

Zombie virus

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In news– Recently, scientists revived 48,500-year-old ‘Zombie Virus’ buried in ice in Russia.

What is Zombie Virus?

- **Zombie virus is the term given to a virus that is frozen in ice and therefore dormant.**
- It does not mean that it is a virus that will turn you into a zombie, like those in horror movies and shows.
- However, in sync with the analogy, these viruses are ‘undead’ like the fictional zombie, and can come back alive and active under certain circumstances.

Key updates-

- European researchers have **revived 13 “zombie viruses” from Russia’s Siberian permafrost.**
- The study revealed that one of these viruses, **Pandoravirus yedoma, is more than 48,500 years old.** It breaks the previous record held by a 30,000-year-old virus that was uncovered by the same team in 2013.
- Other viruses are also tens of thousands of years old.
- **According to the study, it is global warming that is responsible for the revival of the Zombie Virus.**
- The viruses were infectious despite being trapped in the frozen ground for many millennia.
- **The researchers found out that the Zombie Viruses could pose a “health danger” after studying the live cultures.**
- They are of the view that Covid-19-style pandemics could erupt in the future as long-dormant viruses like a microbial Captain America are coming from the melting permafrost.
- The scientists have earlier cautioned that the melting

permafrost owing to global warming will deteriorate the climate change by releasing previously trapped greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. However it is less understood how this impacts the dormant pathogens.

- The researchers said the biological risk of reviving the viruses was “totally negligible” because of the strains they targeted, which were capable of infecting amoeba microbes.