

CURRENT ISSUES WRITING PRACTICE

PRE-TEST MATERIAL FOR CIWP – I

Agricultural Reforms

Why in News?

Three government bills were passed by the parliament with intention to bring unprecedented structural reforms in agriculture sector. The first bill is on agricultural market reforms, the second bill is about contract farming provisions and a third bill on amending Essential Commodities Act was passed. These bills would promote barrier-free trade of farm produce and are likely to support farmers because factors like more investments, Culture of Agripreneurship, R&D and technology are supposed to augment existing agriculture supply chain.

Some of the farmer's organisations are vehemently opposing the bills since no consultations were held. Farmers also fear that the sector might become corporatised and their rights may be undermined by Government as sector is de-regulated. The subsequent end of minimum support price (MSP) regime, the irrelevance of state-controlled APMCs, reduction in the price of farm produce due to market domination by big agribusinesses and exploitation of farmers by big contractors are emerging key issues, arising due to the provisions stated under new bills.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the Structural reforms in Agriculture, Agripreneurship: For next generation farming, Minimum support price (MSP) regime, Tech driven farming and E-agriculture marketing, APMC and federalism, Ways to augment supply chain for doubling farmer's income and Scope of Contract farming in climate resilient precision farming etc.

General Studies I:

- Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).
[Question can be asked from Agriculture part of Human geography in GS-1]

General Studies II:

- Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

General Studies III:

- Issues related to Direct and Indirect Farm Subsidies and Minimum Support Prices
- Major Crops - Cropping Patterns in various parts of the country, - Storage, Transport and Marketing of Agricultural Produce and Issues and Related Constraints
- Food Processing and Related Industries in India- Scope' and Significance

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- Investment Models

Articles Link

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2020/sep/26/analysing-the-centres-reforms-in-agriculture-sector-2202034.html>

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/agriculture-reforms-ignore-political-rhetoric-embrace-prosperity-economics-73938/>

<https://www.prssindia.org/policy/discussion-papers/state-agriculture-india>

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/why-farmers-are-not-keen-on-agri-reforms-152565>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explainer-why-are-the-agriculture-bills-being-opposed/article32618641.ece>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-ideas-farmers-protest-farm-bills-6612927/>

Maps and Figures

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THE FARMERS' PRODUCE TRADE AND COMMERCE (PROMOTION AND FACILITATION) BILL, 2020

Farmers are free to sell their produce to anybody, anywhere

Removes all barriers for intra- and inter-state trade in agricultural produce

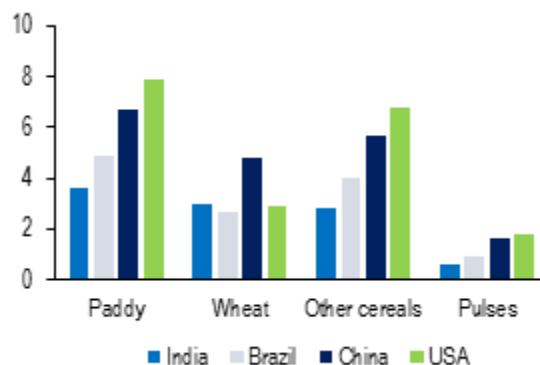
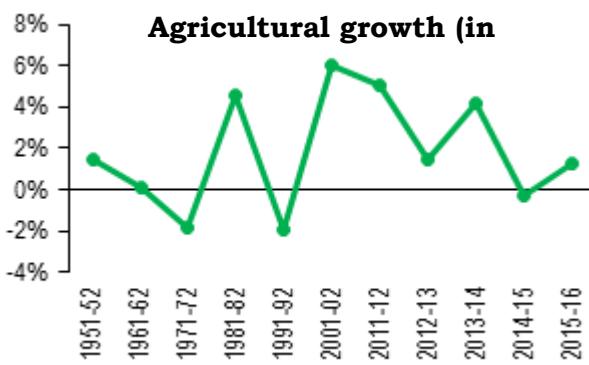
It supports seamless electronic trade

HOW DOES IT HELP?

