UNION HEALTH MINISTER CLAIMS INDIA IS MAKING SIGNIFICANT HEALTHCARE PROGRESS

At the India Health Summit organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in New Delhi, Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad revealed that there has been a reduction in new HIV cases by as much as fifty-seven percent in India. There have been significant falls in the incidence of Mumps, Measles, Rubella, Infant Mortality Rate and Total Fertility Rate. Going through its longest Polio-free period ever, India is ready to meet public health challenges such as Influenza – A H1N1 Pandemic, Diabetes, Tuberculosis and Cancer, thanks to better health reforms, availability of sufficient human resources and the continued efforts of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), etc.

RAPID BRINGS ABOUT ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION SERVICES

The Regular Appraisal of Program Implementation in a District (RAPID), plans a three-day assessment of immunisation services at all sub-district cold chain points through trained supervisors. They are guided by a checklist covering forty-six parameters conducting biannual rounds. After conducting five rounds in Jharkhand and three in Uttar Pradesh and seeing the improvement, UNICEF decided to implement the approach in thirty-two of the seventy-five districts.

TREATMENT FOR TUBERCULOSIS MADE EASY

The Government of India has come up with a new scheme aimed at reducing Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB) cases. A patient confirmed positive for TB by a qualified doctor simply needs to register with the Revised National Tuberculosis Control program. They will be issued a unique ID with information on medicines prescribed, dosage and duration so that any hospital or chemist shop will be able to give medicines for free as per treatment schedule. The new scheme will cost rupees hundred crore more which is to be rolled out by March.
DOORWAY CONVEYANCE OF CONTRACEPTIVES FOR RURAL INDIA SOON

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has come up with “door to door contraceptive program” across all districts of the country. This scheme is meant to benefit seventy percent of India’s population in rural area. This innovative program has been rolled out by Health Minister Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad. Initially the scheme has been rolled out in seventeen states with aid of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers.

DCGI DEVELOPS DRUG ALERT SYSTEM

The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has made it mandatory for all pharmaceutical companies and laboratories to report cases of sub-standard drugs. The details of such drugs will be uploaded on the website of the Central Drugs and Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) every month. This is the first concerted attempt to develop a pan-India drug alert system for consumers. A suitable drug alert is issued when a product is considered to be a risk to public health and its use is withdrawn.

PROGRESS AGAINST MALARIA SLOWING, SAYS WHO REPORT

A new WHO report says that the level of funding for Malaria prevention and treatment since 2010 has slowed down in its progress. Global funding for Malaria prevention and control leveled off during 2010-2012. The delivery of life saving commodities has slowed down. This may lead to the early re-emergence of the world's leading killers.

UNGA VOTES TO SUPPORT UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

A draft resolution for universal healthcare coverage has been supported by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and backed by the United States General Assembly. This resolution encourages the governments to use a system to prepay for financial contributions towards health care which may result in the reduction of catastrophic expenses. This amounts to a system where health insurance is attainable and affordable as well.

‘M-HEALTH’ INITIATIVE TO COMBAT NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A new partnership called the ‘m-health’ initiative to help combat non-communicable diseases has been launched by International Tele-communication Union (ITU) and World Health Organization (WHO). This initiative will provide evidence based and operational guidance to encourage governments to implement ‘m-health’ intervention worldwide. The ‘m-health’ initiative initially for four year period will focus on prevention treatment and control of non-communicable diseases.
**DO YOU KNOW?**

1. Scientists zero in on glaucoma-causing genes
2. Pilot testing a TB drug as prophylactic to HIV infected
3. Plain packs for tobacco in India
4. Allergy can be cured by pills made from pollens
5. New nerve cell regulating heart rhythm identified
6. HIV cases, infant death rate down
7. ‘Epilepsy can be treated with medication’
8. E-Cigarettes: Not Safe
9. Think twice before popping Aspirin

**RECENT RESEARCHES**

**FISH OIL HELPS HEAL BEDSORES**

A study published in the ‘British Journal of Nutrition’ and the ‘American Journal of Critical Care’ states that fish oil reduces pain and discomfort from bedsores. Prof. Pierre Singer at Tel Aviv University carried out a study for a three weeks period by adding eight grams of fish oil to patient’s daily diet. There was a significant lessening of pain and discomfort from bedsores and a reduction of inflammation throughout the body.

**SMOKING IN TEENAGE GIRLS INCREASES THE RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS**

The study published in the ‘Journal of Adolescent Health’ states that smoking causes a negative impact on bone mineral density especially in teenage girls. Dr. Lorah Dorn, Ph.D at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Centre pointed out that teenage girls who smoke carry a higher risk of developing Osteoporosis later in life. The longitudinal study demonstrated that smoking can cause depression and negative impact on bone accrual during adolescence. The study was carried out on two hundred and sixty-two healthy girls from Cincinnati.

**TAMOXIFEN USAGE OVER A DECADE CAN REDUCE CANCER DEATHS**

A finding published by the ‘Lancet’ reveals that Tamoxifen if taken for a decade rather than for only five years significantly cuts deaths and also reduces recurrence of the Cancer. It is used in women with ERpositive (Oestrogen Receptor - Positive) Breast Cancer. The research was carried by international group of researchers led by Christina Davies from the University of Oxford. The study included twelve thousand patients from thirty-six countries.
W. Henry Mosley, visited International Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR), New Delhi campus on 5th December, 2012. Dr. Mosley is Emeritus Professor at Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, U.S.

Professor Mosley while delivering lecture to students highlighted the act and prominence of being a Health Professional. The discussions were drawn to close correlation of sanitation and hygiene on health related disorders. Dr. Mosley cited the significant impact while sharing some of his experiences such as one in Jerusalem, where Typhoid became an epidemic, because their food products were lying close to watercourse which incidentally connects to city sewerage system. Only through vigilant investigations by epidemiologists the root cause was found out and fixed.

Professor Mosley then expounded the importance of managing stakeholders including government officials as one of the key skills of a good health manager. A skilled manager should know how to advocate policy change among critical decision makers for efficiently utilizing their country resources.

Professor Mosley was visibly vexed on the alarming signals of global warming and global water shortage and expressed that the next world war, if any, would solely be due to water scarcity globally. Its known fact that the fresh ground water level has dipped to an all-time low and in the next fifty years there will be severe shortage of water. He stressed upon the necessity of effective administration of water supply as near future issue required due attention from international forum and national authorities.

At last, he impressed upon the audience that they all should aspire to be good health managers i.e. by not going over gross level but getting into the grass level of any communicable disease ensuring thorough and effective communication with the community to achieved marked change in health outcomes.