Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Health*

Why in news?

Though, India's full immunization coverage increased in 2024–25, still there is a need to closely link high-quality and sensitive disease surveillance with immunization efforts.

- Vaccination is one of the most effective and cost-efficient public health measures, saving millions of lives.
- UIP is one of the ***largest public health programmes*** in the world.
- **Aim -** To provide life-saving vaccines to millions of newborns and pregnant women each year.
- **Evolution -** Initially launched in 1978 as the Expanded Programme on Immunization, it was rebranded as the UIP in 1985 when its coverage was extended beyond urban centers to rural areas.
- **Objectives –**
  - To rapidly increase immunization coverage;
  - To improve the quality of services;
  - To establish a reliable cold chain system to the health facility level;
  - To achieve self-sufficiency in vaccine production.
- **Nodal Ministry –** Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- **Features -** Immunization is being provided ***free of cost against 12 vaccine preventable diseases***: 11 vaccines nationwide and one vaccine in endemic areas.

  Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, severe Childhood Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, Rotavirus Diarrhea, Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Japanese Encephalitis (JE).

- **Annual Target -** Around 2.67 crore newborns and 2.9 crore pregnant women.
- **Beneficiaries –** Pregnant women and children from all sections of the

society across the country with the same quality vaccines.

- **Major Outcomes -**
  - **Decline in under-5 mortality** - From 45 to 31 per 1,000 live births between 2014 and 2021, according to the Sample Registration System 2021.
  - **Polio-free status** – Maintained since 2011 through continued stringent surveillance.
  - **Maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination** - achieved in 2015 and was
  - **Yaws-free** – Declared in 2016.
  - **COVID-19 vaccination programme** - Launched 2021, by January 2023, covering 97% of citizens with one dose and 90% with both doses, marking a great achievement in public health on the global stage.
  - India is now the world's largest vaccine manufacturing hub.
  - **Measles and Rubella Champion Award** - On March 6, 2024, India received the award from the Measles and Rubella Partnership, honoring its efforts in the South-East Asia Region.

Quick Facts

Initiatives to promote immunization	
Mission Indradhanush (MI)	• Launched in 2014, to achieve 90% immunization coverage, • In 2014 India's full immunization coverage was 62% (National Family Health Survey-4, 2015-16).
Zero Measles- Rubella Elimination campaign	• Launched in 2025 to boost public awareness about Measles-Rubella immunization and aim to surpass 95% national Measles-Rubella coverage.
U-WIN	• Enables end-to-end digital vaccination and record keeping and tracking of vaccination for pregnant women and children up to 16 years.
National Cold Chain Management Information System	• A web-based system created to manage and monitor the vast cold chain infrastructure of India's UIP in real-time.
SAFE-VAC module	• To promote confidence in the UIP through enhancing national vaccine safety monitoring and rapid signal detection.

Vaccine Maitri initiative	• Launched in 2021 to supply vaccines, primarily COVID-19 vaccines, to supported many low and middle-income countries, reflecting the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family).

References

1. The Hindu | UIP
2. National Health Mission | UIP

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