China’s approach in containing the Virus

Why in news?

Recently PM in his speech to the Nation called for a decentralised decision-making in containing the pandemic on the lines of China’s model.

How China contained the virus?

- The epidemic was seen as a significant threat to the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party and all party resources were mobilised to tackle this challenge.
- At the grassroots, the residential committees (RCs) played a significant role.
- Initially they were mandated to perform administrative tasks, assist government agencies with maintaining public surveillance, health and sanitation, care for the elderly, etc.
- They are instrumental for the party’s for effective governance and political control.
- At the outbreak of the epidemic, these RCs soon took charge.

How did Residential Committees respond?

- In Wuhan, Community workers strictly enforced rules of entry and exit.
- No residents were allowed to leave and no non-residents were allowed to access the community area other than for essential medical needs or epidemic control operations.
- Volunteers were assigned shifts at the gates of the communities and checked access passes.
- They also made calls to residents asking about family members’ health and status, knocked on residents’ doors to conduct regular temperature checks, gather information about travel history, etc.
- They provided home delivery of daily food necessities to people in self-quarantine and elderly residents.
- They also did other essential tasks -tracing contact, registering each individual, placing sick persons under community management and transferring them to designated medical facilities for quarantine.
- A large number of youth and college students, often party members,

volunteered for the RCs which was pursued all across the country.

- Provisions were made to benefit the workers by providing subsidies, provision of health equipment, insurance, publicity and other institutional support.
- Despite some challenges, the epidemic has been successfully contained in Wuhan and elsewhere in China which gave much hope to others.

How can India replicate thus model?

- Many urban areas have residential associations and local governments that can act like RCs in China.
- This has to be done with a centralised plan of action, which is the key aspect of China model.
- There have to be clear channels to pass down resources and authority from central to local organisations.
- Volunteers can be mobilised information dissemination, service delivery and to promote social distancing.
- Youth can form small committees to ensure adherence to COVID-19 restrictions.
- States should decide on lockdowns and other measures needed to contain the pandemic.

What are the takeaways from this?

- States should not left with the sole responsibility of handling the pandemic.
- Else it will only increase policy incoherence and unequal access to states with different fiscal capacities and healthcare infrastructure.
- The need of the hour is for the central leadership to step up and coordinate policy measures across the country.

Source: The Indian Express

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering