Open camps for Sterilisation

Why in news?

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- Over 27 months after 13 women died and 65 took ill at a State-run mass sterilisation camp in Chhattisgarh.
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- Following this, the State government has now discontinued all sterilisation services.
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What was the recent move?

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- Open camps were discontinued.
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- The doctor who performed the surgeries has been terminated and representatives of the pharmaceutical company which supplied the medicines are in jail.
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- These moves are taken as per the recommendations of a judicial commission headed by retired district judge Anita Jha
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What is the effect of it?

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- Health facilities, including district hospitals have also stopped sterilisations.
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- Instead of providing quality sterilisation services in the aftermath of so many deaths, the government has responded by discontinuing the services.
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- As a result of discontinuing them, women have turned to private clinics for

family planning.
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- It costs around Rs. 8,000- 10,000.
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- Those who couldn’t afford are required to go to neighbouring Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.
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- Tribal areas have suffered the most.
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- Since the discontinuation of open camps, sterilisation rates in Chhattisgarh for both men and women have dropped drastically.
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What should be done?

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- It has been a long-standing demand of the health movement in India that open camps be discontinued.
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- However, they have to be replaced by adequate facilities at CHCs and district hospitals.
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- It needs to be accompanied by awareness on male contraceptive methods such as condom use and vasectomy.
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- Family planning is equally a men’s issue.
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- But currently there is no stress or campaign on male contraception.
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- The government does not persuade men into sterilisation the way it does for women.
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- The tragedy in Chhattisgarh was a wakeup call.
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- It showed that there is high demand, especially among women, despite bad quality services.
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- Therefore government should respond by providing quality services to men and women, rather than withdrawing the existing services.
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Source: The Hindu

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