- Ends the monopoly of traders
- Engenders competition among buyers
- Yields better returns to farmers and raises incomes
- Farm produce can move freely from surplus to deficit regions

Consumer gets better and cheaper products

BCCL



AT A GLANCE

- Agriculture continues to be a major driver of economy with 17% contribution in the GDP. It continues to be the primary source of livelihood for more than half of the population
- The gross value added by agriculture and allied sector is estimated at ₹18.53 trillion (\$271 billion) in FY18

GDP CONTRIBUTION OF AGRI SECTOR

Year	Contribution (%)
'12-'13	18.2
'13-'14	18.6
'14-'15	18.0
'15-'16	17.5
'16-'17	17.4

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Video Links

RSTV : The Big Picture : Agriculture Reforms

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6ggAhcGlxA>

India Today: What Is The New Farm Bill 2020: Who Is Protesting And Why

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrSW8IvSkNc>

Social security

Why in News?

Lok Sabha has passed new versions of three labour codes —Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2020, Code on Social Security Bill, 2020 and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code Bill, 2020. These three codes would amalgamate existing labour laws ranging from wage, safety to social security. These reforms are cited as pro-industry and pro-employer while undermining the labours concerns.

The government proposes to increase the ambit of social security by including gig workers and inter-state migrant workers, it has also proposed measures that will provide greater flexibility to employers to hire and fire workers without government permission. Labour community is concerned that Government is deliberately curbing the rights of workers to strike and their voices and demands may be undermined.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the Rights of worker, Formal Social security to labours, Gig Economy in India: Challenges and solution, Demographic misfortune: Inter-state migration, Directive principles of state policy and labour rights and Government initiatives for betterment of labours etc.

General Studies I:

- Salient features of Indian Society
- Population and Associated Issues, Poverty and Developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

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- Effects of Globalization on Indian society.

General Studies II:

- Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.
- Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections of the population by the Centre and States and the Performance of these Schemes; Mechanisms, Laws, Institutions and Bodies constituted for the Protection and Betterment of these Vulnerable Sections.
- Important Aspects of Governance

General Studies III

- Effects of Liberalization on the Economy, Changes in Industrial Policy and their Effects on Industrial Growth.
- Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

Articles Link

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1657898>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/parliament-proceedings-codes-on-occupational-safety-social-security-and-industrial-relations-introduced-in-lok-sabha/article32649886.ece>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/rajya-sabha-passes-labour-bills-making-it-easier-for-employers-to-hire-and-fire-workers/articleshow/78271875.cms?from=mdr>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/govts-new-versions-of-labour-codes-key-proposals-and-concerns-6603354/>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/parliament-passes-three-key-labour-reform-bills/article32675729.ece>

Maps and Figures

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LAGGING PEERS



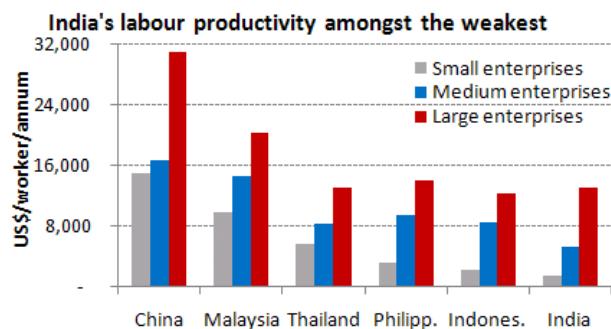
India's labour productivity is far below other emerging markets in manufacturing.

Value added per hour worked, 2009 (US\$ PPP*) Manufacturing Services



*Purchasing power parity

Source: OECD



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KEY LABOUR LAW CODES

PROPOSED LAW	INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BILL	SMALL FACTORIES BILL	FACTORIES AMENDMENT BILL	WAGES BILL	* EPF (AMENDMENT) BILL	** ESI (AMENDMENT) BILL
WHAT IT PROPOSES?	Eases retrenchment norm, toughen trade union formation, calling strike virtually impossible	A separate law for factories with upto 40 workers, inspection and other norms made easier	Women to be allowed to work in night shifts, increase overtime limit and strict safety guidelines for workers	Union wage definition, eases inspection, allows states to set minimum wage for different regions	Employees can switch to National Pension System; firms with 10 workers to be covered under the law	Provides option to workers between ESI scheme and health insurance offered by private sector
CURRENT STATUS	Referred back to sub-committee	Pending in Union labour ministry; more changes will be incorporated	Pending with parliamentary standing committee	Inter-ministerial comments received, to be sent to law ministry soon	Pending in labour ministry	Trade unions reject the proposal in a tripartite meeting

