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30th, August, 2022

Topic: First Fire and Emergency Services Training Institute in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Indian Economy: Public sector institutions.

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude I:*** Topic: Society : Institutions.

What is the news?

- Punjab Government led by the Chief Minister of Punjab Mr. Bhagwant Mann has decided to establish a ***Punjab Fire and Emergency Services Training Institute.***

Purpose:

- To train youth in latest fire fighting techniques.

Why important?

- It will be the ***first institute of its kind in North India.***

Where it will be constructed?

- This high tech institute will be constructed in Lalru town of SAS Nagar. The institute to be built in an area of about 20 acres and will be recognized by the Government of India.

This will under whose control?

- This institute will be under control of the Punjab Fire and Emergency Services Department.

What will be covered under this?

- In this institute, ultra modern and world level training will be given to the students with the latest technologies.
- Courses in fire fighting, rescue, fire acts, state acts, national building code, fire safety standards, industrial standards, emergency response system, special service calls, dealing with emergency situations, etc. will be conducted in this institute and students will be trained with hi-tech safety equipment.

Local Government Minister shared:

- The training will be given by international level instructors. Apart from this, services of qualified officers and employees working in Punjab Fire Services

will also be taken for training. He said that this institute will also create new employment opportunities for the youths. Apart from this, the officers and employees who are already serving in the fire services can also obtain advanced training from this institute for the better opportunities.

(Source: Punjab Government)

Topic: Comprehensive Real Estate policy

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Indian Economy: Rural & urban infrastructure.

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude I:*** Topic: Society: Developmental issues, urbanization, their problems and their remedies (Infrastructure)

What is the news?

- Punjab State government is all set to bring a ***comprehensive Real Estate policy.***

Purpose:

- In order to stop illegal & haphazard development in the urban areas, Punjab Chief Minister S Bhagwant Mann led state government is all set to bring a comprehensive Real Estate policy, disclosed Mr. Aman Arora, Minister for Housing and Urban Development.

Minister for Housing and Urban Development shared:

- Mr Aman Arora said that the previous governments have created a mess in the name of urban development, which resulted in mushrooming of around 14000 illegal colonies in the state. Mann Government is fully aware of all the problems being faced by the common man and it would bring a comprehensive policy to clean this messy system so as to ensure planned development in the state, besides keeping a check on loot of people in this business.
- On a question of making NOC compulsory for property registration, the cabinet minister said that this issue

would also be resolved soon as Punjab Government's three departments, Housing & Urban Development, Revenue and Local Government are working in tandem to sort it out at the earliest.

(Source: Punjab Government)

Topic: African swine fever infected zones in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Everyday Science (Public Health)

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude I:*** Topic: Society: Issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector- Health.

What is the news?

- The Punjab government has declared and notified four more areas in district Patiala as the ***African swine fever infected zones.***
- Epicenters of the disease after the confirmation of African Swine Flu in the samples of these areas by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) -National High Security Animal Disease Institute, Bhopal. Taking immediate action to contain the disease, the Animal Husbandry department has declared 0 to 1 kilometre area of the epicenters as "infected zones" while 0 to 10 KM

(9 KM) area is classified as “surveillance zones.”

Cabinet Minister shared:

As per the National Action Plan for Control, Containment and Eradication of African Swine Fever (June 2020), no live/dead pig (including feral or wild pigs), unprocessed pig meat, feed or any material/goods from the piggery farms or backyard piggery shall be taken out of or brought into the infected zone and no person shall bring or attempt to bring into the market any pig or pig products which is known to be infected with the scheduled disease.

Cabinet Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar appealed to the people that there is no need to panic over African Swine Fever as this disease in non-zoonotic, hence it does not infect humans. This is an incurable and fatal disease which can be prevented only by adopting precautions.

