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## **1. World Heritage Day**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, the International Day for Monuments and Sites or the World Heritage Day is celebrated on 18<sup>th</sup> April Every Year.

### **About World Heritage Day:**

- It is established by The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1982 and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved it in 1983.
- It has been a day to celebrate and promote cultural heritage, and an opportunity to raise awareness about its diversity, its relevance, how vulnerable it can be and what the needs and benefits of its conservation are.
- Its theme for 2020 is “**Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility**”.
- It is an important expression of global unity in the face of the ongoing worldwide health crisis (Covid-19 pandemic).

### **About International Council on Monuments and Sites:**

- It is a global Non-Governmental Organization associated with UNESCO.
- Its mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and sites.
- It is an Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO, which reviews the nominations of cultural world heritage and ensures the conservation status of properties.
- India has **38** world heritage sites that include **30** Cultural properties, **7** Natural properties and **1** mixed site.
- Its creation in 1965 is the logical outcome of initial conversations between architects, historians and international experts that began in the early twentieth century and that materialized in the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964.

## **2. Kisan Rath App**

### **Why in News:**

- Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has launched ‘Kisan Rath’ Mobile Application (app) to facilitate transportation of foodgrains and perishable during lockdown.

### About Kisan Rath App:

- It is being developed by the National Informatics Centre -NIC (backed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology).
- It will be available in eight languages initially, including english and hindi.
- It is expected to connect farmers and traders to a network of more than 5 lakh trucks and 20,000 tractors.
- It is meant to help farmers and traders who are searching for vehicles to move produce. It include Primary transport and Secondary transport.
- **Primary transport:** It is from the farm to the mandis, local warehouses or the collection centres of Farmer Producer Organisations.
- **Secondary transport:** It is from the local mandis to intra-and inter-State mandis, processing units, railway stations, warehouses or wholesalers.
- It will be a stepping stone towards provision of timely transportation service at competitive rates for farmers and traders, besides achieving a reduction in food wastage. It will help in ensuring better prices of the produce to Farmers

### 3. Hydroxychloroquine does not Reduce Viral Load

#### Why in News?

- Results of a randomised, control trial using Hydroxychloroquine Drug in 150 COVID-19 patients show that the drug does not reduce the viral load even on day 28.

#### Highlights:

- Seventy-five patients got the drug and standard of care while the remaining got only standard of care. Patients were given 1,200 mg of the drug for three days followed by 800 mg daily for two and three weeks in patients with mild/moderate and severe symptoms, respectively.
- Researchers say that in contrast to other trials that have shown good results, the randomised trial did not show that hydroxychloroquine drug was able to suppress viral replication.
- This is the first trial using hydroxychloroquine where patients have been randomised to receive either the drug or just standard of care.
- However, patients who got the drug did show quicker alleviation of clinical symptoms, possibly through anti-inflammatory properties and improvement in white blood cell count.

- The drug did not cause any serious adverse effects in patients. But some patients did experience adverse effects.
- During the trial, specimens were taken from the upper and/or lower respiratory tract on the day of screening and during treatment and post-treatment follow-up.
- The authors say that the dosage used in the trial was meant to reach the 50% effective concentrations of hydroxychloroquine against the virus.
- In the case of COVID-19, systemic inflammation or cytokine storm is the driver of disease progression and death. Substantial reduction in white blood cell count and increase in inflammatory response have generally been observed in patients who have eventually progressed and died.
- The results suggest clinical benefits of adding hydroxychloroquine into the current standard management to limit inflammatory response, which is the key to prevent systemic inflammation and subsequent multiple organ failure and death.

#### **4. Ramdesivir Usage in India**

##### **Why in News?**

- The drug Remdesivir has been under the spotlight as a possible treatment for critical cases of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Globally, it is one of the four possible lines of treatment being investigated in the Solidarity trials under the aegis of the World Health Organization (WHO).

##### **Highlights:**

- While the drug is yet to get approval in any country to treat COVID-19, recent studies have claimed they have found promising results.
- It is a drug with antiviral properties that was manufactured by US-based biotechnology company in 2014, to treat Ebola cases. It was also tried in patients of MERS and SARS, both caused by members of the coronavirus family, but experts said it did not show promising results back then.
- Coronaviruses have a single-strand RNA as their genetic material. When the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV2 enters a human cell, an enzyme called RdRP helps the virus replicate.
- Remdesivir works by inhibiting the activity of RdRP. A small cohort study used remdesivir on 61 patients in USA, Canada, Europe and Japan. These patients were critically ill with

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low oxygen levels, and were administered remdesivir under manufacturer Gilead's compassionate use programme.

- The study found clinical improvement in 68% of the cases, with their oxygen levels improving; 47% patients could be discharged after treatment, and more than 50% patients (17 of 30) no longer required mechanical ventilator support.
- The study found that clinical improvement was less frequent in patients on invasive ventilators or among elderly people. Seven patients died despite treatment with remdesivir.
- The study had no control arm, meaning another group of patients who were not administered the drug, to compare outcomes of treatment with and without remdesivir. Unless such trials are conducted, the effect of the drug remains a grey zone.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has said it can consider using the drug if local manufacturers are willing to procure it. Remdesivir is currently not available in India.
- Hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug, is undergoing multiple trials to assess if it can be used to treat severe COVID-19 cases. It works by decreasing the acidity in parts of the cell where the virus is present, thereby inhibiting it.
- Ritonavir and lopinavir are two antiviral drugs used for treatment of HIV. These too work by inhibiting the virus's RNA. Specifically, they target the enzyme that helps the virus split proteins.