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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; T – Thiruvananthapuram; H – Hyderabad*
With nine cases a day, Mizoram becomes State with highest HIV prevalence rate

People aged between 25 and 34 are most vulnerable, followed by those between 35 and 49, officials say

DATA COMPILED BY THE Mizoram State AIDS Control Society (MSACS) show that 67.24% of the positive cases from 2006 to March 2019 have been transmitted sexually, 1.03% of the transmission route being homosexual.

The next major cause, accounting for 28.62% cases, is infected needles shared by intravenous drug users.

The Christian-majority State bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar has battled drug trafficking and abuse for a long time.

Narcotic substances such as methamphetamine and heroin are smuggled in from Myanmar.

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga said the State could do without the dubious record of being the highest HIV-prevalent State in the country.

"The present scenario is indeed alarming. We have to increase the level of awareness about the virus and focus on the treatment and prevention of the disease," he said, while launching an HIV/AIDS sensitisation campaign in Aizawl on October 11.

Dr. Lalthangliana, the MSACS project director, said that an average of 9.2 cases are detected across Mizoram’s 44 standalone Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres on each of the 25 days a month they remain open.

The prevalence rate had dipped to 3.8 during 2012-13 from a high of 4.8 during the previous fiscal.

It kept rising sharply since to become 7.5 during 2017-18 and touch 9.2 during the last fiscal ending March 2019.

"Analysis of the HIV positive cases confirmed at the testing centres show that people in the age group of 25-34 years are the most vulnerable in Mizoram followed by those in the age brackets of 35-49 years and 50-64 years,” Dr. Lalthangliana said.

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in these three age groups are 42.38%, 26.68% and 23.03% respectively.
**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)**

- **Retroviridae family**
- **Infect CD4 cells → immunodeficiency**
- **Most advanced stage - AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)**

**Symptoms - 3 stages**
- Acute symptoms
- Clinical latency
- Severe symptoms

**Transmission**
- Sexual contact
- Blood transfusion
- From contaminated syringes
- From pregnant woman to child

**Tests - ELISA + Western blot test**

**Cure**
- No definitive cure
- Protease inhibitors
- Fusion inhibitors
- Anti-retroviral therapy
- Multi-drug combinations

**News**
- Mizoram: 9 positive cases of HIV/AIDS a day
- HIV Estimation 2019: NACO

- Total number of people living with HIV: 21.40 lakhs in 2019
- Highest number - Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, W.B., T.N., U.P., Bihar
- Highest prevalence - Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland
National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)

* Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
* Formed in 1992

Mizoram - HIV cases 2006 - March 2019

* 67.21% - Sexual transmission
* 28.12% - Intravenous drug users
* Proximity to Golden Triangle
World Bank cuts India’s growth projection to 6%

But it’s likely to recover to 6.9% in 2021

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON
After a broad-based deceleration in the initial quarters of this fiscal, India’s growth rate is projected to fall to 6%, the World Bank said on Sunday.

However, the bank, in its latest edition of the South Asia Economic Focus, said the country was expected to recover to 6.9% in 2021 and 7.2% in 2022 as it assumed that the monetary stance would remain accommodative, given benign price dynamics. The report said India’s growth decelerated for the second consecutive year.

In 2018-19, it stood at 6.8%, down from 7.2% in the 2017-18 financial year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Economic and Social Development—Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies-II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Important International institutions, agencies and fora—their structure, mandate.

PAPER-IV

General Studies-III: Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.
News

- World Bank → 'South Asia Economic Focus'
- The Report

Declining growth — why?
- Sharp decline in private consumption
- Weakening growth in industry and services

Headline Inflation
- RBI’s target — 4% (for first half of 2019-20)
- RBI to continue accommodative monetary policy

Sector specific growth 2018-2019
- Industries: 6.9%
- Agriculture: 2.9%
- Services: 7.5%

Current Account Deficit
- 1.8% of GDP in 2017-18 (deteriorating trade balance)
- 2.1% of GDP in 2018-19

GROWTH RATE


5.00% 5.40% 5.80% 6.20% 6.60% 7.00% 7.40%

7.20% 6.80% 6% 6.90% 7.20%
Trends of Capital Flow (FY 2018-19)
- First half: Capital Outflow
- Second half: Capital Inflow → Rise in Foreign Exchange Reserve

Govt. deficit - 5.9% of GDP in 2018-19

Govt. debt - 67% of GDP → Stable and Sustainable

Poverty in India
- 2011-12: 21.60%
- 2015-16: 13.40%

Rising risk for poor
- Disruptions by GST & demonetisation
- Stress in rural economy
- High youth unemployment rate in urban areas
‘Foreign’ plastic invades Great Nicobar Island

Researchers have found litter from Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand on the island, which hosts a biosphere reserve.

**Plastic threat**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Plastic Litter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study was conducted by the Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine Research.

