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

PIB| Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research