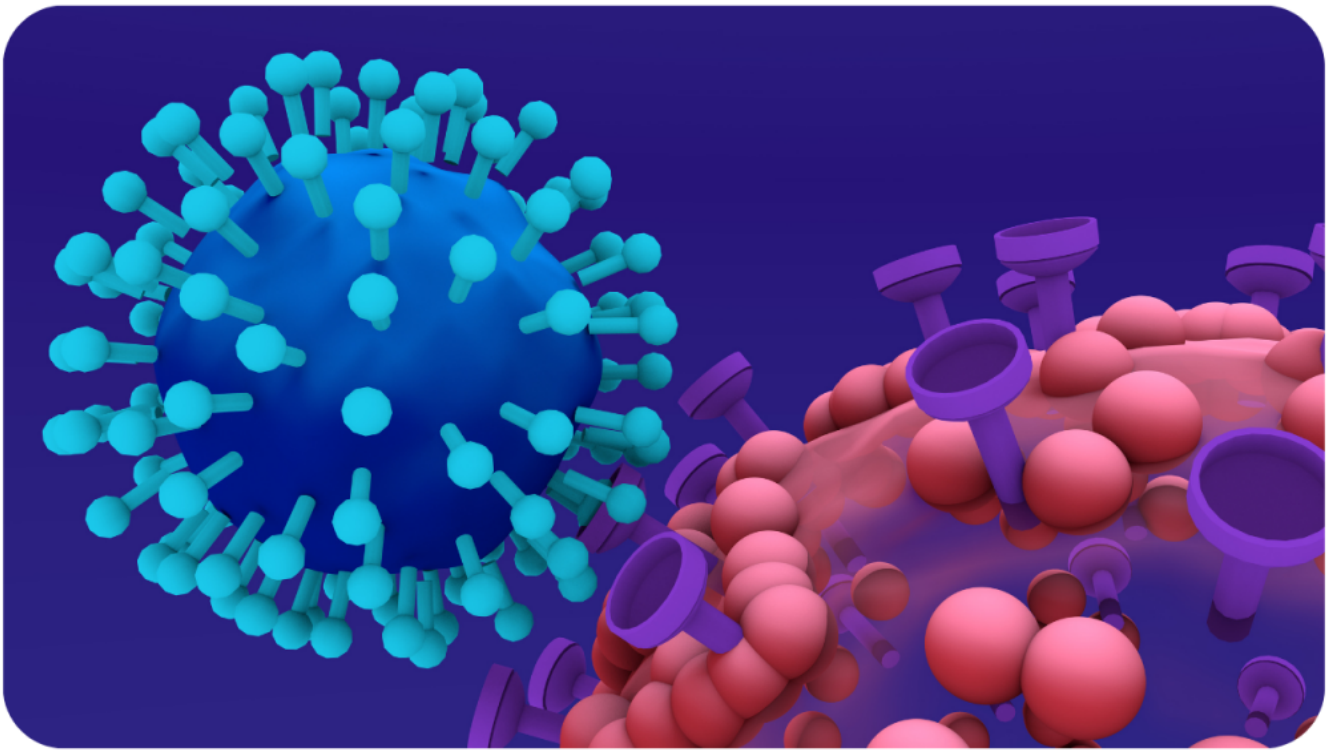
About African Swine Flu:

About African swine fever:

What is African swine fever?

- African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease of domestic and wild pigs, whose mortality rate can reach 100%.
- It is not a danger to human health, but it has devastating effects on pig populations and the farming economy. There is currently no effective vaccine against ASF.
- The virus is highly resistant to the environment, meaning that it can survive on clothes, boots, wheels, and other materials. It can also survive in various pork products, such as ham, sausages or bacon. Therefore, human behaviors can play an important role in spreading this pig disease across borders if adequate measures are not taken.

It is caused by a DNA virus of the Asfarviridae family.



Some Important Points:

- It was first detected in Africa in the 1920s.
- Historically, outbreaks have been reported in Africa and parts of Europe, South America, and the Caribbean.
- However, more recently (since 2007), the disease has been reported in multiple countries across Africa, Asia and Europe, in both domestic and wild pigs.
- ASF is a disease listed in the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code and thus, reported to the OIE.

African swine fever: a socio-economic burden and a threat to food security and biodiversity:

- Pigs are a primary source of household income in many countries. The spread of ASF across the world has devastated family-run pig farms, often the mainstay of people’s livelihoods and a driver of upward mobility. It has also reduced opportunities to access healthcare and education.

- Moreover, pork meat is one of the primary sources of animal proteins, accounting for more than 35% of the global meat intake1. Hence, this disease poses a serious problem for food security worldwide.
- This disease is also a concern for biodiversity and the balance of ecosystems, as it affects not only domestic farmed pigs, but also wild boars, including native breeds.

ASF evolution since 2005:

2005: Presence in Africa:
ASF has traditionally been present in the African continent, where it has been reported in 32 countries since 2005, when WOAH began to collect data on ASF through its World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS)

2007: Appearance in East Europe
In 2007, the disease was confirmed in the Caucasus region of Georgia. From there, the ASF virus gradually spread to neighboring countries (i.e., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia and Belarus) affecting domestic pigs and wild boar.

2014: Spread to the EU
The first occurrence of ASF was reported in the European Union (EU) in 2014 and since then, numerous EU countries have been

affected by this devastating pig disease that continues to be reported in 16 countries (during 2020/2022). Two European countries have managed to eradicate the disease and submitted a self-declaration of freedom: Belgium (event resolved in March 2020) and Czech Republic (event resolved in April 2018).

2018: Emergence in Asia
In August 2018, the virus leapt to China (People's Rep. of), which represented the first occurrence of ASF in Asia. Since then, the disease has continued to spread in the Region, affecting 16 countries as of 2021.

