

Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has announced the establishment of India's first dedicated Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research.

- **Located at** - Keylong in Lahaul & Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh.
- **Setup by** - Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- **Objective** - The Centre is designed to generate context-specific scientific evidence and develop scalable healthcare solutions for populations living in mountainous and remote regions.
- **Role** - It provides year-round access to high-altitude and tribal communities, enabling long-term field studies and public health research.
- **Key Areas of Research** - The Centre will undertake multidisciplinary research in:
 - High-altitude physiology and acclimatisation
 - Mountain medicine
 - Climate-sensitive and emerging diseases
 - Infectious and non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
 - Maternal and child health
 - Nutrition and mental health
 - Environmental and occupational health
 - Disaster and emergency medicine
 - The research will strengthen understanding of how altitude, climate change, and environmental factors influence human health while supporting evidence-based policymaking.
- **Technological Innovations** - To improve healthcare delivery in difficult Himalayan terrain, the Centre will integrate:
 - Digital health platforms
 - Telemedicine services
 - Drone-enabled transportation of medicines, vaccines, and diagnostic samples
 - Real-time public health surveillance systems
 - These technologies aim to bridge geographical barriers and improve access to quality healthcare in remote areas.
- **Institutional Collaborations** - The Centre will collaborate with:
 - Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS)
 - Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

- Government of Himachal Pradesh
- National and international universities and research institutions
- Such partnerships will promote translational research, innovation, and policy support in high-altitude medicine.
- **Significance** - The Centre represents a major milestone in India's biomedical research ecosystem by creating the country's first dedicated institution for high-altitude medicine and public health.
- It will support national priorities in tribal health, disaster preparedness, climate-resilient healthcare, digital health innovation, and border-area development.

Reference

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