*EPF: Employees Provident Fund **ESI: Employees State Insurance

Source: Labour ministry officials

Video Links

RSTV: The Big Picture - Code On Wages Bill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1gmqJ9xibE>

RSTV: The Big Picture - Social Security Code

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91wXzDcI4Sc>

The Hindu: All about the Industrial Relations Code 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_U9asMsavM

RSTV: The Big Picture - Labour reforms: Do they balance labour and industry concerns?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-g9K2P5qOI&index=861&list=PLVOgwA_DiGzoqQsGjmamTu6f453RWpm_I

RSTV: In Depth: Labour & Productivity

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xcu6exYGxyY>

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Frequent Epidemics

Why in News?

The coronavirus is not the first widespread disease that the world has faced. Several global pandemic and epidemic diseases have been triggered by prevalence of zoonotic diseases and human interaction with it. Recently, the health commission of Lanzhou City in China announced an outbreak of brucellosis disease. The outbreak was caused by a leak at a state-owned biopharmaceutical company making animal vaccines last year. Climate change is also cited as the cascading factor responsible for frequent Epidemics.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the Socio-Economic impact of pandemics, biopharmaceutical companies and pandemic, regulation required for biopharmaceutical companies, wildlife trafficking, Climate change and pandemic, and anthropogenic activities responsible for pandemic, Vaccine nationalism: Responses to pandemic reshaped by geopolitics etc.

General Studies II:

- Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector Services relating to Health
- Important International Institutions
- Government Policies & Interventions in Various Sectors

General Studies III:

- Science and Technology- Developments and their Applications and Effects in Everyday Life.
- Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; Indigenization of Technology and Developing New Technology.
- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, Robotics, Nano-technology, Bio-technology and issues relating to Intellectual Property Rights.
- Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

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- Disaster and Disaster Management.

General Studies IV:

- Case Studies

Articles Link

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/coronavirus-global-epidemics-health-pandemic-covid-19/>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/slideshows/20-pandemic-and-epidemic-diseases-according-to-who?>

<https://www.thehindu.com/society/pandemics-and-prejudice-when-there-is-an-epidemic-social-prejudices-resurface/article31246102.ece>

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2020/sep/18/bacterial-outbreak-in-china-infects-several-thousandsafter-2019-factory-leak-2198554.html>

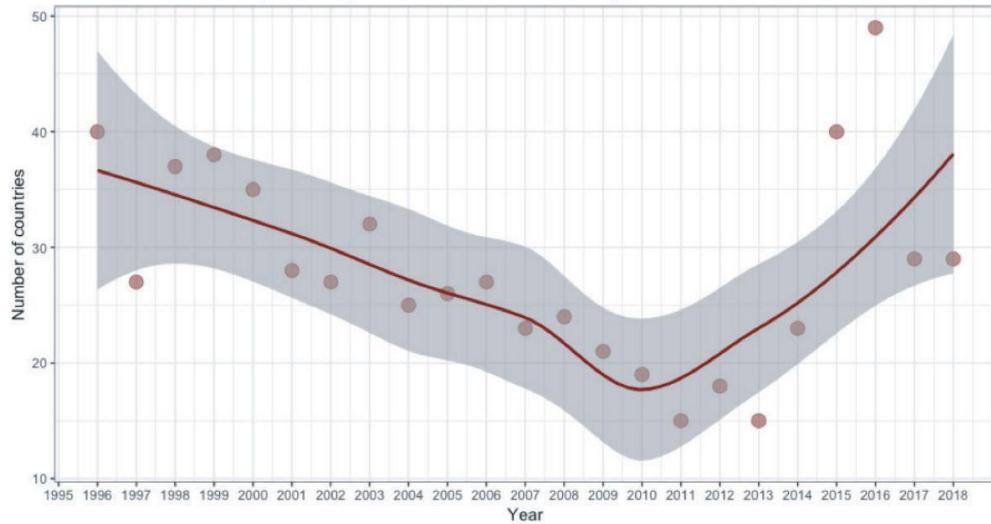
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Figure 1: Number of countries experiencing significant disease outbreaks, 1995-2018

