Significance of World Stroke Day in India

Why in news?

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- World Stroke Day was observed on October 29, and the message for the year 2018 was ‘Up Again after Stroke’.
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How is the Stroke identified?

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- A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of your brain is interrupted or reduced, depriving brain tissue of oxygen and nutrients.
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- Within minutes, brain cells begin to die, therefore early action can minimize brain damage and potential complications.
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- The pneumonic to identify stroke is FAST\n
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    - Face - One side of face drooping when the person smiles
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    - Arm – unable to move an arm when lifting both arms
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    - Speech – slurred speech & difficulty in understanding words
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    - Time – If these symptoms are present, rush to nearest hospital.
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- These symptoms could also be accompanied with Paralysis or numbness of the face, arm or leg, trouble with seeing or blurred vision, headache with vomiting, dizziness or altered consciousness, may all indicate a stroke.
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What is incidence of Stroke in India?

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- In India, the estimated incidence is about 119-145/100,000 population.
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- According to a recent study this has increased by over 50 per cent from 1990 to 2016.
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- Heart diseases and stroke together have contributed to 28.1 per cent of total deaths in India in 2016 compared with 15.2 per cent in 1990.
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- And the severity of stroke and the mortality due to it are higher among women.
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What actions must be taken to reduce Strokes in India?

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- **Programmes -** Both the Central and State governments have to initiate programmes and create awareness among public about early recognition and treatment of stroke.
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- The governments have to provide facilities for acute stroke management in all medical colleges and district hospitals.
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- All States must come forward to provide the treatment for stroke 'thrombolytic therapy' free of cost, which only a few states are providing.
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- And restriction needs to be imposed on cost of 'stentrievers' for acute ischemic stroke therapy, similar to cardiac stents.
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- **Insurance cover -**Ayushman Bharat must be leveraged to provide cover for treatment of stroke that affects both the urban and rural populace.
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- **Training of physicians** - Continuing Medical Education (CME) programmes for doctors, nurses and paramedics should be organised across the country.
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- **Other essential services -** Besides developing inexpensive treatment systems, hospitals should be well-equipped with ambulance services, trained paramedical and nursing personnel, and access to swift radiology and rehabilitation facilities to treat various types of stroke.
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- A crucial component would be developing a national monitoring framework to instil confidence among stroke patients for a renewed lease of life.
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Source: Business Line

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