

NEWS TODAY

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO) HAS THREE STRATEGIES TO REVIVE WORLD ECONOMY

- ILO released **Policy Brief on the World of Work and COVID-19**.

Report Highlights

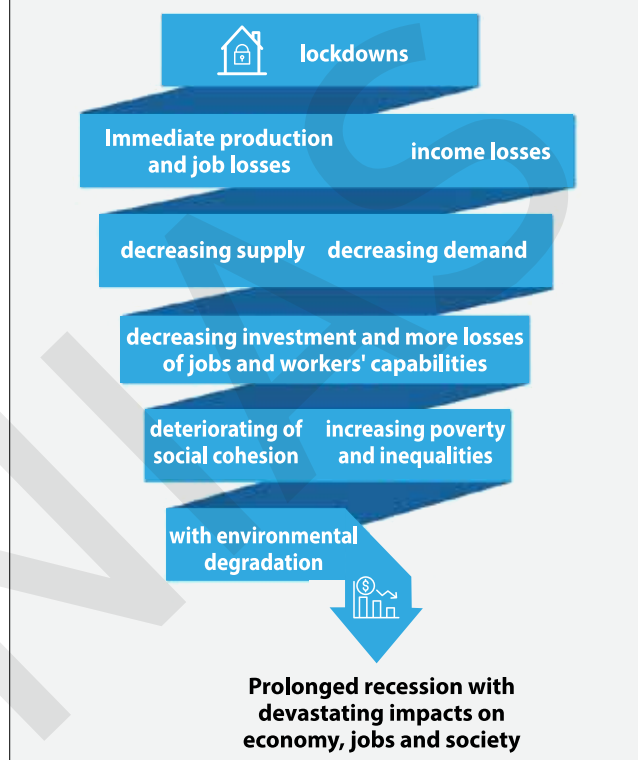
- **Impact of COVID 19 on world of work**

- > **2 billion people toiling in informal economy, suffered a 60% decline in earnings** in first month of crisis alone.
- > **Women are disproportionately represented in high-risk sectors** and are often amongst first to lose employment and last to return.
- > **Workers in food and accommodation, retail and wholesale business services and administration and manufacturing** face maximum impact.

- **Proposed three-pronged strategy:**

- > **In short-term**, provide **immediate support for at-risk** workers, enterprises, jobs and incomes. Focus would be:
 - ⇒ Extension of social protection coverage and outreach,
 - ⇒ Avoiding increasing vulnerabilities through gender-responsive, inclusive, accessible and targeted measures
- > **In medium-term**, ensure a **comprehensive approach to returning** to work. Focus would be:
 - ⇒ Safe and accessible work-places,
 - ⇒ Well-designed active labour market policies (ALMPs)
- > **In longer-term**, **create decent and productive jobs** for a green, inclusive, and resilient recovery and future of work. This includes:
 - ⇒ investment in social protection;
 - ⇒ transition to formality;
 - ⇒ investments in climate change & green jobs,
 - ⇒ leverage new technologies

ECONOMIC CHANNELLING MECHANISMS - THE NEGATIVE EMPLOYMENT SPIRAL



COVID-19 SPARKS BIOMEDICAL WASTE (BMW) CRISIS

- COVID-19 has presented a unique challenge with **un-estimated amount of BMW being generated** exclusively from dedicated COVID hospitals, quarantine centres and home quarantine facilities.
 - > According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), **Delhi generates up to 11 tonnes** and Mumbai up to 9 tonnes of COVID-19 related waste every day.
 - > Also they end up in landfills, **posing a health risk to waste pickers, sanitation workers** etc.
- **Issues in dealing with BMW**
 - > Limited capacity for waste disposal
 - ⇒ BMW is either taken to a **Common biomedical waste treatment facilities (CBWTF)** or a waste-to-energy plant for waste disposal.
 - ⇒ India has around 200 CBWTF which are running at only 60% capacity.
 - > **Incinerators have not been upgraded** to handle COVID-19 waste.
 - > Lack of tracking of waste collected.
- **Some Steps taken**
 - > **In April, CPCB released specific guidelines** that are required to be followed in addition to existing practices under Biomedical Waste Management (BMWM) Rules, 2016 for COVID 19.
 - ⇒ **BMWM Rules, 2016** were notified under **Environment Protection Act 1986** to bring a comprehensive regime for biowaste management.
 - > **United Nations Industrial Development organization (UNIDO) is also supporting medical waste management** efforts in India.

