



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

23rd July 2026



CONTEXT: Following the CJP protest in Delhi over alleged examination irregularities, mobile internet services were temporarily suspended in parts of Central Delhi.

What is an Internet Shutdown?

- It refers to the **intentional suspension or disruption** of internet or telecommunication services by the government to maintain public order, national security, or public safety.

Types

- Complete internet shutdown
- Mobile internet suspension
- Blocking specific platforms/apps
- Internet speed throttling

Current Scenario

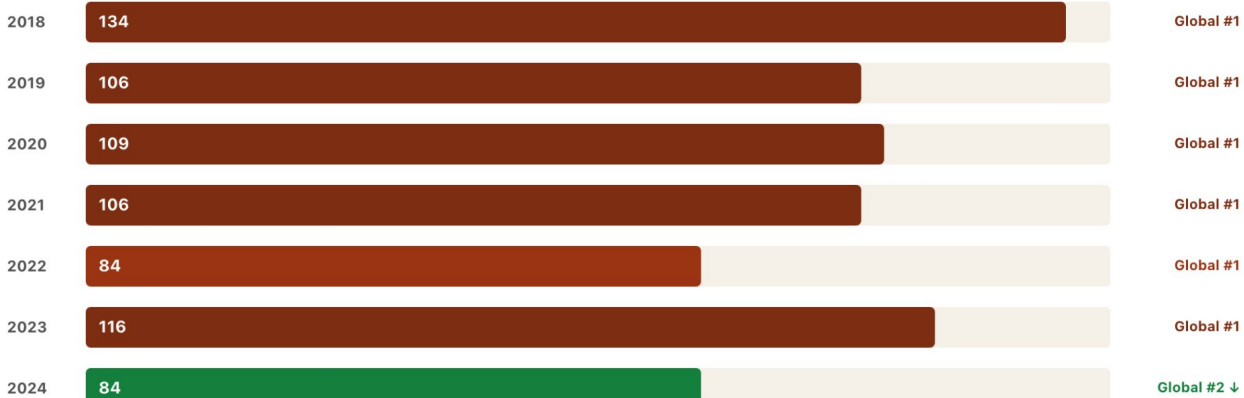
- The 2026 **#KeepItOn report**, "Rising Repression Meets Global Resistance: Internet Shutdowns in 2025," highlights the growing use of internet shutdowns worldwide. In 2025, India recorded 65 internet shutdowns, the highest number among democracies.

TREND RESET · ACCESS NOW DATA

Internet shutdowns in India: 2018 to 2024

Six years at #1 globally, then 2024 broke the streak. Myanmar overtook India.

SHUTDOWNS PER YEAR · ACCESS NOW METHODOLOGY



MANIPUR

21

incidents in 2024

HARYANA

12

incidents in 2024

JAMMU & KASHMIR

12

incidents in 2024

2024 TRIGGER BREAKDOWN · 84 TOTAL

41

PROTESTS

23

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

5

EXAMINATIONS



CONTEXT: Following the CJP protest in Delhi over alleged examination irregularities, mobile internet services were temporarily suspended in parts of Central Delhi.

Legal Framework Governing Internet Shutdowns

Telecommunications Act, 2023

- Section 20 empowers the government to temporarily suspend telecommunication services during:
 - Public emergency
 - Public safety
 - subject to prescribed safeguards.

Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024

- Written reasons mandatory
- Limited duration
- Periodic review
- Publication of orders

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 19(1)(a)**
 - Freedom of Speech and Expression
- **Article 19(1)(g)**
 - Freedom to practice any profession or trade.
- **Article 21**
 - Right to Life includes access to digital services essential for livelihood and dignity.

Why Do Governments Impose Internet Shutdowns?

- **Maintain Public Order**
 - Prevent spread of rumours during protests.
- **National Security**
 - Eg. Counter-terrorism operations in Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Prevent Violence**
 - Eg. Communal riots.

- **Prevent Fake News & Misinformation**
 - Eg. Stopping viral misinformation during sensitive situations.
- **Protect Public Safety**
 - Eg. During large-scale law and order situations.

Why are Internet Shutdowns Criticised?

- **Restricts Fundamental Rights**
 - Limits freedom of speech under Article 19(1)(a).
- **Economic Losses**
 - Digital businesses, UPI payments and e-commerce suffer.
- **Affects Education**
 - Students lose access to online learning.
- **Impacts Healthcare**
 - Telemedicine and digital health services are disrupted.
- **Governance Challenges**
 - Citizens cannot access online government services.
- **Disproportionate Measure**
 - Entire districts may face shutdowns because of localized incidents.



