

19 June 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. Ban on export of anti-malarial drug Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ)

Context:

The Government has lifted the ban on the export of anti-malarial drug Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) API and formulation with immediate effect.

Details:

- The [Directorate General of Foreign Trade](#) – DGFT has issued a formal notification in this regard.
- Currently, India is having a surplus of Hydroxychloroquine tablets over and above its domestic requirements.
- Presently, the Health Ministry is maintaining enough buffer stock of HCQ to cater to domestic demand.
- The domestic producers of HCQ other than Export Oriented Units (EOUs), SEZs and Units will continue to supply at least 20% tablets of total manufacturing for local pharmacies or trade, whichever is higher for the month of June, 2020.
 - The supply made to State Governments, HLL and other public and private institutes will be over and above the quantity mentioned.
 - Further, all manufacturers shall fulfil any order placed by HLL (a PSU), State Government(s) or any other Government Institute on a priority basis.

2. Victory Day

Context:

A Tri-Service contingent from India will participate in the 75th Victory Day Parade of World War II in Moscow.

Details:

To know what is Victory Day, check [PIB dated Jun 17, 2020](#).

The marching contingent taking part in the parade is the Sikh Light Infantry Regiment. This regiment received four Battle Honours and two Military Cross amongst other gallantry awards, for its role in the Second World War.

Background:

- The British Indian Armed Forces during World War-II were one of the largest Allied Forces contingents which took part in the North and East African Campaign, Western Desert Campaign and the European Theatre against the Axis powers.
- These campaigns witnessed sacrifice by over 87 thousand Indian servicemen beside 34,354 being wounded.
- The Indian Military not only fought on all fronts, but also ensured logistic support along the Southern, Trans-Iranian Lend-Lease route, along which weapons, ammunition, equipment support and food went to the Soviet Union, Iran and Iraq.
- The valour of the Indian soldiers was recognised with the award of over four thousand decorations, which also included awards of 18 Victoria and George Cross.
- Two Indian soldiers also received the prestigious Order of the Red Star from the Soviet Union.

3. PM SVANidhi

Context:

MoU signed between the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs and the [Small Industries Development Bank of India \(SIDBI\)](#) in order to engage SIDBI as the implementing agency for PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi).

Details:

- PM SVANidhi is a special micro-credit facility for street vendors.
- **For more on PM SVANidhi, check [PIB dated Jun 1, 2020](#).**

4. Earthquakes in Delhi-NCR

Context:

Recent Delhi-NCR tremors do not signal of a big event, though a strong earthquake cannot be ruled out: WIHG

Details:

- In the wake of the recent series of tremors in Delhi-NCR, the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology, has said that such tremors are not unusual in the Delhi-NCR region, but indicate that strain energy is built up in the region.
- They have said that since the seismic network is quite good, present micro to minor earthquakes in and around Delhi-NCR could be recorded.
- Though our understanding in terms of when, where and with how much energy (or magnitude) an earthquake can occur is not clear, but the vulnerability of a region can be understood from the past seismicity, calculation of strain budget, mapping of active faults, etc.
- **The Delhi-NCR region has been identified as the second highest seismic hazard zone (Zone IV).**
- Sometimes, a vulnerable zone remains quiet, experiences small magnitude earthquakes that do not indicate any bigger earthquake, or receives a sudden jolt by a big earthquake without any call.
- The recent events cannot be defined as the 'foreshocks'.
 - If a big earthquake takes place in a region, all smaller events that occurred in the immediate past in that region are categorized as the **foreshocks**.
- There is no mechanism to predict an earthquake.

Why earthquakes happen in Delhi-NCR?

- All the earthquakes in Delhi-NCR are due to the release of strain energy, which have been accumulated as a result of the northward movement of the Indian plate and its collision with the Eurasian plate, through fault or weak zones.
- There are many weak zones and faults in the Delhi-NCR: Delhi-Haridwar ridge, Mahendragarh-Dehradun subsurface fault, Moradabad fault, Sohna fault, Great boundary fault, Delhi-Sargodha ridge, Yamuna river lineament, Ganga river lineament, etc.
- The Himalayan seismic belt, where the Indian plate collided with the Eurasian plate and underthrust beneath the Himalayan wedge, accumulates strain energy at the plate boundary due to relative movement of plates against each other causing crustal shortening and deformation of rocks.
- This energy can be released through the weak zones and faults in the form of earthquakes ranging from micro (<3.0), minor (3.0-3.9), light (4.0-4.9), moderate (5.0-5.9), strong (6.0-6.9), major (7.0-7.9) or great (>8.0) earthquake, defined as per the amount of energy released.
- The small magnitude earthquakes are frequent, but large magnitude earthquakes are rare to very rare.

Impact of earthquakes in the Himalayas to Delhi-NCR:

- The rupture areas due to large earthquakes show gaps along the Himalayan arc, which have not experienced great earthquakes for a long time, and are identified as the future potential zones for great earthquakes.
- Three main seismic gaps have been identified in the Himalaya:
 - The Assam Gap between the 1950 Assam earthquake and the 1934 Bihar-Nepal earthquake;
 - The Kashmir Gap between the 1905 Kangra earthquake and the 1975 Kinnaur earthquake;

- The 700 km long Central Gap between the 1905 Kangra earthquake and the 1934 Bihar-Nepal earthquake.
 - The entire NW-NE Himalayan belt lies in the highest seismic potential zone V and IV, where major to great earthquakes can take place.
 - There are so many faults, ridges, and lineaments transverse to the Himalayan arc, large sediment thickness in the Ganga Alluvium Plains to the north of Delhi-NCR.
 - Again, the Delhi-NCR is ~200 km away from the Himalayan arc. Therefore, a major earthquake in the Himalayan seismic belt may also be a threat to Delhi-NCR.
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5. World Sickle Cell Day

Context:

Union Minister for Tribal Affairs addresses webinar ‘National Sickle Cell Conclave’ to mark the World Sickle Cell Day, organized by FICCI, jointly with Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Apollo Hospitals and Novartis.

About World Sickle Cell Day:

- World Sickle Cell Day is a United Nation’s recognised day to raise awareness of sickle cell at a national and international level.
- In 2008, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution that recognises sickle cell disease as a public health problem and “one of the world’s foremost genetic diseases.” The resolution calls for members to raise awareness of sickle cell on June 19th of each year at national and international level.

About Sickle Cell Disease:

- Sickle cell disease is a group of disorders that affects haemoglobin, the molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen to cells throughout the body.
- People with this disorder have atypical haemoglobin molecules called haemoglobin S, which can distort red blood cells into a sickle, or crescent shape.
- The signs and symptoms of sickle cell disease are caused by the sickling of red blood cells.
- When red blood cells sickle, they break down prematurely, which can lead to anaemia.
 - Anaemia can cause shortness of breath, fatigue, and delayed growth and development in children.
- The rapid breakdown of red blood cells may also cause yellowing of the eyes and skin, which are signs of jaundice.
- Painful episodes can occur when sickled red blood cells, which are stiff and inflexible, get stuck in small blood vessels.
- People with sickle cell are also at risk of complications like stroke, acute chest syndrome, blindness, bone damage and priapism.

- Mutations in the HBB gene cause sickle cell disease.
- Sickle cell is a genetic disease. Treatment of sickle cell mostly focuses on preventing and treating complications.

