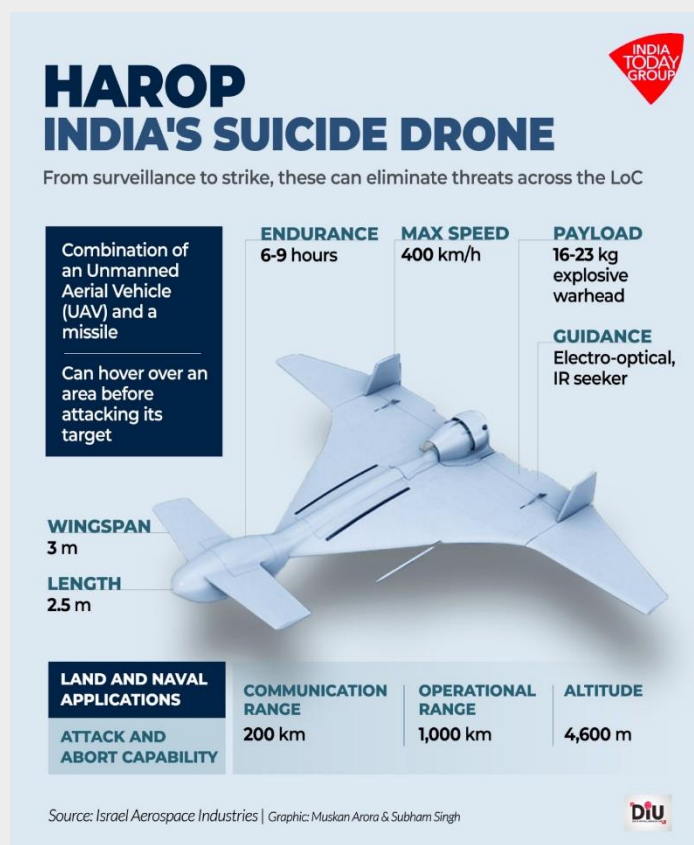# Daily News Juice 12th May, 2025

1. HAROP: UAV believed to have been used by India against Pakistan

Why in News?

A day after India hit terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under Operation Sindoor, India also targeted multiple air defence systems in Pakistan and successfully hit one in Lahore. It is understood that the latest Israeli HAROPs, a type of unmanned combat aerial vehicle, were used.

HAROP
INDIA'S SUICIDE DRONE
From surveillance to strike, these can eliminate threats across the LoC

Combination of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and a missile

Can hover over an area before attacking its target

ENDURANCE 6-9 hours
MAX SPEED 400 km/h
PAYLOAD 16-23 kg explosive warhead
GUIDANCE Electro-optical, IR seeker

WINGSPAN 3 m
LENGTH 2.5 m

LAND AND NAVAL APPLICATIONS
ATTACK AND ABORT CAPABILITY
COMMUNICATION RANGE 200 km
OPERATIONAL RANGE 1,000 km
ALTITUDE 4,600 m

Source: Israel Aerospace Industries | Graphic: Muskan Arora & Subham Singh

What are HAROPs

HAROP is a kind of loitering munition. This category of weapons is named so because they loiter (to stand or walk around) in the air close to the designated target. They cause destruction by crashing into their targets with the explosive payload that they carry, earning names such as "suicide drones" and "kamikaze drones".

Usually, loiter munitions carry a camera which is nose-mounted and can be used by the operator to see the area of operation and choose targets. These munitions also have variants which can be recovered and reused in case they are not used for any strike. This is new compared to how older precision-guided weapons were traditionally used, because they required the exact location of the targets before launch.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology
Source: Indian Express

2. Govt. data confirms massive undercount of pandemic deaths

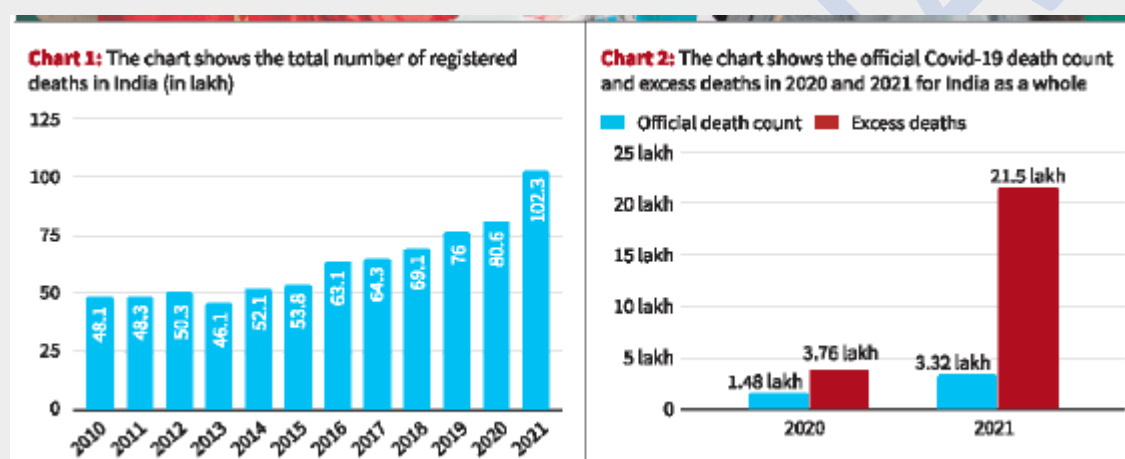**Underreporting of Covid Deaths**

In 2021, an analysis of excess deaths — the increase in the death tally over expected numbers based on previous years (2015-2019) — shows that the number was nearly six times more than the reported COVID-19 death toll. This was the year when the delta variant of the SARS-COV-2 virus wreaked havoc across the country.

