2020 Report on Medical Certification of Cause of Death

For Prelims: MCCD Report, Respiratory Illness, Covid-19

For Mains: MCCD Report, Causes and Prevention of Diseases, Health

Why in News?

According to the 2020 report on Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD), the first year of **Covid-19 lockdown** saw the highest incidences of persons dying of **respiratory illnesses** in a decade.

What is MCCD Report?

- The scheme of Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) was introduced in the country under the provisions of the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969.
- Since then, it has been operational in the country, but with varying levels of efficiency across the States/Union Territories.
- Under the scheme, the Office of the Registrar General, India (ORGI) obtains data on medically certified causes of deaths as collected, compiled and tabulated by the Offices of the respective Chief Registrars of Births and Deaths of the States/UTs.

What are the Key Highlights of the MCCD Report?

- **Total No. of Deaths:** The total number of deaths, from all causes, in 2020 was 81.2 lakh.
    - The report pegged India's excess mortality for 2020 and 2021 at 47.4 lakh.
    - **Civil Registration System (CRS)** data reported 4.75 lakh excess deaths from all causes in 2020 over 2019.
- **Medically Certified Deaths:** Medically Certified Deaths account for 22.5% of total registered deaths at national level but after taking into consideration any kind of medical attention received by the deceased at the time of terminal illness, it increased to 54.6%.
    - Around **5.7% of total medically certified deaths have been reported in infants.**
- **Leading Cause-Groups of Deaths:** Nine leading cause-groups of deaths constituting around 88.7%of total medically certified cause of deaths:
    - Diseases of the Circulatory System (32.1%)
    - Diseases of the Respiratory System (10%)
    - Codes for Special Purposes – Covid-19 (8.9%)
    - Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (mainly consisting of septicemia and tuberculosis) (7.1%)
    - Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases (5.8%)
    - Injury, Poisoning and Certain other Consequences of External Causes (5.6%)
    - Neoplasms (4.7%)
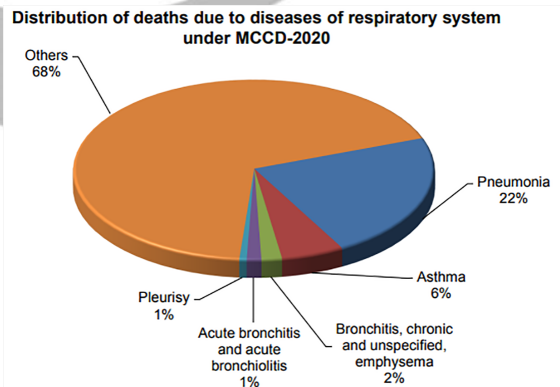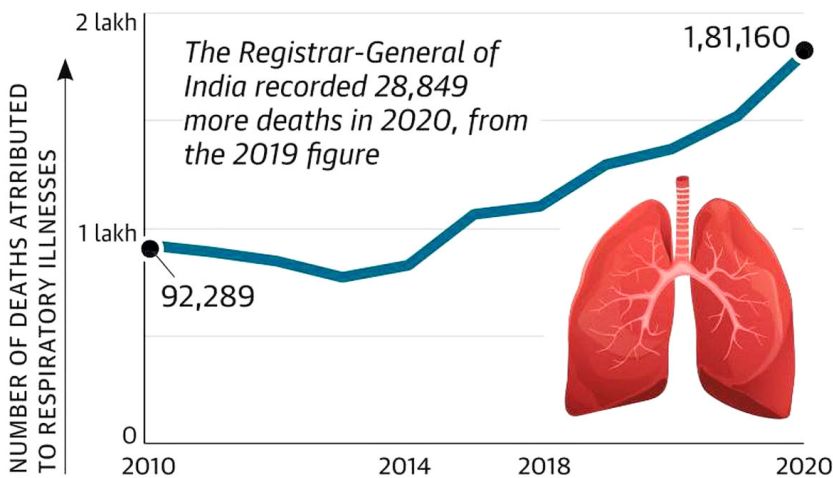   - Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period (4.1%)

- Symptoms Signs & Abnormal Clinical Findings "Not Elsewhere Classified" (10.6%)

How many deaths were caused by Covid-19?

- Covid-19 virus, also a respiratory disease that has been separately recorded in the report as "Deaths reported under Codes for Special Purposes (Covid-19 Deaths)."
- Covid-19 Deaths is the third leading cause group, recording 8.9% of the total medically certified deaths at national level.
- The Union Health Ministry, however, reported 1.49 lakh Covid-19 deaths in 2020.
- As of May 2022, India's official Covid-19 death toll is 5.2 lakh.

How many deaths were caused by Respiratory Illness?

Short of breath | In 2020, India recorded a 10-year high in the number of deaths caused by respiratory diseases. The chart shows the number of deaths linked to respiratory diseases in the past decade

The Registrar-General of India recorded 28,849 more deaths in 2020, from the 2019 figure

1,81,160

92,289

NUMBER OF DEATHS ATTRIBUTED TO RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

2010   2014   2018   2020

Distribution of deaths due to diseases of respiratory system under MCCD-2020

Others 68%
Pneumonia 22%
Asthma 6%
Bronchitis, chronic and unspecified, emphysema 2%
Acute bronchitis and acute bronchiolitis 1%
Pleurisy 1%

- In 2020, as many as 1,81,160 deaths occurred due to respiratory diseases such as pneumonia, asthma and bronchitis, higher than 1,52,311 such deaths reported in 2019.
- Those **above 70 years were the worst affected** by the respiratory diseases accounting for the highest incidences of deaths - 29.4 % of total registered medically certified deaths.
  - This was **followed by 55-64 years** reporting 23.9% deaths; the age group 65-69, also reported a significant number of deaths - 4.5%.
- The major number of deaths is concentrated in the age group of 45 years and above, constituting 82.7% of total deaths in the group.

Source: TH