INDIA ON TRACK TO BECOME POLIO - FREE : WHO

According to a report of the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO), with no registered polio cases over the past year, India is on the course to become free of this disease. India was once regarded as the world’s epicentre for polio, but now it will become free of the epidemic first time in its history if all the results of pending samples for the virus tests negative. By this, the number of polio-endemic countries will come down to three namely Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria. The effort made for eradication is appreciative with 170 million children under the age of five being vaccinated each year in two national immunization campaigns and multiple special campaigns for 70 million high-risk area children.

RSBY SCHEME TO BE EXPANDED

The Government plans to expand Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) to provide health insurance cover to more people under the vulnerable sections of the society. The scheme has already been extended to few segments of unorganized workers which include MGNREGS beneficiaries, street vendors, domestic workers, beedi workers and building and construction site workers. The already existing features of this scheme are smart card based cashless health insurance cover of Rs. 30000 per family per annum with the Central Government contributing 75 percent of annual premium and the State Government, 25 percent.

UNION HEALTH MINISTRY TO SET UP NATIONAL ORGAN PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION ORGANIZATION (NOPDO)

A landmark step by the Indian Union Health Ministry is soon to be taken up by setting up of the autonomous National Organ Procurement and Distribution Organization (NOPDO) at the centre. Also ten State Organ Procurement and Distribution Organization (SOPDO) will be established. It is under the country’s new National Organ Transplant Programme (NOTP). This will work towards increasing the availability of organs from cadaver donors, build capacity for retrieval of organs, transplantation and roll out post transplant services to both recipient and living donors.
COLLABORATION OF NABH AND BECTON, DICKINSON AND COMPANY TO DEVELOP HOSPITALS’ QUALITY STANDARDS

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) and Becton, Dickinson and Company to support hospitals in attaining quality-of-care standards for infection control. The minimum requirements are quality towards safe injection practices, waste management and infusion safety. This collaboration will have three phases with an intention to strengthen health system in India.

GOVERNMENT SET TO FUND RS. 5825 CRORE TO ERADICATE TUBERCULOSIS IN INDIA

The Central Government is all set to increase its financial allocation for its fight against Tuberculosis (TB) by over 400 percent. The budget allocated for TB control programme in the 11th Five-Year Plan was Rs. 1440 crore and for 12th Five Year plan Rs. 5825 crore has been planned. One of the main components of the 12th Five-Year Plan will be national scale-up for diagnosis and treatment of multi-drug resistant and extremely drug resistant TB. According to the Ministry’s Plan forty-three culture and drug susceptibility laboratories (CDST) will be set up by 2013 while another thirty CDST labs will be established through Public-Private Partnership by 2015.

GLOBAL NEWS

UNICEF PLANS A MASSIVE EXPANSION OF ITS VACCINATION PROGRAMS

The UN agency has big ambitions for 2012 and beyond: UNICEF is preparing ambitious plans to update, strengthen and vastly expand its global vaccination programme. It has already supplied vaccines worth $757 million in the year 2010. Nevertheless, it is now gearing up to triple its capacity over the next five years. This action would help achieve victory over one of the greatest enemies of children worldwide, Polio. Increasing its capacity would also help UNICEF to reach the most vulnerable corners of the world. “We need to strengthen what we do, so that the role that we and governments play in delivering immunization is much more solid,” said UNICEF Chief of Immunization Jos Vandelaer.

MAJOR CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO ELIMINATE SEVEN DISEASES BY 2020

The END7 campaign was launched on 10 January, 2012 for combating seven major Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) by the end of 2020. It is an initiative taken by the Global Network for NTDs started by the Sabin Vaccine Institute. END7 is a public private partnership that seeks to get support in the form of funding for NTDs. It works with the World Health Organization, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the governments of various countries like US and UK. It raises the public awareness and funding required to cover the costs of distributing medicine and setting up treatment programmes in impoverished communities. Sabin Vaccine Institute is a non-profit organization of scientists, researchers and advocates who have come together to reduce vaccine-preventable and neglected tropical diseases.
WHO ADOPTS INDIA’S RESOLUTION ON MENTAL HEALTH

The World Health Organization (WHO) has adopted a resolution moved by India that focuses on the global burden of mental disorders at the 130th executive board meeting of WHO, supported by the United States of America and Switzerland. The resolution recognizes the importance of early identification, care and recovery, the problems of stigma, poverty and homelessness and the need for community based intervention including de-institutionalised care. Its first time in over a decade that WHO has, at its highest levels, taken note of this very major public health concern which accounts for 13 percent of the global burden of the diseases. India had already played a key role in getting mental disorders included in the non-communicable diseases (NCDs) list at the first Ministerial Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Non-communicable Disease Control in Moscow last year.