CONTEXT: Following the CJP protest in Delhi over alleged examination irregularities, mobile internet services were temporarily suspended in parts of Central Delhi.

Supreme Court's Stand

- **Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India (2020)**
- SC held that:
- Internet access is closely linked to:
 - Freedom of Speech (Article 19(1)(a))
 - Freedom of Trade (Article 19(1)(g))
- **Principles:** Internet shutdowns must be:
 - Legal, Necessary
 - Proportionate
 - Temporary
 - Least restrictive
- **Key Observations**
 - Indefinite internet shutdowns are unconstitutional.
 - Orders must be published.
 - Subject to judicial review.

Challenges

- **Balancing Security & Liberty**
 - Need to control violence without excessive restrictions.
- **Transparency Issues**
 - Orders are sometimes not promptly published.
- **Federal Concerns**
 - Variation in practices across different states.

Way Forward

- **Use Shutdowns Only as Last Resort**
 - Prefer targeted restrictions over blanket shutdowns.

• **Better Intelligence & Policing**

- Prevent violence through proactive surveillance and policing instead of internet bans.

• **Platform-Specific Restrictions**

- Block specific unlawful content instead of disabling the entire internet.

• **Greater Transparency**

- Publish all shutdown orders with reasons.

• **Judicial Oversight**

- Ensure speedy review by courts in cases of prolonged restrictions.

• **Strengthen Digital Literacy**

- Public awareness campaigns to combat misinformation.

• **Introduce parliamentary scrutiny**

- Or an independent oversight body

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Examine the legal framework governing internet shutdowns in India. Do the existing safeguards adequately balance public order with citizens' digital rights?

(10 Marks, 150 words)

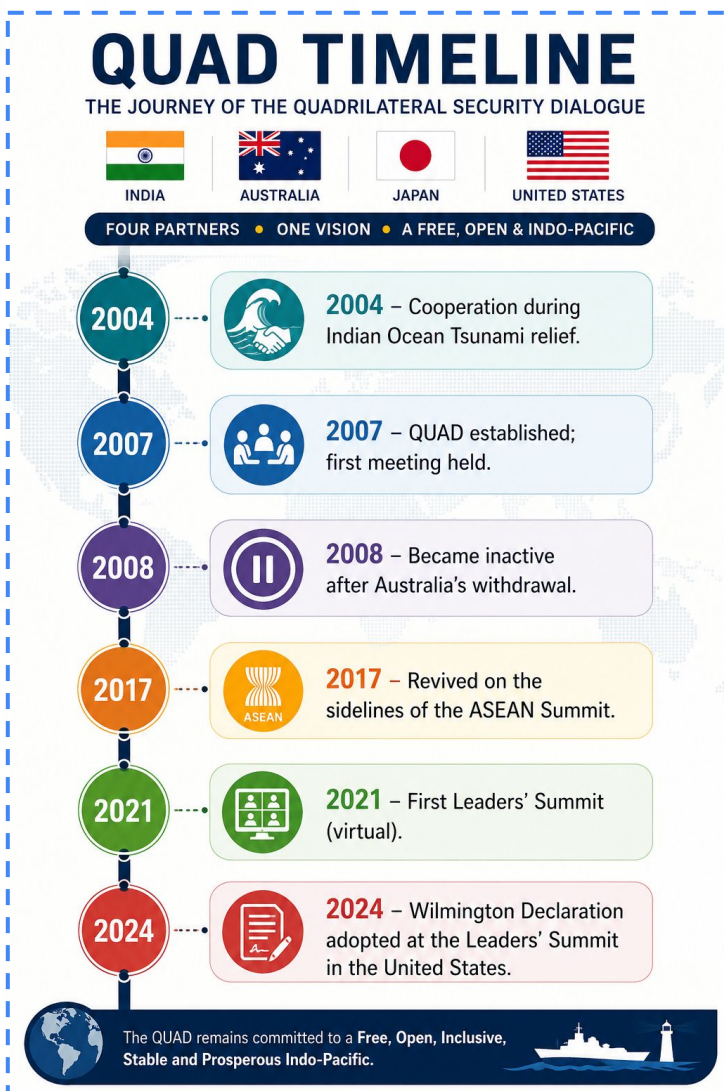


Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting



CONTEXT: At the Meeting in Manila (Philippines), India, the US, Japan and Australia reaffirmed their commitment to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

- The ministers expressed support for **ASEAN centrality and unity**, emphasizing that regional peace, stability and prosperity should remain ASEAN-led.
 - ASEAN Centrality means that ASEAN should remain at the core of the regional security and economic architecture in the Indo-Pacific.



QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)

- An informal strategic partnership of four democratic countries aimed at promoting a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific.
- Origin:
 - Proposed in **2007** by **Shinzo Abe**.
- No permanent secretariat.
- Headquarters: None.
- Nature:
 - Not a military alliance** and not a treaty-based organization.
- Objective** is to promote a Free, Open, Inclusive, Stable and Prosperous Indo-Pacific based on:
 - Rule of law
 - Freedom of navigation
 - Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity
- Areas of Cooperation:**
 - Maritime security
 - Cybersecurity & Space cooperation
 - Supply chain resilience
 - Climate change, Disaster relief (HADR)
- Military Exercise:**
 - Exercise **Malabar** naval exercise.
 - Australia rejoined the exercise in 2020, making it a four-country exercise.



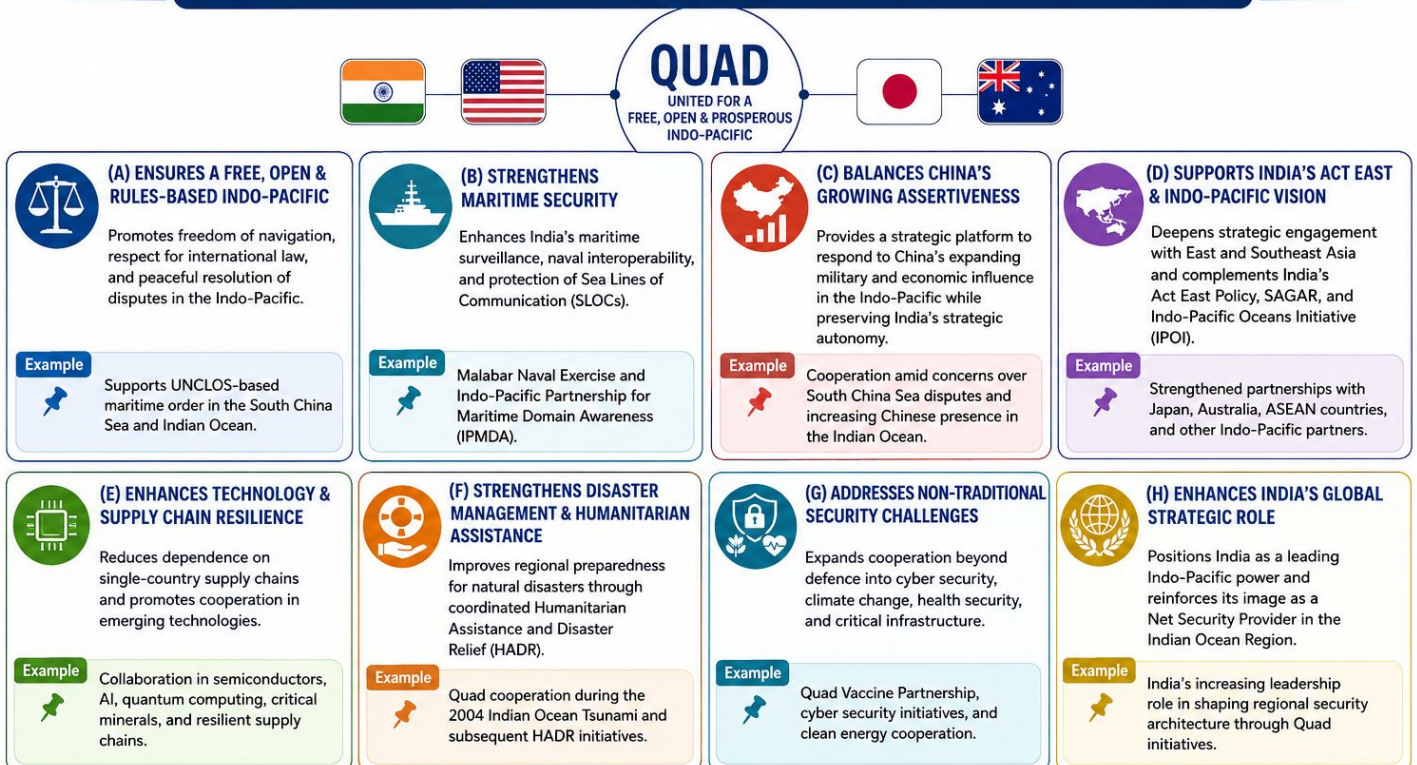
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Areas of Cooperation under QUAD

