

**14. Passage 2**

Several States have extended the coronavirus lockdowns, while fresh cases appear to show a downward trend, but India's COVID-19 battle lacks strategic focus. Although a cessation of activity has been imposed, there is not much clarity on the future threat from virus variants, notably B.1.617 that now has three sub-types and the dominant one, B.1.617.2, is estimated to be 50% more transmissible than another variant of concern, B.1.1.7. Neither is there a road map for vaccine availability ahead, with direct imports by States hitting a roadblock and vague assurances of a domestic ramp-up substituting for firm commitments. Some States are unwisely taking the foot off the testing pedal, making it that much harder to map the course of transmission. A miasma of confusion has come to pervade COVID-19 policy, where the Centre no longer has an appetite for leadership, even if it means shunning responsibility for universal vaccination, and the only tool available with States is a lockdown. But as states have pointed out, a lockdown does not provide a solution, and comes with its own economic side-effects that hit the working class poor the hardest.

**Q. In light of the above passage, consider the following implications:**

1. Encouraging safe public behaviour is a wise option now
  2. Need of persuasive communication and monitoring is very high
  3. Southern states health infrastructure is more suitable for universal vaccination
  4. There is a demand for Covid-19 containment policy that incorporates medical interventions of scale.
- Which of the above are correct?
- A. 1 & 2 only
  - B. 1, 2 & 3 only
  - C. 1 & 3 only
  - D. 1, 2 & 4 only

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**Q. On the basis of above passage, following assumptions have been made:**

1. States are in a helpless situation
  2. Though vaccination took a hit, States can be commended for their unflinching detection of Covid cases
- Which of the above assumptions is/are valid?
- A. 1 only
  - B. 2 only
  - C. Both 1 & 2