2019/2020: Spread to Oceania
In September 2019, the first occurrence of ASF in Oceania was reported by Timor-Leste, followed by Papua New Guinea (March 2020).

2021: Reappearance in the Americas
In July 2021 the disease reappeared in the Americas after an absence of almost 40 years, having been introduced in the Dominican Republic and later in Haiti.

2022: Further spread in Asia and Europe
In January 2022, ASF genotype II was notified on the Italian mainland after around 40 years of absence. Two new countries reported the first occurrence of the disease in January as well: North Macedonia and Thailand. In March 2022, ASF was reported for the first time in Nepal.

About World Organization for Animal Health:

- It is an intergovernmental organization responsible for improving animal health worldwide.
- It has 182 Member Countries. India is one of the member countries.
- It develops normative documents relating to rules that Member Countries can use to protect themselves from the

introduction of diseases and pathogens. One of them is the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.
- Its standards are recognized by the World Trade Organization as reference international sanitary rules.
- It is headquartered in Paris, France.

(Source: World Organisation for Animal Health & The Tribune)

Topic: Cancer cases on the rise in Malwa

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Everyday Science (Public Health)

Punjab PCS Mains:

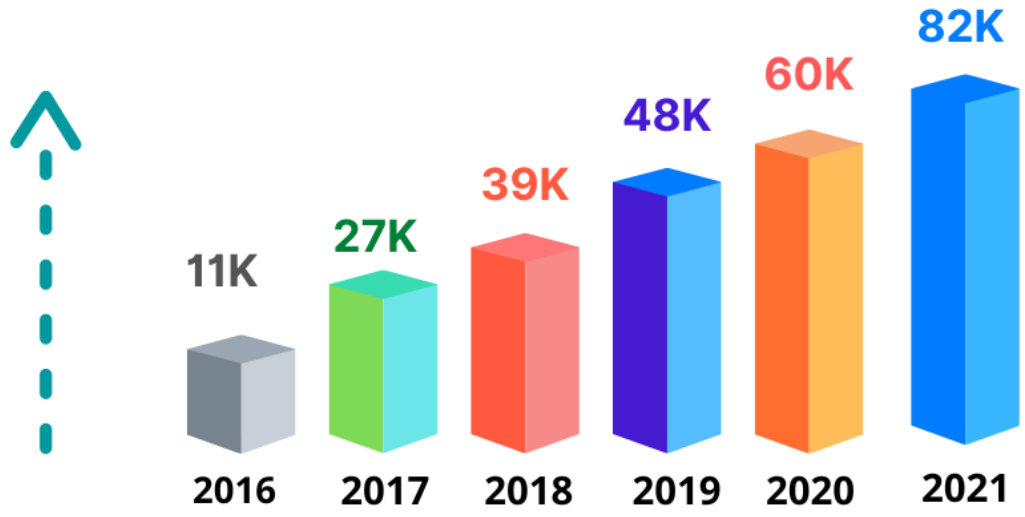
- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude I:*** Topic: Society: issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector- Health.

What is the news?

- The southern Malwa region, also known as the cotton belt of the state, has a high number of cancer patients, and their count is growing by the year.

- ***Over 82,000 patients, a majority of them from the Malwa region,*** availed treatment last year from the Advanced Cancer Institute in Bathinda which was set up six years ago. The institute saw 11,000 patients in 2016, 27,000 in 2017, 39,400 in 2018, 48,000 in 2019 and 60,000 in 2020.

Patients in the Bathinda Center



In Last 6 Years ,2.6 Lakhs Treated at Bathinda Centre

Causes:

- Experts claim that research studies have revealed that the disease has spread in the Malwa region largely due to consistent use of pesticides and other chemicals in agriculture.
- A 2018 study, commissioned by the Central University of Punjab, had found ***concentration of calcium, magnesium, sodium, nitrate and fluoride higher than the permissible limits, rendering 80.3 percent of the groundwater in the Malwa region unsuitable for drinking.***

The Advanced Cancer Institute Director, Dr Deepak

Arora, emphasized:

- That early detection and diagnosis, improved the chances of successful treatment. “We are creating awareness about the disease, and that is the reason people in high numbers are coming to our institute. Earlier, they were going too far-off places like Bikaner for cancer treatment,” Dr Arora said.
- Dr Karuna Singh, Associate Professor at the cancer institute said breast and cervical cancer were common among female patients, while head and neck cancer were prominent among youth.
- To provide financial assistance to the affected, the state government started the Mukhya Mantri Punjab Cancer Raahat Kosh Scheme in 2013. An amount up to Rs 1.5 lakh is made available for the treatment of every cancer patient.

(Source: The Tribune)

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