Covid-19 Death Rate

Why in news?

Measuring the burden of Covid-19 by seeing how many deaths it has caused.

What is the death rate?

- Covid-19 has infected over 30 lakh people in 185 countries and regions.
- It has killed close to 2.1 lakh people.
- The countries have reported very different case fatality ratios (CFR),
- [CFR - The number of deaths divided by the number of confirmed cases]

What are the factors on which CFR depends?

- **Number of people tested** - Testing rates have been different in different countries.
- India continues to be among the countries where testing is widely seen to be inadequate.
- More aggressive testing identifies more asymptomatic infected persons, and people with milder, less noticeable symptoms.
- Since CFR relies on the number of confirmed cases (not the total number of cases), more testing lowers the ratio.
- **Demography** - As a general principle, any virus poses a greater threat to those with weaker immunities.
- A vast majority of deaths from Covid-19 have been of people with co-morbid conditions.
- Older people are more vulnerable to the virus.
- **Strength and capacity of healthcare systems** - This matter greatly.
- Countries like Italy or Spain saw their hospitals overwhelmed, and unable to adequately care for the flood of patients.
- In India, the resources are limited and critical care capacities constrained.
- So, the danger from an uncontrolled spread is much greater.

What are some facts?

- **In absolute number** - The US carries the greatest burden of Covid-19, accounting for nearly a third of all cases.

- Spain and Italy follow, together accounting for over 14% of global cases.
- **In terms of observed CFR** - According to the Johns Hopkins University coronavirus resource centre dashboard, the highest mortality is in Belgium (15.4%).
- It is followed by France (14.1%) and the UK and Italy (13.5% each).
- The CFR of the US is 5.7%.
- **In terms of deaths per 1 lakh population** - Belgium's deaths per 1 lakh population are 62.11, the highest in the world.
- It is followed by Spain (49.63), Italy (44.09) and France (34.17).

Source: The Indian Express

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