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24th, December, 2021

Topic: Polity and Agriculture

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims

What is the news?

- Director, Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla, N.K. Pandey, called on Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar at Raj Bhawan today and apprised him of the various activities of the Institute.

Purpose:

- He said a large-scale awareness campaign should be launched to dispel various misconceptions about the use of potatoes. He is delighted that 66 different varieties of potatoes have been prepared by this institute, including 8 varieties that can be processed.

This may be a question:

Where is the Central Potato Research Institute in Himachal Pradesh?

- ***Shimla is the headquarters of the institute.***

Historical Aspect:

- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI) was established during August 1949 at Patna (Bihar, India) on the recommendation of the Agricultural Advisor to the Government of India, Sir Herbert Steward under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- The institute was later relocated to Shimla, Himachal Pradesh in 1956 in order to facilitate hybridization work in potato breeding and maintain seed potato health. It was transferred to the ICAR in April 1966.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: Health

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims

What is the news?

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur virtually chaired a

meeting to review preparedness for the new COVID-19 variant, Omicron in the State, with Shimla's Deputy Commissioners today.

About Omicron:

- On November 26, 2021, the WHO identified variant B.1.1.529 as a variant of concern, named Omicron, on the advice of the WHO Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution (TAG-VE). This decision was based on the evidence presented to the TAG-VE that Omicron has several mutations that may have an impact on how it behaves, for example, on how easily it spreads or the severity of illness it causes.

Omicron Variant Facts



Current understanding of Omicron:

- Researchers in South Africa and around the world are

conducting studies to better understand many aspects of Omicron and will continue to share the findings of these studies as they become available.

- Communicability: It is not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible (for example, more easily spread from one person to another) compared to other variants, including Delta. The number of people testing positive has risen in areas of South Africa affected by this variant, but epidemiologic studies are underway to understand if it is because of Omicron or other factors.

Effectiveness of prior SARS-CoV-2 infection:

- Preliminary evidence suggests there may be an increased risk of reinfection with Omicron (ie, people who have previously had COVID-19 could become reinfected more easily with Omicron), as compared to other variants of concern, but information is limited.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: Rights

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims

What is the news?

- The campaign to implement the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, in the tribal Spiti region received a massive push as the people of Kibber village became the first to submit their claims to the sub-divisional level

committee, chaired by the SDM at Kaza in Spiti today.

Kibber Forest Rights Committee chairman Kaljung Phunsok said:

- In addition to 53 individual forest rights claims, the village also filed a request for community use and conservation of forestland and management rights under the FRA. He said, "It took us so many years to register our claims because neither clear information regarding the Act was provided by the government, nor forest right committees got timely training."

Important:

- Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary there.
- Kibber village, known across the world for snow leopards, has a large chunk of land classified as a wildlife sanctuary by the Forest Department.

(Source: HP Tribune)

Important Fact:

Person in News:

- Neha Rikta, student of Jubbal in Shimla district, **won the coveted Most Vivacious Miss Himachal** crown in the three-day contest that concluded here last night.

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