- **Maritime Security**
 - Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA).
- **Cyber Security**
 - Cooperation against cyber threats and ransomware.
- **Critical & Emerging Technologies**
 - Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, Semiconductor ecosystem.
- **Health Security**
 - Quad Vaccine Partnership during COVID-19.
- **Climate Action**
 - Clean hydrogen, renewable energy and resilient infrastructure.
- **Infrastructure Development**
 - Transparent and sustainable infrastructure financing.

WHY IS QUAD IMPORTANT FOR INDIA?



QUAD reinforces India's security, prosperity and leadership in the Indo-Pacific through cooperation, stability and a shared vision for a peaceful and inclusive region.



Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting



CONTEXT: At the Meeting in Manila (Philippines), India, the US, Japan and Australia reaffirmed their commitment to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Challenges Before QUAD

- **No Formal Institutional Structure**
 - No permanent secretariat or treaty obligations.
- **Divergent National Interests**
 - Different strategic priorities among members.
- **China's Opposition**
 - China views QUAD as an attempt at strategic containment.
- **ASEAN Concerns**
 - Need to ensure ASEAN Centrality in Indo-Pacific architecture.
- **Strategic Autonomy of India**
 - India seeks cooperation without entering military alliances.

Way Forward for QUAD

- **Institutionalise Cooperation**
 - Strengthen working groups and regular ministerial engagements.
- **Expand Economic Cooperation**
 - Build resilient supply chains and critical mineral partnerships.
- **Strengthen Maritime Domain Awareness**
 - Enhance information sharing and joint surveillance.
- **Collaborate in Emerging Technologies**
 - AI, quantum technologies and cyber security.
- **Support ASEAN Centrality**
 - Ensure Quad complements existing regional institutions.
- **Promote Inclusive Indo-Pacific**
 - Focus on development, connectivity and capacity building alongside security.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Examine the significance of the Quad for India's Indo-Pacific strategy. Also discuss the challenges that may limit its effectiveness.

(10 marks, 150 words)



Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No :** 10

Beyond the protests, three education initiatives

Recent Developments in India's Education System

- **APAAR ID** – A unified, lifelong digital identity for Indian students.
 - Aligning with the "One Nation, One Student ID" vision
 - Over 33.85 cr. APAAR IDs have been linked to the Academic Bank of Credits via DigiLocker.
- **Internationalization via Foreign University Campuses**
 - 19 foreign universities are set to establish campuses in India. Eg. Deakin University in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)**
 - The ANRF operationalized the ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) Fund.
- **NIPUN Bharat mission**
 - To universalize foundational literacy and numeracy by the 2026-27 academic cycle, supported by upgraded infrastructure in 12,000 PM SHRI schools.
- **National Digital University (NDU)**

1. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in Education

- Promotes a balanced understanding of India's scientific and cultural heritage.
- Recognises contributions of Aryabhata, Brahmagupta & Madhava alongside global scientific traditions.
- Promotes decolonisation of education.

2. Mother Tongue & Multilingual Education

- Language is not merely a medium of instruction but a carrier of culture, identity and cognitive development.
- Strong foundation in Indian languages.
 - English as a global link language.
- Supports NEP 2020's emphasis on multilingual education.

3. Examination Reforms

- Secure digital infrastructure (Stronger data security)
- Biometric authentication
- Computer-Based Testing (CBT)
- Greater state-level coordination (Reliable exam centres)
- Reducing Coaching Dependency



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Internal Security
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 3**

Who are Agniveers?

- Personnel recruited under the **Agnipath Scheme** for the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force.
- Launched: **2022**
- Nodal Ministry: **Ministry of Defence**
- Service Tenure:
 - **4 years** (including training)
- Age Eligibility:
 - **17½ to 21 years**
- Retention:
 - Up to **25%** of each batch may be enrolled into the regular armed forces based on organizational **requirements and merit**.
 - The remaining 75% are released after four years.