Registered Deaths

Chart 1 shows the total number of registered deaths in India over the years. Over 1 crore registered deaths were recorded in 2021, a 27% increase compared to the previous year. The bump in 2021 is obvious on account of the pandemic.

To estimate the multiple, we calculated excess deaths in 2021 using a three-step method. First, we analysed registered deaths in each State from 2015 to 2019 and extrapolated this trend to estimate expected deaths for 2020 and 2021. This gives a reasonable estimate of the expected number of deaths in these years, if not for an extraordinary event. Next, we compared these expected figures with the actual registered deaths revealed by the newly released data. The difference between the two gave the number of excess deaths.

Most of these excess deaths are likely attributable to COVID-19 — the only major disruptive event during those years. Moreover, pandemic-related restrictions had significantly reduced deaths from other causes, such as road accidents, making it unlikely that non-COVID-19 factors were behind the surge.

Chart 1: The chart shows the total number of registered deaths in India (in lakh)

Chart 2: The chart shows the official Covid-19 death count and excess deaths in 2020 and 2021 for India as a whole

Death Counts
Chart 2 shows India's official COVID-19-related death count published by State governments in 2020 and 2021 compared to the excess deaths calculated based on the recently released reports. While the official COVID-19 death count in 2020 was about 1.5 lakh, about 3.8 lakh 'excess deaths' were the same year. In 2021, while about 3.3 lakh COVID-19-related deaths were officially recorded, there were 21.5 lakh 'excess deaths' (6.5 times more).

Relevance: GS Prelims; Governance
Source: The Hindu

3. Blackouts in over 15 cities amid India-Pakistan tensions: What the measure is, how it can help
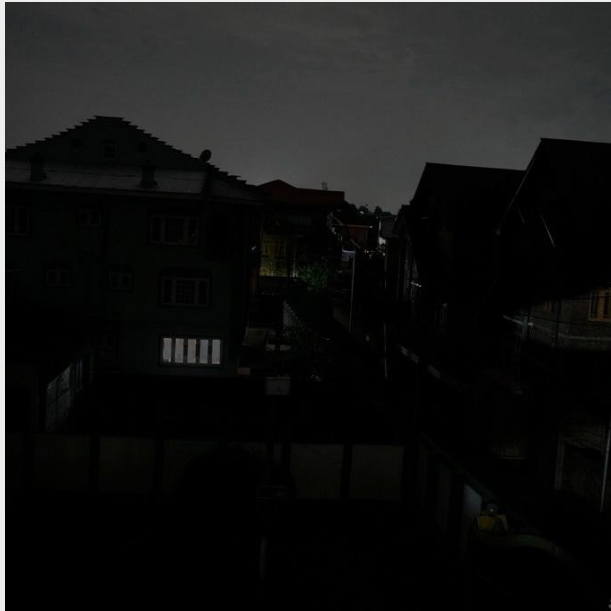
Indian City Blackout Measures
Amid the ongoing India-Pakistan tensions, blackouts were imposed in over 15 cities in India – from Srinagar to Chandigarh to Bhuj. In this context, a blackout is when all lights are turned off or restricted in a given area.

What is meant by blackout measures in the event of an attack?

Such measures ensure the elimination of all light sources visible from the open air. They are part of lighting restrictions and primarily meant to help strengthen civil defence mechanisms, which is the preliminary line of defence of the citizens, by the citizens.

No light should be visible at a height of 5,000 feet above ground level under normal visibility conditions.

How exactly do blackouts help?

The aim is to enable people to protect themselves and physical infrastructure from enemy aircraft at night, "without incurring the discomfort of total darkness". Blackouts make locking ground targets difficult for advanced high-speed aircraft.

The order further read: "The anxiety level of the enemy pilot in the cockpit would be more if the area is dark. This holds even with significant changes in the threat perception and technological advancement over time."

How are lighting restrictions to be imposed?

The order states that it is not practical for all lighting restrictions to be imposed all at once. The best approach is to do so in gradual stages, so that civilians can carry out their normal activities with "less and less light". These include street lights, those in buildings and vehicles, and larger complexes.

For example, for street lights:
*The number of street lights should be reduced to the absolute minimum.
*The power of the remaining lights is to be reduced as far as possible, ensuring that no light is reflected on the ground.

In the case of buildings, or open ground, "The total light reaching the outside of the building in any place is not greater than that thrown on the ground by a 25 watt bulb at a distance of 20 ft. or an ordinary hurricane lantern held at a distance of 6 ft," the order reads.

And what is a 'crash blackout'?

A 'crash blackout' is applicable to factories and commercial premises in case of an air raid warning.

The purpose is to prevent conspicuous buildings from being picked out at night as targets for an air attack. It is also aimed at depriving an easy means of checking geographical positions. This makes it a protection measure for not just these larger premises, but also for the entire neighbourhood.

Auxiliary or supplementary lighting, if used, should be provided from another source rather than the main electric supply of the commercial building. Batteries or a small petrol-driven generator are considered suitable in such cases.