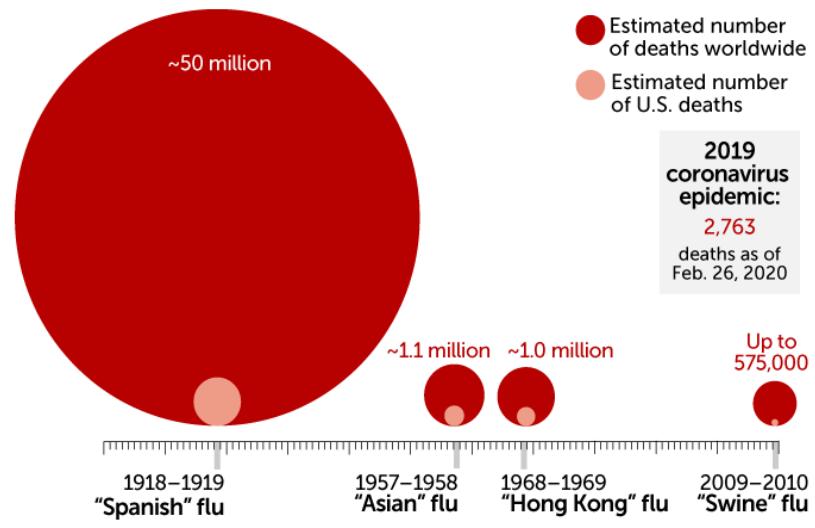
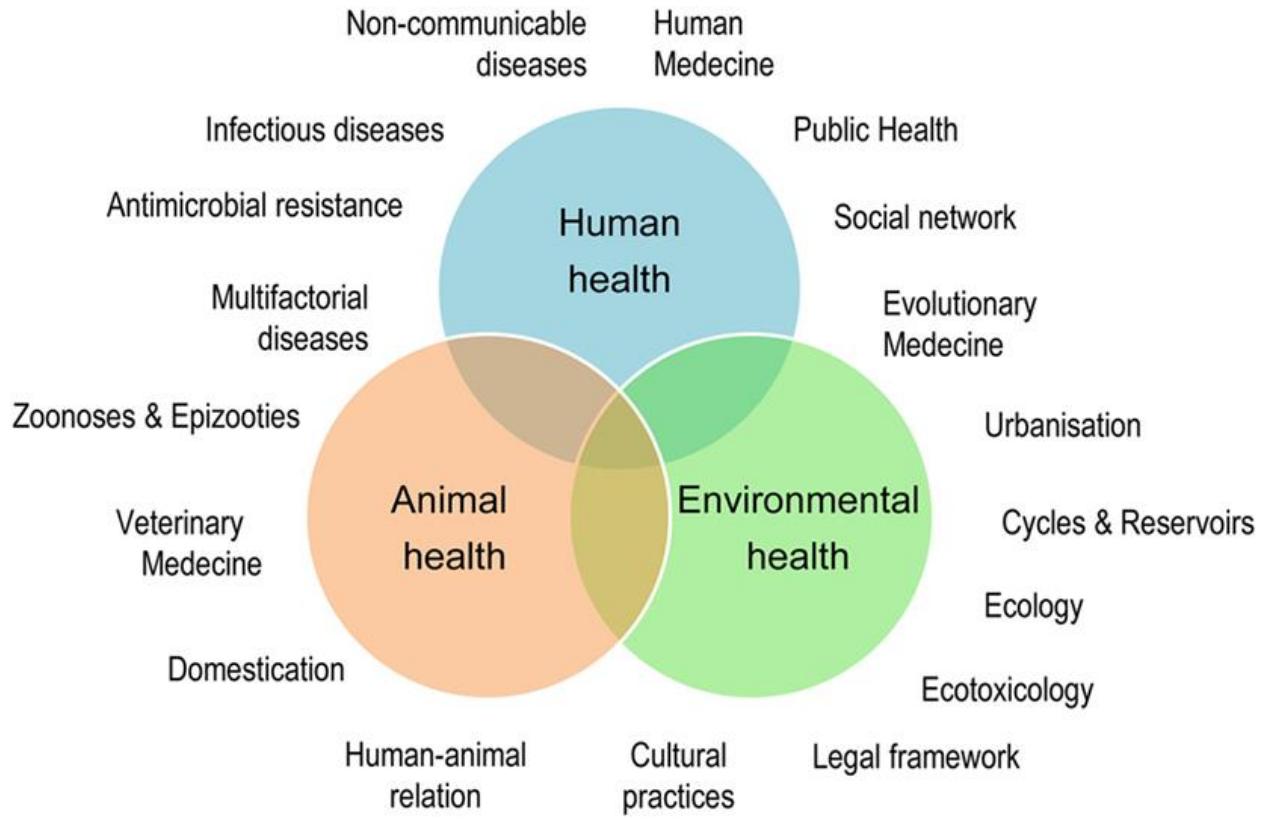