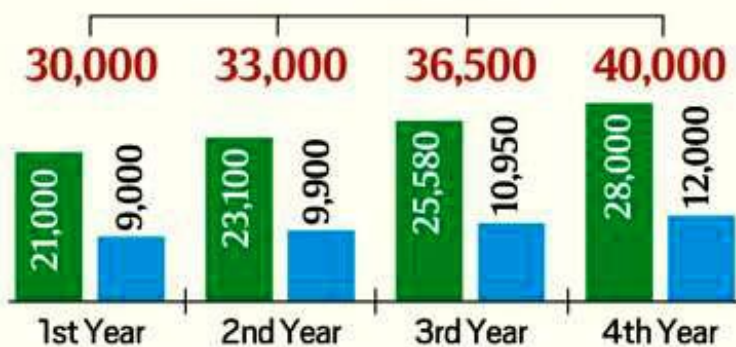
PAY & BENEFITS: WHAT THE AGNIVEERS GET

■ In Hand (70%)

■ Contribution to Seva Nidhi (30%)*

Similar contribution to corpus fund by Government of India**

BASIC PAY PER MONTH



All figures in ₹ (Monthly Contribution)

Exit After
4 Years

₹11.71 Lakh as SevaNidhi Package
(Including interest accumulated on the above
amount as per the applicable rates)

Total
contribution
to Seva Nidhi
after 4 yrs
10.04 Lakh
(₹ 5.02 Lakh* +
₹5.02 Lakh**)



Who are Agniveers?

SYLLABUS: Prelims: Internal Security
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 3**

- **Seva Nidhi Package:**
 - Lump-sum amount paid on exit (tax-free)
- **Benefits:**
 - Skill certificate and experience.
 - Priority in several recruitment processes announced by CAPFs, some State Police forces, and other organizations.
 - Life insurance cover during the service period.
- **Not Eligible For:**
 - Pension or ex-servicemen status solely by virtue of completing the four-year tenure (unless retained in regular service under applicable rules).

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN AGNIVEER

Permanent Cadre Opportunity: Up to 25% of Agniveers can be enrolled in the permanent cadre based on existing terms.

Financial Stability: Agniveers receive a tax-exempt corpus of Rs. 10.04 Lakhs plus interest after four years, aiding higher education or business ventures.

Reserved Jobs in Defence: 10% reservation in Indian Coast Guard, Defence civilian posts and all DPSU.

Paramilitary Forces Reservation: 10% vacancies in Central Paramilitary Forces and Assam Rifles, with age relaxation.

Civil Aviation Roles: Opportunities in air traffic services, aircraft maintenance, and other aviation-related jobs.



Who are Agniveers?



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Internal Security
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 3**

Exam Traps

- Agniveers serve for 10 years → WRONG
- All Agniveers are permanently absorbed after four years → WRONG
- The scheme is applicable only to the Indian Army → WRONG
- Every Agniveer receives a pension after four years → WRONG
- The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs → WRONG
- The upper age limit is permanently 23 years → WRONG



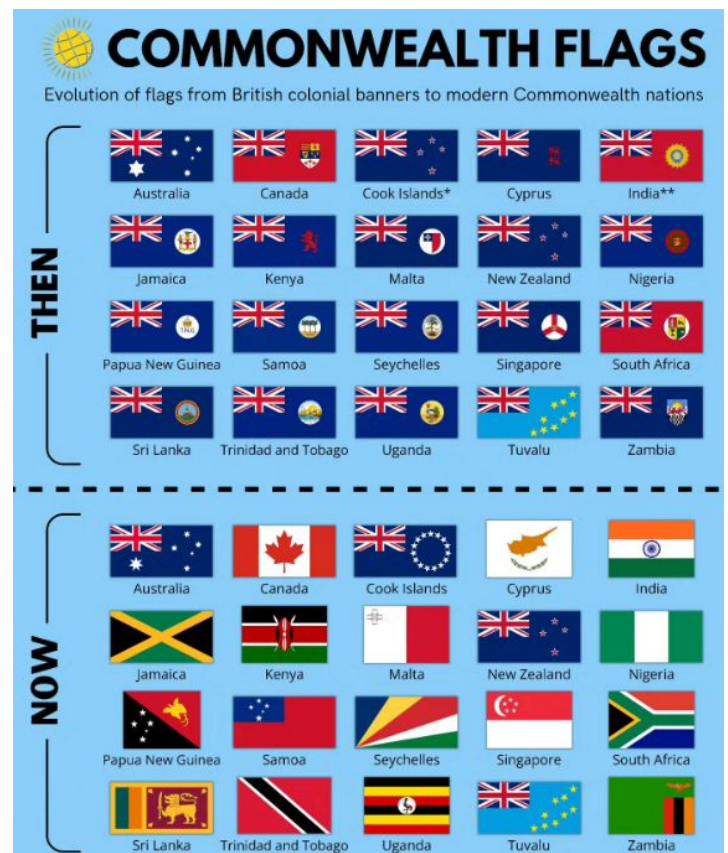
SYLLABUS: Prelims: Sports
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 17**