TOO MUCH VITAMIN D BAD FOR YOUR HEART

A new research published in the American Journal of Cardiology has warned that excess of Vitamin D levels can cause harm to the heart. The findings found that increasing levels of Vitamin D in the blood are linked with lower levels of the popular marker for cardiovascular inflammation, C-reactive protein (CRP). Vitamin D is beneficial for bone health and for heart protection, only when the values are up to the normal level. Beyond blood levels of 21 nanograms per millilitre Vitamin D is associated with an increase in CRP, a factor linked to stiffening of the blood vessels and an increased risk of cardiovascular problems.

HERPES VIRUS CAN REACTIVATE EVEN DURING ANTIVIRAL THERAPY

The results of a study published in the Lancet, states that genital Herpes can reactivate even during high dose of anti-viral therapy. A total of one hundred and thirty patients were included in the study who were either given Aciclovir or Valaciclovir to treat their infection. This underlines the need for a new class of treatment. The authors stated that currently available anti-HSV (Herpes Simplex Virus) therapy benefits patients by preventing clinical HSV recurrence. Suppressive therapeutics with greater potency are needed for prevention of HSV-2 transmission and HIV-1 for acquisition and transmission.

ENZYME STRUCTURES KEY TO UNDERSTAND DEADLY VIRUSES: A STUDY

A study published in the international journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, states that scientists have successfully determined the three-dimensional structure of a key enzyme, Bacterial Endomannosidase using the state-of-the-art synchrotron technology. This could help determine how viruses like HIV, Hepatitis C, Dengue fever etc. infect the human body. This would in turn help in developing new drugs to combat these diseases. It is expected that these findings will have consequences beyond the study of viruses. The findings can pave way for treatments of other diseases like cancer.

DO YOU KNOW?

1. “Totally Drug – Resistant” TB, a reality in India now
2. Round the clock pharmacy opens at AIIMS, offers 56% discount on MRP
3. The Evolution Of Affordable Health Care
4. “On Call” Ultrasound machines to get banned
5. National Institute of Health (NIH) plans to launch “first online Genetics course for social and behavioural scientists”
6. Religare Technologies announced the launch of India’s first free Healthcare Assistance Service
7. Memory functions start deteriorating at 45
8. Overeating being a mental disorder or not?
9. Grapes reduce age related vision loss risk
10. Government charges norms for Cancer Docs training
11. Rural India beats cities in Prenatal sex determination test

RECENT RESEARCHES

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STRESS HELD AT IIHMR, NEW DELHI

The 2nd International Conference on Stress was organized by IIHMR Delhi in collaboration with IISMAAS (International Institute of Stress Management and Allied Sciences) on December 27-28, 2011 at IIHMR Delhi campus. The main theme of the conference was: Stress: Paradigm Shift in Technology and Allied Sciences.

The aim of the conference was to stimulate interest among researchers, students, managers and healthcare providers through a platform for sharing the latest information on stress and its management. The following new ideas were put forward in the conference through paper and poster presentation.

- Globalization and economics of stress in today’s world
- Stress could also be positive and a motivator
- Parental stress and its cause-effect relationship with children’s needs.
- An experimental viewpoint about unique sources of stress among rural children of Kashmir.
- Effects of post traumatic stress disorder in terrorist attack survivors
- Managing stress through technology
- Stress management among marketing professionals.
- Buddhist strategy for emotional stress management
- Psychology and Physiology of Stress
- Combating stress through nutrition

In the end of the conference, Dr. Jagbir Singh Kadyan, president, IISMAAS concluded that stress is multidimensional and many of its dimensions are not well understood, as a key highlight. Stress is intricately related to mental well being and it could be tackled by bringing changes in lifestyle through application of traditional as well as non traditional methods.

Next International Conference On Stress will be held at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi in April 20-21, 2012.

References:
http://www.iismaas.com

NOTE: The newsletter is open for inclusion of any information or advertisement; however selection of information will be governed by the SYNAPSE Team, IIHMR, New Delhi

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