



PLUTUS IAS

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Saguna Rice Technique

Context-

It has been said that this technology will help people to stop the stubble burning in Haryana and Punjab.

About the technology-

- It is a zero till technology and is a unique conservation Agriculture type of cultivation Method.
- The technology is used to cultivate rice and selected crops without ploughing, budding and transplanting rice on permanent raised beds.
- According to experts SRT iron forma tool facilities are using this for planting a crop in predetermined distances enabling previous plant population per unit area.

SRT Technology-

- It insists that all roots and a small portion of stem should be left in the beds for slow rotting.
- No ploughing, puddling and hoeing need to be done to control weeds.
- It will make the crop ready for harvesting eight to ten days earlier.

H1B Visa

Context-

Recently the Government of the USA has decided to amend its H1B policy to give priority to higher wages and skills.

H1B Visa-

It is a non immigrant visa given by the government of the USA to employ skilled workers from other countries who can work in the USA for a certain period of time.

Objective-

- It is generally approved for three years. Afterwards it has been seen that visa holders change their employer and company and then continue working in the USA.
- Biggest beneficiary of the H1B visa is India and the second biggest beneficiary is China.

Present Status-

- The selection of H1B visas was performed on a randomised lottery system.
- At present the system did not take success wages, experience or any other requirements as a consideration for awarding Visas.

Recent Amendments-

Now the government has decided that they will not go with the lottery system rather they will check the skill of the person.

Vanadium in Arunachal Pradesh

Context:

Geographical Survey of India has placed Arunachal Pradesh on the Vanadium map, as geologists are confident about the vanadium deposits in Arunachal Pradesh.



About Geological Survey Of India

The Geological Survey of India is a scientific agency of India. It is one of the oldest of such organisations in the world.

Headquarters: Kolkata West Bengal

Parent Government Organisation: Ministry of Mines



Founded: 1851

Parent Organisation: Survey of India.

About Vanadium:

- It is a hard, silvery grey, malleable transition metal. Its symbol is V and the Atomic Number is 23.
- It is rarely found in nature.
- Vanadium is recovered as a by-product from the slag, collected from processing of **Vanadiferous magnetite ores(iron ores)**.

Significance:

- Vanadium alloys are durable in extreme temperature and environmental conditions and are corrosion resistant.
- It is used in strengthening steel and titanium.
- It is a high value metal.
- It increases the fuel efficiency in automotive and aviation industries due to its high strength to weight ratio.
- It forms the integral part of vanadium redox batteries, that have the least ecological impact in energy storage.

WHO team reaches Wuhan to investigate COVID-19 origins

Context:

- A 10-member team of international experts from the WHO arrived in Wuhan to start a highly politicised probe into the origins of the coronavirus.

Objective of the Mission:

- Studies will begin in Wuhan to identify the potential source of infection of the early cases.
- The mission aims to probe the origins of Covid-19 comes as China reported its first death from the killer virus in eight months amid a resurgence in coronavirus cases.
- An international team of scientists will engage and review scientific research with their Chinese counterparts on the origins of the virus.
- Scientific evidence will drive hypotheses, which will then be the basis for further, longer-term studies.

Significance of the Visit:

- COVID-19 pandemic has taken so many lives and caused massive disruption to families, societies and economies all over the world.
- It also triggered the fastest and most wide-reaching response to a global health emergency in human history.
- We have seen how divisions in politics and communities feed the virus and foment the crisis.

Development so far:

- Global scientists are intensifying research into COVID-19, as the World Health Organization (WHO) moves to expand its scientific collaboration and monitoring of emerging variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- The scientists from around the globe discussed critical knowledge gaps and research priorities for emerging variants of the virus.
- It is normal for viruses to mutate, but the more the SARS-CoV-2 virus spreads, the more opportunities it has to change. High levels of transmission mean that we should expect more variants to emerge.
- Of the significant variants reported so far, some are associated with increases in transmissibility but not disease severity.

- Research is ongoing to address whether the changes impact public health tools and measures.
- Increasing sequencing capacity across the world is a priority research area for WHO.
- So far an astounding 350 000 sequences have been publicly shared, but most come from just a handful of countries.
- Improving the geographic coverage of sequencing is critical for the world to have eyes and ears on changes to the virus.
- The hallmarks of the response have been an unparalleled mobilization of science, a search for solutions and a commitment to global solidarity.
- Vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics have been developed and rolled out, at record speed.
- Vaccines offer great hope to turn the tide of the pandemic. But to protect the world, we must ensure that all people at risk everywhere – not just in countries who can afford vaccines – are immunized.