Commonwealth Games 2026

- **23rd** Commonwealth Games (XXIII Games)
- Host City & Country: **Glasgow, Scotland**
- **Host Selection:**
 - Originally awarded to Victoria (Australia), which withdrew due to rising costs.
 - Glasgow was later selected as the replacement host.
- Theme:
 - A **scaled-down, cost-effective edition** focused on using existing venues.
- **Sports Programme:**
 - 10 sports, including:
 - Athletics & Para Athletics
 - Swimming, etc.
- Sports **Excluded** (compared with 2022):
 - Hockey, Cricket
 - Badminton, Wrestling, etc



- The **first Commonwealth Games:**
 - Held in Hamilton, Ontario, **Canada** in August **1930**.
- Participating Nations:
 - It feature teams from **74 nations and territories**.
 - Although there are **56 sovereign states** in the Commonwealth of Nations.
- **Next Edition:**
 - **2030** Commonwealth Games to be hosted by **Ahmedabad, India**.



Commonwealth Games 2026



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Sports

Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 17**

Exam Traps

- Commonwealth Games 2026 are being held in Victoria, Australia → WRONG
- The Games feature 20+ sports like previous editions → WRONG
- The Games are hosted by England → WRONG
- Glasgow is hosting the Commonwealth Games for the first time → WRONG
- India is hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games → WRONG



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Economics

Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 13**

NSE's AHIMSA Index

- AHIMSA – **Aspiration, Harmony, Inclusion, Management, Sustainability and Accountability**
- Launched By: NSE
 - Developed In Collaboration With SMBC Group (Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation)
- **Purpose:**
 - Measures the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance of listed Indian companies.
 - Helps investors identify companies with strong sustainability and responsible business practices.
- Index Type:
 - ESG-based thematic stock market index.

- Companies are **evaluated** on:
 - Environmental performance
 - Social responsibility
 - Corporate governance
 - Transparency
 - Ethical business practices
- **Uses:**
 - Promotes responsible investing.
 - Encourages companies to improve ESG disclosures and performance.
- **Significance:**
 - Aligns India's capital markets with global sustainable finance trends.
 - Supports long-term value creation by integrating ESG considerations into investment decisions.

Exam Traps

- AHIMSA is launched by SEBI → WRONG
- It is a government welfare index → WRONG
- Only manufacturing companies are included → WRONG
- AHIMSA is an index for green bonds → WRONG
- AHIMSA is a religious or non-violence index → WRONG



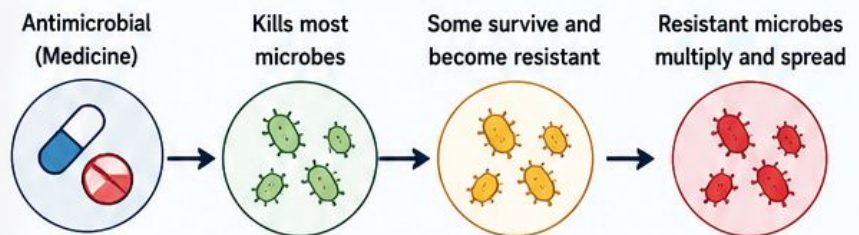
SYLLABUS: Prelims: Health & Wellness
Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 8**

ANTI MICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

WHEN MICROBES OUTSMART MEDICINES, COMMON INFECTIONS BECOME DEADLY

WHAT IS AMR?

- Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change over time and no longer respond to medicines.
- Infections that were once easily treatable become difficult or impossible to treat.



