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# CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVERS' POINT

A ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR UPSC/APSC/SSC & BANKING

**THE ASSAM TRIBUNE ANALYSIS**

**DATE - 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2021**

**For Preliminary and Mains examination**

**As per new Pattern of APSC**

**(Also useful for UPSC and other State level government examinations)**

# CSAP

## CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVER'S POINT

*Leadership through knowledge...*

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## EDITORIALS

1. Battling second wave (GS 2 – Health related)
2. Tremor alarm (GS 5 – Earthquake – Disaster management)

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## ARTICLES

### Battling second wave

- With the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic now making its unsettling presence felt across the State, the State Government and the district administrations have been compelled to take recourse to a slew of restrictive measures.
- Night curfew, too, has been imposed in addition to the 6 pm deadline for shops and business establishments and the situation is akin to a partial lockdown. One hopes things will improve in the coming days and normalcy would be restored.
- But with cases rising rapidly and experts warning of a peak by the next one month or so, all concerned including the government machinery and the general public need to be very cautious and must follow the Covid-19 protocols put in place.
- It goes without saying that the State Government took things casually till as late as April even as the pandemic was witnessing a huge spike across the country.
- Holding the Assembly elections with much fanfare and huge public rallies was unwarranted at this critical hour, given that the second wave was already a reality across many parts of the country. Indeed, the people's representatives had the opportunity to lead by example and restrict the polls to a low-key affair.
- Nothing of the sort was witnessed and the cavalier approach of the Government certainly had a worsening impact on the situation that we are in today.
- With the new strain of the virus stated to be more lethal and spreading more quickly, the need is to put in place a matching response mechanism, especially in terms of space and resources for treatment besides expediting vaccination.

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- As most of the Covid centres had been closed down following easing of the situation in the beginning of the year, there has apparently been a space crunch to treat the surge in the number of patients.
- Even worse is the case with critical patients, particularly in view of the shortage of plasma donors.
- The Government together with voluntary bodies needs to speed up plasma collection. Responsible public conduct is another must, as we had seen that till mid-April, the protocol of social distancing and wearing mask was thrown to the wind, with slack enforcement making things worse.
- One may argue that the people in general have not quite been following these norms for the past couple of months or so, but that is distracting from the core issue.
- Since there are rules and regulation in place, the authorities are responsible for enforcing those and the least they should do is to magnify the hazard manifold by their shockingly irresponsible behaviour.
- Even as the situation stands to worsen, a full-fledged lockdown is not going to be the answer, given the staggering economic loss it would trigger and also the fact that a shutdown does not really help reduce the spread.
- What the authorities need to do is to accelerate the pace of vaccination and make the public stick to the basic Covid protocols of wearing mask, social distancing and hand sanitization.

## Tremor alarm

- A powerful earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter Scale, at a shallow depth of 10 km beneath the epicentre near Dhekiajuli, Sonitpur district, jolted Assam in the early hours of yesterday morning.
- Tremors were felt over a wide area, spreading across to Myanmar, Bhutan, Bangladesh, etc. Some seismologists are of the opinion that a series of minor quakes precede a major one, and this seems to have been the case in this instance.

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- During the past few months several small and micro earthquakes have reportedly been recorded in the region.
- On 5th April an earthquake of magnitude 5.4 had struck the Sikkim-Nepal border, while the very next day an earthquake of magnitude 2.7 had hit Tinsukia in Upper Assam.
- Thus, hopefully, yesterday's tremor had followed a pattern and is not a prelude to more severe ones in the immediate future.
- Media reports suggest that there were six aftershocks of magnitude 3.2 to 4.7 recorded over the next 2 hours 30 minutes in the vicinity of Sonitpur in Assam, a cause for some reassurance.
- Though shallow earthquakes are felt more strongly than deeper tremors as they are closer to the surface, as yesterday's one, the destruction caused reportedly was not as severe as it might have been expected to be.
- Although buildings and infrastructure reportedly suffered damage, there have been no reports of any casualties so far. However, such an earthquake should cause a degree of alarm in the inhabitants of this region and serve to warn them of tremors of potentially more lethal consequences.
- We need to bear in mind that the seismologic vulnerability of the North-Eastern States is due to the collision tectonics between the Indian plate and the Eurasian plate in the north and subduction tectonics along the Indo-Myanmar range in the east.
- We must also not forget great earthquakes which had struck this region in the past, as that which took place on the night of August 15, 1950, with its epicentre near Rima in Arunachal, one of the severest in the world.
- Apart from causing death and destruction, this earthquake made some irreversible topographic changes, including the obliteration of the township of Sadiya.
- Being random occurrences, scientists are unanimous in the belief that it is impossible to predict earthquakes, let alone prevent one from occurring. But we certainly can adopt a "learn to live with earthquakes" philosophy and install tremor mitigation techniques in the structures that we build.
- Unfortunately, this has not always been the case as illustrated by the construction of mega-dams in this earthquake prone region.