Way Forward:

- Better surveillance and laboratory capacity to monitor strains of concern needs to be accompanied by prompt sharing of virus and serum samples via globally agreed mechanisms so that critical research can be promptly initiated each time.
- Need to build National Data Platforms to document critical clinical, epidemiological and virus data that facilitates the detection and assessment of new SARS-CoV-2 variants.
- The governments must increase investment in public health, from funding access to COVID vaccines for all people, to making our systems better prepared to prevent and respond to the next, inevitable, pandemic. At the heart of this is investing in universal health coverage to make health for all a reality.
- As it will take time to vaccinate everyone against COVID, we must keep adhering to tried and tested measures that keep each and all of us safe. This means maintaining physical distance, wearing face masks, practicing hand and respiratory hygiene, avoiding crowded

indoor places and meeting people outside. These simple, yet effective measures will save lives and reduce the suffering that so many people encountered in 2020.

- We must commit to working together in solidarity, as a global community, to promote and protect health today, and in the future.

US Unveils Plan To Counter China With India's Rise

Context:

- National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien announced the publication of the document, titled "United States Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific."
- The Trump administration declassified its strategy to ensure continued dominance over China, which focuses on accelerating India's rise as a counterweight to Beijing and the ability to defend Taiwan against an attack.

Significance:

- It was released to show the U.S. commitment to "keeping the Indo-Pacific region free and open long into the future."
- The document lays out a vision for the region in which India is predominant in South Asia and the US works with partners around the world to resist Chinese activities to undermine sovereignty through coercion.
- Beijing is increasingly pressuring Indo-Pacific nations to subordinate their freedom and sovereignty to a 'common destiny' envisioned by the Chinese Communist Party.
- It assumed that China will take "increasingly assertive" steps to compel unification with Taiwan and warns that its dominance of cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence will "pose profound challenges to free societies."

- The Trump administration's actions to counter China in Asia have largely enjoyed bipartisan support. Incoming Biden officials have talked about the need to work more with allies and partners against China, which also forms a key part of the strategy -- particularly in strengthening security ties with Australia, Japan and India.
- The document shows U.S. policy in Asia was driven by efforts to "bolster allies and counter China." But he noted that the strategy was so ambitious that "failure was almost assured" on issues such as disarming North Korea, sustaining "primacy" in the region and finding international consensus against harmful Chinese economic practices.
- The declassified framework will have enduring value as the beginning of a whole-of-government blueprint for handling strategic rivalry with China.

Key highlights of the report include:

China:

- Assumes China "aims to dissolve U.S. alliances and partnerships in the region. China will exploit vacuums and opportunities created by these diminished bonds."
- "China seeks to dominate cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence and bio-genetics, and harness them in the service of authoritarianism. Chinese dominance in these technologies would pose profound challenges to free societies."
- "China will take increasingly assertive steps to compel unification with Taiwan."
- Act to "counter Chinese predatory economic practices that freeze out foreign competition, undermine U.S. economic competitiveness, and abet the Chinese Communist Party's aspiration to dominate the 21st century economy."
- "Build an international consensus that China's industrial policies and unfair trading practices are damaging the global trading system."
- "Work closely with allies and like-minded countries to prevent Chinese acquisition of military and strategic capabilities."
- India

Desired outcome:

- India remains preeminent in South Asia and takes the leading role in maintaining Indian Ocean security.
- India's preferred partner on security issues is the United States. The two cooperate to preserve maritime security and counter Chinese influence in South and Southeast Asia and other regions of mutual concern.
- Accelerate India's rise and capacity to serve as a net provider of security and Major Defense Partner; solidify an enduring strategic partnership with India underpinned by a strong Indian military.
- Strengthen the capacity of emerging partners in South Asia, including the Maldives, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, to contribute to a free and open order.

According to the document, US wants to:

- Build a “stronger foundation for defence cooperation and interoperability;
- Expand our defence trade and ability to transfer defence technology to Enhance India’s status as a Major Defence Partner;
- Increase our cooperation on shared regional security concerns,
- Encourage India’s engagement beyond the Indian Ocean Region”.
- Support India’s bid for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
- Work “with India toward domestic economic reform and an increased leadership role in the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ADMM+ (Asean Defence Ministers Meeting”
- Align US Indo-Pacific strategy with those of Australia, India and Japan”, of deepening quadrilateral security cooperation and relationship with India.