CAUSES / DRIVERS

-  Overuse and misuse of antibiotics (in humans and animals)
-  Self-medication and over-the-counter availability
-  Use of antibiotics in livestock, aquaculture and poultry for growth promotion
-  Poor infection prevention and control, poor sanitation and hygiene
-  Lack of new antibiotics and diagnostics

IMPACT / THREAT

-  Increased illness, disability and death
-  Longer hospital stays and higher medical costs
-  Threatens achievement of SDGs (especially SDG 3 – Good Health)
-  Global economic loss estimated at US\$ 1 trillion per year by 2050 (World Bank)
-  Undermines advances in modern medicine (e.g., surgery, chemotherapy, transplants)

What is antibiotic classification?

The World Health Organization (WHO) groups antibiotics into three categories:

■ **ACCESS:** First-choice antibiotics for common infections that have a lower risk of driving resistance.

■ **WATCH:** Broad-spectrum

antibiotics that should be used only for specific infections because they carry a higher risk of promoting antimicrobial resistance.

■ **RESERVE:** Last-resort antibiotics reserved for treating multidrug-resistant infections.

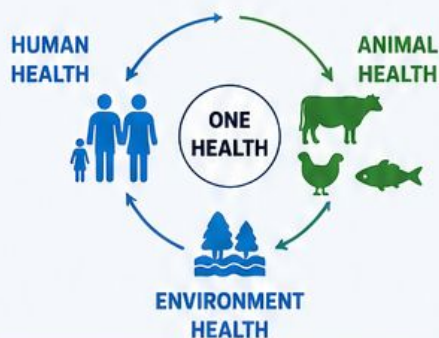
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SYLLABUS: Prelims: Health & Wellness
Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 8**

ONE HEALTH CONNECTION

AMR is a One Health issue—affecting humans, animals, plants and the environment.



GLOBAL RESPONSE



WHO Global Action Plan on AMR (2015)



FAO Action Plan on AMR (2016)



UNEP supports AMR through environmental actions



UNGA High-Level Meeting on AMR (2016)

INDIA'S RESPONSE



National Action Plan on AMR (NAP-AMR), 2017



National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) – AMR Division



AMR Surveillance Network across hospitals & labs



Rational use of antibiotics under "Antibiotics Stewardship Program"



Jan Andolan on AMR (awareness campaign)

HOW CAN WE COMBAT AMR?



Use antibiotics only when prescribed by a qualified health professional



Complete the full course, do not stop early



Do not use leftover antibiotics or share with others



Practice good hygiene and infection prevention



Responsible use of antibiotics in animals and agriculture



Encourage research for new antibiotics, vaccines and diagnostics



Awareness and community participation

KEY FACTS



AMR causes ~1.27 million deaths directly and contributes to ~4.95 million deaths associated with AMR every year. (WHO, 2019)



Drug-resistant infections can affect anyone, of any age, in any country.



Without urgent action, by 2050 AMR could cause 10 million deaths annually.

Exam Traps

- AMR means the human body becomes resistant to antibiotics → WRONG
- Antibiotics are effective against viral infections → WRONG
- AMR is caused only by overuse in humans → WRONG
- AMR concerns only bacteria → WRONG (It also involves viruses, fungi and parasites.)
- AMR is only a healthcare issue → WRONG



Q1. With reference to Agniveers recruited under the Agnipath Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. The service tenure is four years, including the training period.
2. All Agniveers are permanently absorbed into the armed forces after completion of service.
3. The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
4. Every Agniveer is entitled to a pension after four years of service.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: a

Q2. With reference to the 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games, consider the following statements:

1. Glasgow, Scotland will host the event.
2. Glasgow is hosting the Commonwealth Games for the first time.
3. Hockey, Cricket, Badminton, and Wrestling are excluded compared to the 2022 Games.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: c

Q3. With reference to the AHIMSA Index, consider the following statements:

1. It is launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
2. It measures the ESG performance of listed Indian companies.
3. It helps investors identify companies with strong sustainability practices.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q4. With reference to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), consider the following statements:

1. AMR occurs when microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites no longer respond to medicines.
2. Antibiotics are very effective against viral infections.
3. Use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry for growth promotion is a driver of AMR.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a

Q5. With reference to the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, consider the following statements:

1. It was proposed in 2007 by Shinzo Abe.
2. It does not have a permanent headquarters and functions as an informal strategic partnership.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: c





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