Covid-19 Containment Strategies

Why in news?

As India is nearing the end of its extended lockdown, it must learn from other countries in devising strategies to contain the epidemic.

What happened in China?

- It took 94 days to reach one million Covid-19 cases on April 3, 2020 after China reported the first cluster of 41 cases on December 31, 2019.
- Within 12 days, the cases doubled to two million.
- It again took just 12 more days to cross three million cases globally.

What is the rate of spread globally?

- **Spread** - The virus has now spread to 188 countries/regions.
- The true number of infections will be several-fold higher as most countries have not been testing people who have mild or no symptoms.
- While new cases have declined in Europe, there is an uptick in Africa and South America.
- The virus is still spreading quickly in the U.S., which has the most number of cases globally.
- **Deaths** - There have been over 2.1 lakh deaths worldwide.
- With the U.S. accounting for over 56,600 deaths, which is double that of Italy, which is over 27,000.

What is the rate of spread in India?

- India has reported over 30,300 cases and 973 deaths.
- The number of cases has multiplied several-fold from over 600 since the national lockdown from March 25.
- At nearly 8,600 cases, Maharashtra has the maximum in the country.
- Dharavi, a slum in Maharashtra alone has 330 cases and 18 deaths.
- Nearly 3,000 people might need institutional quarantine in the absence of effective containment in Dharavi.

What could India learn from the Singapore's experience?

- Singapore almost contained the spread of the virus early on.

- But, the city-state has seen numbers rising since late March, 2020.
- **Dormitories** - Fresh cases have been reported from dormitories that house over 0.2 million migrant workers from other countries.
- The crowding in the dormitories has provided an ideal setting for easy infection spread.
- These dormitories are akin to what is seen in the slums in India.
- **Efforts** - Singapore has shut down educational institutions and workplaces on April 3, when the number of cases was 1,114.
- Though it took many other measures to contain the spread, it has not been able to contain the spread of the virus.
- Nearly 15,000 cases have been reported as on April 28, 2020.
- As India nears the end of its extended lockdown, it needs to **learn from the successes and failures** of other countries.

Source: The Hindu

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