquidity for their 1- to 3-year needs.

