

**13-04-2024**

### Whooping cough cases outbreak

#### Why in News?

- Whooping cough, a highly contagious respiratory illness also known as pertussis, is making a concerning comeback across the globe. Outbreaks are being reported in numerous countries, raising concerns about vaccine efficacy and the vulnerability of young children.

#### More About the News

- China has reported a more than 20-fold increase in whooping cough cases in January and February compared to the same period last year.



- After confirming 32,380 cases and 13 deaths, Chinese authorities warned that it is a major cause of mortality among infants and young children globally.
- However, whooping cough can affect people of all ages when immunity wanes over time. The increasing number of cases has been attributed to the weakening of the vaccine's long-term effects in China.
- According to an expert cited by Chinese tabloid newspaper Global Times, the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP) vaccine used in the country faces production and quality control challenges

unlike vaccines manufactured in developed countries.

- The disease experiences a cyclical rise every three to five years, but incidences have been growing for more than twenty years.
- Another potential reason researchers are considering behind the rising incidences of pertussis over the last two decades is the impact of outdoor air pollution in China.
- The bordetella pertussis bacteria that causes whooping cough also appears to have mutated, particularly in Australia. The country is facing its worst outbreak since 2013, with 2,799 cases recorded in the first three months of 2024.
- A strain of the virus that was pertactin-deficient appeared to have become the dominant strain by 2017 in Australia. Pertactin is a key protein targeted by the vaccine, reported The Conversation, a network of nonprofit media outlets.

### Gas-based Power Plants

#### Why in the News?

- In order to help meet the high electricity demand in the country during the summer season, the Government of India has decided to operationalize gas-based power plants.

#### More About the News

- 'To ensure maximum power generation from Gas-Based Generating Stations, the Government has issued directions to all Gas-Based Generating Stations under Section 11 of the Electricity Act, 2003.
- A significant portion of the Gas-Based Generating Stations (GBSs) is currently unutilized, primarily due to commercial considerations.

- As per the arrangement, GRID-INDIA will inform the Gas-based Generating Stations in advance, of the number of days for which Gas-based power is required.
- India's electricity demand has been rising rapidly, driven by economic growth, particularly during hot-weather and high-demand periods.
- However, the Gas-based power plants can only provide temporary relief during the summer months. Imported gas is not favourable in terms of cost economics.

### 105th Anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

#### Why in the News?

- President Droupadi Murmu expressed heartfelt tributes on April 13 to the people who sacrificed their lives for the country in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and said the spirit of patriotism of those martyrs will keep inspiring the coming generations.

#### More About the News

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place in pre-Independence India on 13 April, 1919, when the acting Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer ordered British troops to open fire on unarmed Indian civilians.
- Hundreds of people protesting peacefully against the Rowlatt Act were gunned down by British forces without any provocation on 13th April 1919 at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar.



- The day was also the festival of Baisakhi, so many went to the Jallianwala grounds in Amritsar to celebrate together and also peacefully protest the arrest of two freedom fighters Satyapal and Saifuddin Kitchlew.
- The Hunter Commission report, which came out in 1920, criticised both Dyer and the Punjab government at the time.
- Noted litterateur and musician Rabindranath Tagore even renounced his Knighthood in protest.
- The shock and outrage led to the non-cooperation movement of 1920-22, which proved a step in the direction of ending the British rule of India 25 years later.

### Home Voting Facility

#### Why in the News?

- In a pathbreaking initiative, the Election Commission of India (ECI), for the first time in a Lok Sabha Election, has provided the facility of home voting for the elderly and Persons with Disabilities in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

#### More About the News

- Voters above 85 years of age and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) with 40% benchmark disability can avail the optional home voting facility.
- This initiative marks a significant stride towards ensuring inclusivity and accessibility of the electoral process and in bolstering democratic participation.
- The provision of home voting is a progressive measure aimed at empowering voters who encounter barriers to participating in the electoral process at the polling stations.
- By extending this optional facility to these segments of the voters, the Election Commission recognizes the need to ensure that citizens' right to vote is not encumbered by physical barriers and disabilities.
- This upholds the Commission's motto of ensuring - No voter is left behind.
- Voters are notified ahead of time of the planned visit, allowing them to be prepared

to exercise their right to vote in a safe and comfortable manner.