Source: Harvard Global Health Institute/World Economic Forum analysis of data from WHO Disease Outbreak News (<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>)

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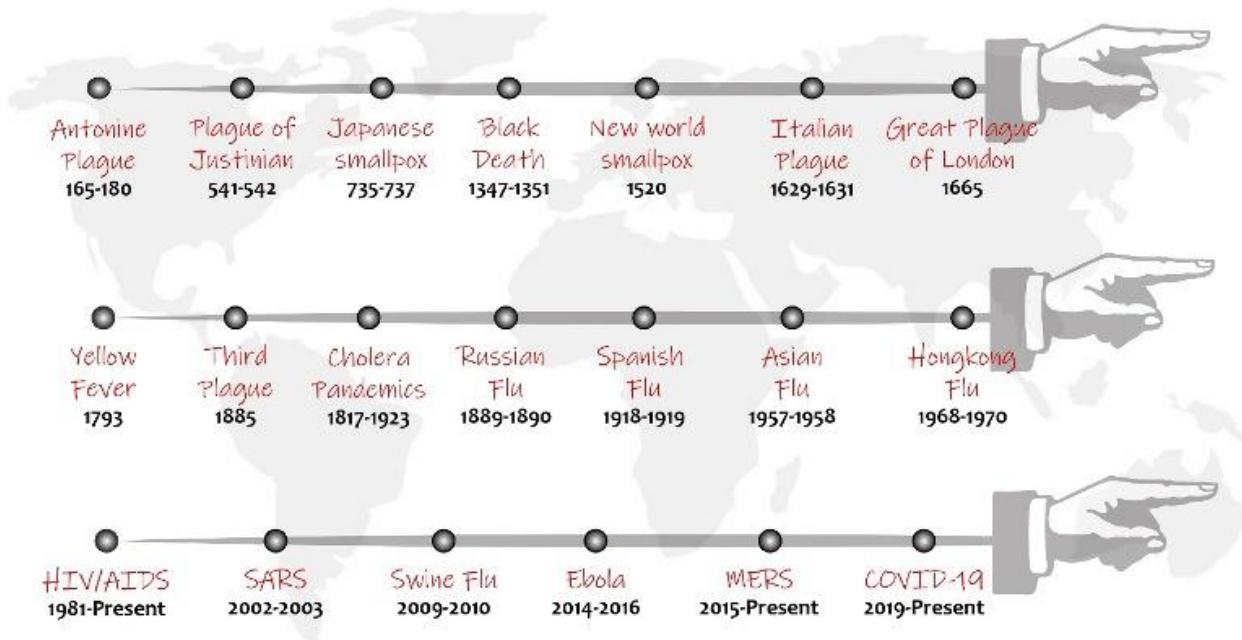
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Video Links

RSTV: In Depth - Pandemic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQqEjv0cBOE>

The Hindu: A history of pandemics since the 20th century

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvG-uNxyR4M>

TED: The next outbreak? We're not ready

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Af6b_wyiwl

TED: When is a pandemic over?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qi0edf_nJDo