Reduction in Air Pollution vs Disease Burden in India

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in news?

By cutting air pollution by 30% under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) target can lower heart disease, diabetes, anaemia, says IIT-Delhi study

- **Health Benefit Assessment Dashboard -**
  - **Developed by –** Climate Trends in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.
  - The Dashboard is a *first-of-its-kind analytical tool* based entirely on Indian data.
  - **Based on –** 5th National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) data from 641 districts
  - **Purpose –** Aims to make the invisible health impacts of air pollution tangible for policymakers, researchers, and the public.
- **Key findings from the analysis –**
  - **Significant disease reduction –** The dashboard illustrates how achieving the PM2.5 reduction targets of the NCAP can substantially decrease the prevalence of various illnesses.

By achieving India's 30% clean air target could bringing the national disease prevalence rate down from 4.87% to 3.09%.

  - **Specific health conditions –** Establishes a clear link between PM2.5 exposure and several diseases, among women of reproductive age and children under five years, with improvements expected across multiple conditions.
  - **In women (ages 15–49) –** Meeting the targets could lower the prevalence of hypertension, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), anaemia, and diabetes.
  - **In children (under 5) –** The benefits include measurable declines in lower respiratory infections (LRI), low birth weight (LBW), and anaemia.
  - **Regional impact –** The greatest health improvements are anticipated in the most polluted areas, particularly in the Indo-Gangetic Plain and eastern India such as Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Assam.
  - **Economic benefits –** Beyond health, reducing air pollution has substantial economic advantages by decreasing lost output from premature deaths and morbidity.

In 2019, air pollution cost India 1.36% of its GDP, an economic impact that could

be mitigated by achieving clean air goals.

References

1. The Hindu | Health Benefit Assessment Dashboard
2. Indian Express | Health Benefit Assessment Dashboard

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