- To further expedite the procedure and improve accessibility, voters can also receive notifications via SMS about the days when their home voting facility will be active. The complete process is videographed for transparency.

### India's Index of Industrial Production

#### Why in the News?

- The Quick Estimates of Index of Industrial Production (IIP), for the month of February 2024 has been released on 12th April 2024.

#### More About the News

- For the month of February 2024, the Quick Estimates of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) with base 2011-12 stands at 147.2.
- The Indices of Industrial Production for the Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity sectors for the month of February 2024 stand at 139.6, 144.5 and 187.1 respectively.
- As per Use-based classification, the indices stand at 148.2 for Primary Goods, 106.2 for Capital Goods, 158.9 for Intermediate Goods and 179.8 for Infrastructure/ Construction Goods for the month of February 2024.
- Further, the indices for Consumer durables and Consumer non-durables stand at 121.6 and 148.9 respectively for the month of February 2024.
- The Quick Estimates of Index of Industrial

Production (IIP) are released on 12th of every month (or previous working day if 12th is a holiday) with a six weeks lag and compiled with data received from source agencies, which in turn receive the data from the producing factories/ establishments.

- These Quick Estimates will undergo revision in subsequent releases as per the revision policy of IIP.

### Retail Inflation eases to 4.85 per cent in March, 2024

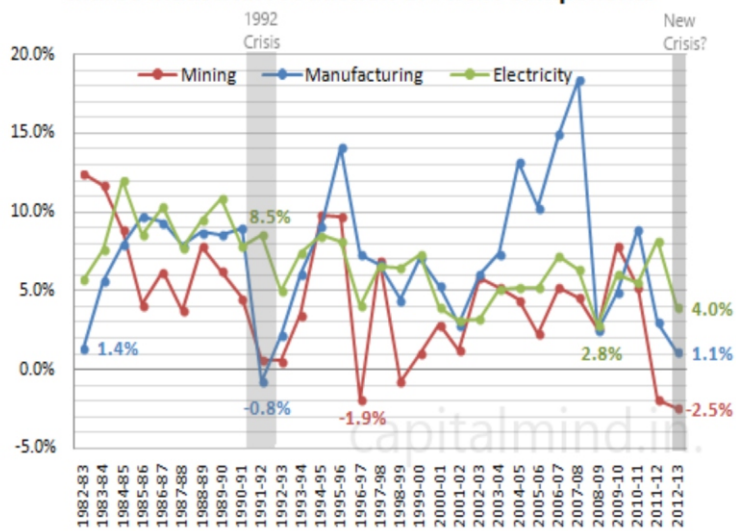
#### Why in the News?

- The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is releasing All India Consumer Price Index (CPI) on Base 2012=100 and corresponding Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) for Rural (R), Urban (U) and Combined (C) for the month of March 2024 (Provisional) in this press note.

#### More About the News

- Retail inflation declined to a five-month low of 4.85 per cent in March mainly due to cooling food prices, according to official data released on 12th April 2024.
- The inflation in the food basket was at 8.52 per cent in March, down from 8.66 per cent in February, according to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was 5.09 per cent in February and 5.66 per cent in March 2023. Previously, CPI-based inflation was the lowest at 4.87 per cent in October 2023.
- The government has tasked the Reserve Bank to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent, with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.
- According to the Reserve Bank, which factors in consumer inflation while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy, food price uncertainties continue to weigh on the inflation trajectory going forward.
- The central bank has projected retail inflation at 4.5 per cent for the current fiscal assuming a normal monsoon.

India's Industrial Production Growth : Components



# GS FOUNDATION COURSE

FOR BPSC

## ADMISSION OPEN

upto  
**50** %  
OFF\*



हिंदी माध्यम | ENGLISH MEDIUM

MODE: Online & Offline