

Q → As India prepares for the pandemic situation, increasing genome sequencing & use of scientific evidence for decision-making are essential. Explain.

Ans The scientific knowledge & evidence-based decision making become essential for general public as well as governments when life is at stake. as the pandemic is taking more than thousands lives each day. In order to eliminate the virus & its eventual spread we need to focus on followings based on scientific evidence.

- Decreasing R_0 or Reproductive no. value.

- ↳ Reducing susceptibility of population by rapid vaccination

- ↳ ~~Reducing~~ Minimising opportunities for transmission by practicing social distancing, wearing masks & washing hands regularly.

- Increasing Genome Sequencing

- ↳ US & UK have been using it effectively to tackle the spread, by knowing the true behaviors of new strains such as Alpha & Delta variants.

- Benefits of using scientific Evidence.
- ↳ In principle, science is anti-authoritarian as data & facts rule supreme. So it eliminates any human biasedness, thus infuses trust in decision-making body.
 - ↳ Proper & Timely Analysis of data, as done in genome sequencing improve decision-making & lead to better solutions.

Challenges in India.

- Skewed Trust in government data as highlighted by media reports e.g. → Divya Bhaskar, a Gujarat daily highlighted the discrepancies in death count data.
- Data-sharing is still inefficient.
- Lack of transparency in decision-making which further erodes the citizen's trust.
- Lack of Accountability

way forward

- Sharing actual & truthful data in a timely & transparent manner
- Rapidly expanding Genome sequencing
- Understanding the impact of new variants
- Ensuring transparency in decision-making & accountability in the governance.

The only assured way to fight the pandemic is to use scientific evidence to decide policies, modify strategies and take corrective actions.