PATENT POOLING (PP) IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

- **PP is an agreement between two or more patent owners** to license their patents to one another or to third parties.
 - > It **supports greater innovation, collaborative research and development, removes bottlenecks** in patent regimes and hastens product development.
- With the outbreak of COVID-19, Public health PP represent an innovative type of partnership that can **be used to manage privately held Intellectual Property rights in public interest**.
 - > It can **enormously speed up the effort to find medicines and vaccines** by creation of a pool and immediate licensing.
- **Initiatives/Framework to provide PP to fight COVID-19**
 - > **GISAID (global initiative to sharing of all influenza data)** has collected 49,781 genome sequences of COVID virus.
 - > **Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) has facilitated the development of generic drugs** for HIV, tuberculosis, and hepatitis C, allowing them to be sold at an affordable price.
 - ⇒ MPP is a **United Nations-backed public health organisation** working to increase access and facilitate development of life-saving medicines for low-and middle-income countries.
 - > **Nagoya Protocol and its obligations** require sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.
 - > **Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** which allows countries to grant compulsory licences.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES BY MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MoRD)

Scheme	Positives	Issues	Recommendations
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) (guarantee right to work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped in creating individual land assets on land of small and marginal farmers. Wage payment is being made on time. Financial safety for women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No asset creation specifically for landless. In 2019, average work per household was 48 days (50 in 2018) which is half of entitled 100 days. Wage rates in certain states are less than corresponding state's minimum wage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better framework for convergence with other schemes. Study to review wage rate and reasons as to why number of work days per household is less than entitlement. Capacity building of elected representatives and other official of PRIs.
PM Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) (To provide connectivity by All-weather Road in rural areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of roads with less than 5 years of construction is satisfactory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of roads after 5 years of construction is cause of concern in many states. Use of green technology is still low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well defined national road policy. Earmarked funds could be provided by Finance commission for maintenance of roads.
Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana (DDU-GKY) (To bridge the skill gap in rural youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bringing differently abled, women, and tribals in mainstream. Decrease in number of dropouts in few states. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue in identification of right candidates. Small size of North-Eastern states a major constraint for setting up large training centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular skill gap assessment. Involvement of PRIs and SHGs for identification of beneficiaries.

ALSO IN NEWS

China to join UN arms trade treaty (ATT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATT is legally binding international agreement to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > regulate global trade in conventional arms by establishing common international standards for member countries. > Prevent and eradicate illicit trade and diversion of conventional arms. It covers all conventional weapons and does not place restrictions on the types or quantities of arms that may be bought, sold, or possessed by states. It is adopted by UN General Assembly and it entered into force in 2014. It is signed by 130 countries; India is not a signatory.
Cairns Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a coalition of 19 agricultural exporting nations lobbying for agricultural trade liberalization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It accounts for more than 25% of the world's agricultural exports. It was formed in 1986 in Cairns, Australia. India is not a member. Recently, Cairns Group Members launched an initiative to support global agricultural and food system during COVID-19 pandemic, and limit impact of emergency measures on global food security and fair trade.
Centralised Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling (AAAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central government is reviewing the proposal to notify setting up a centralised AAAR under Goods and Services Tax (GST). It is proposed body to deal with cases of conflicting decisions by two or more State Appellate Advance Ruling (AAR) Authorities on the same issue under GST. It is aimed at providing certainty to taxpayers as divergent rulings by AARs leave the industry confused about the tax implication of a particular business decision It was approved by the GST Council in 2018, but has not been notified yet.
Ambubachi Mela	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival was recently cancelled due to COVID-19. It is an annual festival held at Kamakhya temple, atop Nilachal hills of Guwahati, Assam on the bank of Brahmaputra river. Devi Kamakhya is worshipped as Goddess of fertility. Kamakhya temple is one of 51 Shakti Peethas, important shrines in the Hindu tradition of Shaktism that are spread across India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, China and Sri Lanka.
Kalidasa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He was a Sanskrit poet and dramatist who flourished in 5th century CE. Works: Ritusanharam, Meghadutam, Kumarasambhavam, Raghuvansham, Malavikagnimitram, Vikramorvashiyam, Abhijnanashakuntalam.
Places in news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amami Islands: This archipelago is part of Japan. Japan has reported sighting an unidentified submarine around Amami Islands. Senkaku islands: These a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea, claimed by Japan, China and Taiwan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Recently, Japan changed the name of the southern Japan area containing Senkaku Islands from "Tonoshiro" to "Tonoshiro Senkaku," seen as an attempt to cement its claim.

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