Context:

- Health authorities have been strongly advocating the use of face masks to prevent corona infection. At the same time, wearing a mask for a long time is reportedly causing difficulties in breathing and congestion in the respiratory system.
- To address this issue, scientists at CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), Lucknow, have developed a herbal decongestant spray.

Reasons for suffocation while wearing a mask:

- The main reasons behind this problem include the accumulation of carbon dioxide and humidity in the inner cavity of the mask.
- When a person breathes in, this goes back to the lungs again.
- Repetition of this process over a period of time causes discomfort in breathing and congestion.

Herbal Decongestant spray:

- Herbal decongestant spray is a fine blend of four plant-based oils, but the names of these plants cannot be disclosed right now because of issues related to intellectual property. This product is developed based on the principles of Ayurveda and contains ingredients reported in traditional scriptures.
- This formulation helps in clearing the wind pipe and congestion by removing the mucus or cough leading to ease of breathing. It also reduces stress due to excessive use of mask and decongestion. This spray has been prepared as per guidelines of the Ministry of AYUSH.

CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), Lucknow

- Lucknow-based NBRI is a constituent laboratory of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), which is mainly known for its botanical research work. The initial results of this NBRI's herbal spray have been extremely impressive. People wearing masks for a long time are getting a lot of relief from this, say researchers.
- The Institute plans to transfer the technology of this inhaler for commercial production so that it can be produced on a large scale and sent to the frontline worriers fighting against COVID-19 pandemic.

National Ayush Mission

Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has launched National AYUSH Mission (NAM) during 12th Plan for implementing through States/UTs. The basic objective of NAM is to promote AYUSH medical systems through cost effective AYUSH services, strengthening of educational systems, facilitate the enforcement of quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani & Homoeopathy (ASU & H) drugs and sustainable availability of ASU & H raw-materials. It envisages flexibility of implementation of the programmes which will lead to substantial participation of the State Governments/UT. The NAM contemplates establishment of a National Mission as well as corresponding Missions in the State level. NAM is likely to improve significantly the Department’s outreach in terms of planning, supervision and monitoring of the schemes.
Objectives

- To provide cost effective AYUSH Services, with a universal access through upgrading AYUSH Hospitals and Dispensaries, co-location of AYUSH facilities at Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and District Hospitals (DHs).
- To strengthen institutional capacity at the state level through upgrading AYUSH educational institutions, State Govt. ASU&H Pharmacies, Drug Testing Laboratories and ASU & H enforcement mechanism.
- Support cultivation of medicinal plants by adopting Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) so as to provide sustained supply of quality raw-materials and support certification mechanism for quality standards, Good Agricultural/Collection/Storage Practices.
- Support setting up of clusters through convergence of cultivation, warehousing, value addition and marketing and development of infrastructure for entrepreneurs.

Components of the Mission

- AYUSH Services
- AYUSH Educational Institutions
- Quality Control of ASU & H Drugs
- Medicinal Plants

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Dedicated MIS monitoring and evaluation cell would be established at Centre/ State level. It is therefore proposed to have a Health Management Information System (HMIS) Cell at National level with three HMIS Managers and one HMIS Manager at State level.
- The concurrent evaluation of the AYUSH Mission shall be carried out to know the implementation progress and bottlenecks and scope for improvement. Third party evaluation will also carried out after two years of Mission implementation.