Reemergence of Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Prelims - *Science & Technology- Health | Current events of national and international importance.*

Why in News?

Recently, diseases that can be prevented through vaccination, such as measles, meningitis, and yellow fever, are re-emerging globally.

Vaccine

• **Vaccine** – A suspension of weakened, killed, or fragmented microorganisms or toxins or other biological preparation, such as those consisting of antibodies, lymphocytes, or messenger RNA (mRNA), that is administered primarily *to prevent disease*.

• **Vaccine preventable Diseases**



• **Importance** - It *reduces the incidence of infectious diseases* and it also builds herd immunity.

• Over the last 50 years, essential vaccines have *saved at least 154 million lives.*
- That's 6 lives a minute, every day, for 5 decades, noted WHO.

• WHO states that immunisation is a 'best buy' in health with a *return on investment of $54 for every dollar invested* and provides a foundation for future prosperity and health security.

• It accounts *improvement in infant survival.*

• The world has *eradicated smallpox and almost eradicated polio* through vaccination.

- **Reason for re-emergence** - A World Health Organization (WHO) rapid stock showed that many countries are facing *disruptions in vaccination campaigns, routine immunisation*, and access to supplies due to ***reduced funding***.
  - For instance, in 2023, an estimated 14.5 million children missed all their routine vaccine doses.
- WHO, UNICEF and Gavi have issued a joint warning stating that immunisation efforts are being threatened by *misinformation, population growth and humanitarian crises.*

***Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, is a public-private partnership that helps vaccinate more than half the world's children against deadly and debilitating infectious diseases. It has helped vaccinate more than 1.1 billion children in 78 lower-income countries, preventing more than 18.8 million future deaths.*

- **Impacts** – It puts *lives at risk* and exposing countries to *increased costs in treating diseases* and responding to outbreaks.
- **Measures** – Continuing investment in the ***'Big Catch-Up initiative',*** launched in 2023 to reach children who missed vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ***Gavi's pledging summit*** on June 25, 2025 seeks to raise at least $9 billion from donors to fund an ambitious strategy to protect 500 million children, saving at least eight million lives from 2026 to 2030.

Vaccination in India

- **Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)** – It is one of India's most comprehensive public health initiatives, aiming to provide life-saving vaccines to millions of newborns and pregnant women each year.
- **Vaccine prevented diseases** – India was certified *polio-free in 2014* and *eliminated maternal and neonatal tetanus in 2015*.
- **Immunisation status** – According to the National Family Health Survey-5, 2019-21, India's full ***immunisation coverage stands at 76.1%***, which means that *1 child out of every 4 is missing out* on essential vaccines.

According to UNICEF, In India every year, nearly 26 million newborns and 34 million pregnant women are targeted for immunisation, and over 13 million immunisation sessions are held nationwide to vaccinate children and pregnant women.

Reference

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