**Major portion of the plastic is of foreign origin**

**40.5% of the litter is of Malaysian origin**

**Indonesia (23.9%) and Thailand (16.3%)**

**Threat mainly from foreign plastic and posing challenge to sustain the marine ecosystem**

**Reasons:** Increasing foreign litter

- Geographical proximity
- Influence of water currents
- Improper handling of the solid waste from fishing or mariculture activity & ship traffic

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**News:**
Foreign plastic invades Great Nicobar Islands

- Major portion of the plastic is of foreign origin
- 40.5% of the litter is of Malaysian origin
- Indonesia (23.9%) and Thailand (16.3%)
- Threat mainly from foreign plastic and posing challenge to sustain the marine ecosystem

**Reasons:** Increasing foreign litter

- Geographical proximity
- Influence of water currents
- Improper handling of the solid waste from fishing or mariculture activity & ship traffic
Geographical details: A & N islands

- Nicobar group of islands: Car Nicobar, Little Nicobar and Great Nicobar
- Southermost point of India → Indira point or Great Pigmolean point → located in Great Nicobar island
- Nearest nation — Myanmar (Andaman islands) — Indonesia (Nicobar islands)
- Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve (GNBR) → Galathea National Park & Campbell Bay National Park
- Shompen tribes: PVTG
Measures

* Detailed scientific examination of source of origin
* Regional partnership
* Strict enforcement
FASTag
- device for making toll payments directly—when the vehicle is in motion
  - employs RFID Technology
  - RFID passive tag is used
- affixed on front windscreen
- ID—linked to a prepaid/savings/current account
- Vehicle specific
- part of National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) programme—developed by NPCI
  - interoperable nationwide toll payment solution
  - clearing house services for payment settlement
  - dispute management
- can be purchased from member banks of NETC
* Mandatory from 1\textsuperscript{st} December 2019 at all National Highway Toll Plazas

* FASTag Lane - reserved exclusively for the movement of FASTag users

* Rule 6(3), National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008
  
  - non-FASTag users - charged double the fee - if they pass through FASTag lanes

* FY 2019-20 → 2.5\% Cashback on all Toll payments made at National Highways

* Benefits
  
  - reduces congestion
  - reduces travel time
  - no fuel wastage
  - transparency
  - less cash economy
  - no need to carry change
  - pay while in motion
**Radio Frequency Identification Technology**

* enables tracking the movement of men, materials, vehicles
* Automated data collection technology
  - users radio frequency waves - transfer data b/w reader + moveable item
* fast
* Does not require any physical sight or contact b/w reader and tagged item
* performs using low cost components
* unique identification given to the object and five backend integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active RFID Tags</th>
<th>Passive RFID Tags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Battery powered</td>
<td>* No internal power source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Higher storage capacities</td>
<td>* powered by electromagnetic energy transmitted from RFID Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* longer readranges</td>
<td>* lower storage capacities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Cheaper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A tax policy that could work

Ensuring, with political will, that multinational companies actually pay their fair share of taxes is a feasible strategy.

The Indian government should now be desperate to solve their revenue issues. It issued a tax target of rs 446,000 cr for the current fiscal year, which is 22% lower than the target of rs 566,000 cr set by the previous government. If the government ever reached the target set by the previous government, it would have to raise nearly 1% of the revenue needed for the current fiscal year. This year’s revenue target is set at 2% of the revenue needed for the current fiscal year. If the government ever reached the target set by the previous government, it would have to raise nearly 1% of the revenue needed for the current fiscal year.

TAX

The proposal to tax multinational companies would only work if all countries agree, and certainly that is the kind of task that is not within the purview of the OECD. It is the kind of task that is not within the purview of the OECD.

The Indian government has already proposed a tax on multinational companies to protect their local market, and the OECD’s BEPS initiative has been in progress to find solutions to these problems. The OECD’s BEPS initiative has been in progress to find solutions to these problems. The OECD’s BEPS initiative has been in progress to find solutions to these problems. The OECD’s BEPS initiative has been in progress to find solutions to these problems.

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**Tax Revenues**

* Central Government has missed the tax targets in the previous FY, and in Q1, FY 2019-20
  - Poor GST Collections
  - Corporate Tax rate cuts

* Suggestions
  - Strategy to ensure MNC pay their fair share of taxes, who benefit due to ‘Bank Erosion Profit Shifting’
    - MNC → One entity → Tax
    - Global profits → Calculated → Apportioned using a formula
      - Sales
      - Employment
      - Users

**UNITARY TAXATION**

**Unitary Taxation**

- Common Minimum Tax that can be imposed by all the countries
  - Workable idea if big countries like USA, EU collaborate and decide the tax rate
  - Proposed by Indian Government as well
  - To be considered by OECD BEPS Initiative (OECD / G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS)
    - India - Member (OECD → Non-member)
Concerns:

- Arbitrary separation between ‘Routine’ and ‘Residual’ profits
  - No economic justification
  - No clarity in the definition

- Formula to be used to distribute tax profits
  - OECD → ‘Sales’ → will affect developing countries

↓

Combination of sales/users/employment must be used

Way Forward

* India should take clear position at OECD meeting → will increase the revenues
PRACTICE QUESTIONS
DISCUSSION
Q. Consider the following statements regarding ‘HIV Estimation Report – 2017’ by National AIDS Control Organization.

1. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of people living with HIV.

2. Mizoram has the highest estimated adult HIV prevalence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements.

1. Andaman and Nicobar group of islands are of coral origin.
2. Indonesia is geographically nearest to Andaman islands.
3. Shompen tribes reside in Great Nicobar island.
4. The pristine beaches of Nicobar islands are being polluted because of Indian origin plastic material.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below
(a) 2 and 3 only
(b) 2, 3 and 4
(c) 3 and 4
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to ‘FASTag’.

1. It is part of National Electronic Toll collection program aimed at reducing congestion, travel time and promoting transparency at toll plazas on National Highways.

2. It is based on RFID technology.

Select the correct option using the codes given below.

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Practice Question – Mains

GS – III

Q. “Define Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS)”. Do you think that BEPS is the reason for poor tax revenue collections? Suggest suitable measures to tackle BEPS. (150 words, 10 Marks)

Practice Questions – Prelims Answers

14-10-2019

1. Option ‘b’ – 2 only
2. Option ‘c’ – 3 and 4
3. Option ‘c’ – Both 1 and 2