

## 15 March 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

### PM interacts with SAARC leaders to combat COVID-19 in the region

#### Context:

Prime Minister interacted with the leaders of the [SAARC](#) countries through video conference to chart out a common strategy in order to combat COVID-19 in the region.

#### Details:

- In the spirit of collaboration, Prime Minister Modi proposed the creation of a **COVID-19 Emergency Fund** based on voluntary contributions from all the countries, with India making an initial offer of US \$10 million for the fund.
- The fund can be used by any of the partner countries to meet the cost of immediate actions.
- He informed that India is assembling a Rapid Response Team of doctors and specialists, along with testing kits and other equipment, which will be on stand-by, to be placed at the disposal of the countries, if required.
- Prime Minister also offered to arrange for online training capsules for the emergency response teams of the neighbouring countries and sharing of the software behind India's Integrated Disease Surveillance Portal to help trace possible virus carriers and the people they contacted.
- He suggested that existing mechanisms like **SAARC Disaster Management Centre** can be used to pool in best practices.
- He also suggested the creation of a common Research Platform to coordinate research on controlling epidemic diseases within the South Asian region.

For the latest on [COVID-19](#), click on the linked article.