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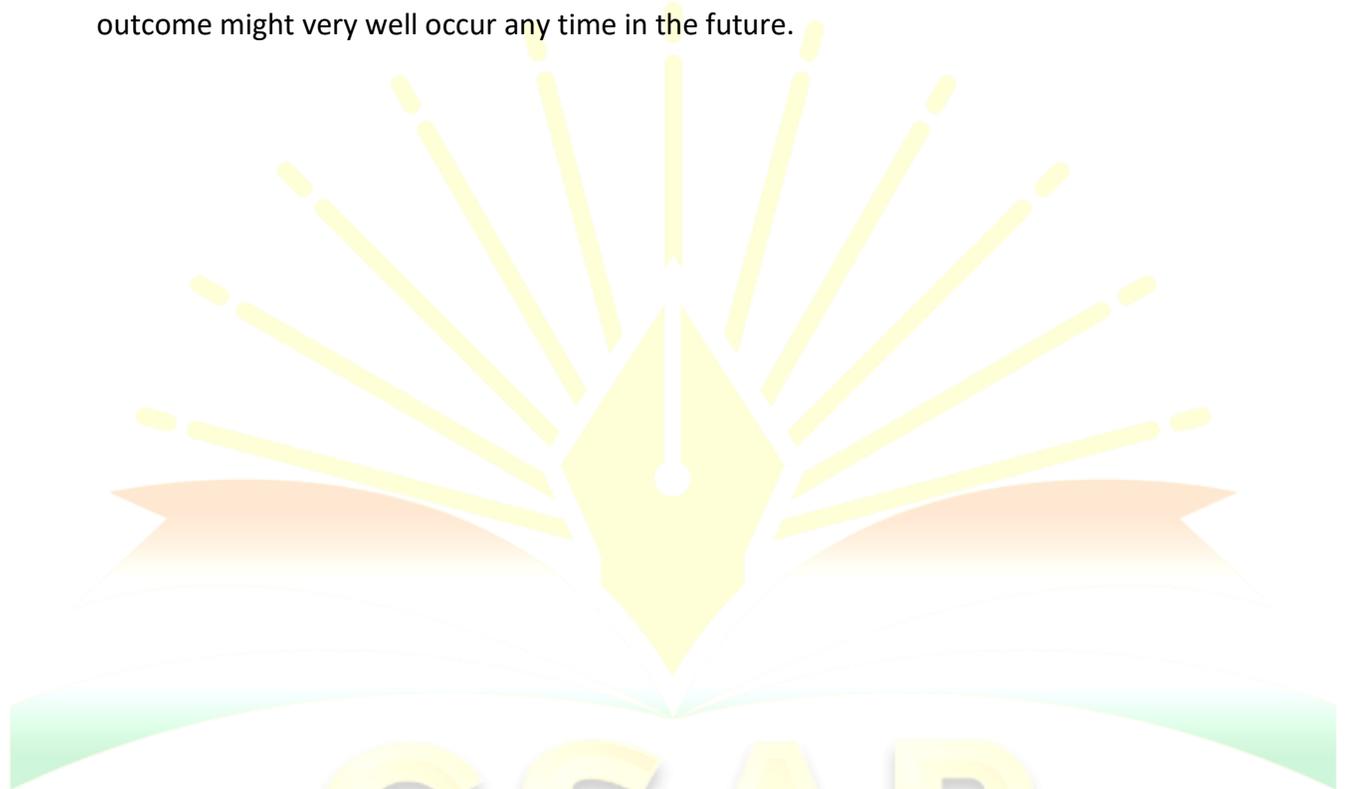


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- Similarly, the administrations of urban conglomerates like Guwahati have been allowing high-rise buildings to mushroom at a rapid speed.
- Although, on this occasion, limited structural damage has been seen in these, a more severe outcome might very well occur any time in the future.



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