WHO on Covid-19's Origin

Why in news?

A panel of experts drafted by the WHO to investigate the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic and prepare a framework to investigate future outbreaks has published its first report.

To know about COVID 19 disease, click here

What does the WHO report say?

- The Scientific Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens (SAGO) was set up in October, comprising 26 experts from around the world.
- The first human cases were reported in December 2019 in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.
- The report says a zoonotic origin is the most likely explanation for the emergence of the novel coronavirus.
- It says that neither the original animal source, the intermediate host, nor the moment the virus crossed over into humans, has been identified because a lot of data is missing, particularly from China.
- The panel also said that no further information has been provided on whether the coronavirus may have reached humans via a laboratory incident.

WHO-China report on COVID-19, and a US intelligence inquiry, both pointed towards a natural origin for the pandemic, likely from bats, rather than a lab leak.

What are the aims of the panel?

- The WHO says the main aims of the SAGO panel are to draw up a framework for investigating future outbreaks more effectively.
- The studies needed include early investigation work into things such as modes of transmission and the extent of human-to-human transmission as well as research on early cases and their travel history and exposure to animals.
- There should also be plans for visits and the systematic recording of information from the site of the earliest detected cases.
- It will discuss work on identifying the origins of some of the Sars-CoV-2 variants, as well as the spread of known pathogens, such as the recent monkeypox outbreak.
- The panel also recommended more work on biosafety and security.

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/coronavirus-origins-explained-7962318/



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