

## UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelimbits 18-07-2025

### Chhattisgarh Forest Control Battle

*Prelims : Current events of National and International Importance*

#### Why in News?

Recently, Chhattisgarh Forest department attempted to control over community forest management, contradicting the provisions of Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, leading to widespread protests.

- **FFR act** - Enacted to recognizing the rights of ST and other forest dwellers over their ancestral lands and community forest resources (CFRs).
- **Act Empowers** - Gram Sabhas (GS) to manage, protect, regenerate, conserve & sustainably use their community forest resources, includes right to formulate their own forest management plans.
- FRA shifts forest governance from a top-down, timber-centric approach to a community-led, needs-based model.
- **Community Forest Resources (CFRs)** refer to the common forest land traditionally protected, conserved, and used by a particular community for their sustainable livelihood. These resources are crucial for the well-being and cultural identity of millions of forest-dwelling communities in India.

- **Community Forest Resource Rights (CFRR)** - It is a transformative provision of the FRA, recognizes the right of gram sabhas to manage their customary forests.
- It seeks to rectify the injustices of colonial forest consolidation which dispossessed local communities and supplanted their traditional management institutions with centralised state control.
- **Issues with centralized control** - Chattisgarh Forest Department Attempting to declare itself the nodal agency for CFR management, usurping the role of Gram Sabhas.
- ☒ Gram Sabhas should follow a specific plan from Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA).
- It means Gram Sabhas should follow the **National Working Plan Code (NWPC)**. Thus, undermines local autonomy.
- **Prohibition** - It also prohibited other departments or NGOs from supporting gram

sabhas in CFRR management planning.

- **Resistance** - Strong resistance from GS, local political representatives & Adivasi rights groups forced the forest department to retract its decision.
- The letter was withdrawn after a spirited grassroots mobilisation by gram sabhas, local elected representatives, and Adivasi rights groups.
- **Historical context** - Forests under government control were traditionally managed through "working plans" rooted in colonial-era "scientific forestry."
- Aims to maximizing timber extraction by disregarding local ecosystems and community needs, leading to forest degradation and conflicts with forest-dwelling communities.
- **Challenges in FRA Implementation** - Despite over 10,000 GS receiving CFR titles nationwide, fewer than 1,000 have successfully developed their management plans due to persistent resistance from forest departments.
- **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan** - A Central government program, offers a flexible framework for community forest management plans, which can be further improved.
- MoTA must firmly uphold the autonomy of GS under the FRA and resist pressures to impose NWPC on community forest management.
- Forest departments need to transit from timber-focused "scientific" approach to a people-centric forest management model, providing necessary financial and protective support to GS.

#### **National Working Plan Code (NWPC).**

The NWPC is a set of guidelines issued by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**, Government of India.

**Standardizes Forest Management:** Its primary purpose is to regulate and standardize the way forests are managed and planned scientifically across the country.

**Blueprint for Forest Divisions:** Essentially, it acts as a blueprint for the preparation of "Working Plans" for specific forest divisions or regions. These plans typically cover a period of 10 years.

**Focus on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM):** The NWPC aims to ensure that forest management balances conservation, sustainable resource use, and the livelihood needs of communities.

## **Reference**

[The Hindu | Future of forest governance](#)

## **Display of Sugar and oil Boards**

***Prelims:** Current Events of National and International Importance*

## Why in the news?

The Health Ministry has asked all government departments to display such information in their cafeterias, lobbies, and meeting rooms, in a bid to highlight the health risks of popular Indian snacks.

- **Sugar and Oil Boards initiative** - It is to promote healthier dietary habits in various settings.
- **Objective** - These Display boards serve as visual behavioural nudges in ***schools, offices, public institutions etc*** displaying key information about hidden fats and sugars in everyday foods.
- The goal is *not to restrict but to encourage* moderate consumption and more mindful eating habits.
- **Pilot initiative** - The Health Ministry has launched a health awareness campaign *at AIIMS Nagpur* as the first location.
- **Office guidelines** - Government officials are encouraged to include health messages on official stationery and publications to promote wellness consistently.
- **National rollout** - The campaign will expand to other Indian cities later this year after initial implementation and feedback.



- **Nutrition awareness** - Government departments are instructed to display boards showing oil, sugar, fat, and trans-fat content in popular Indian snacks like samosas, jalebis, pakoras, vada pav, and chai biscuits.
- **Visual nudges** - These boards aim to serve as visual behavioral nudges *to help people make more informed dietary decisions*.
- **Health alerts** - Cafeterias and food counters in government settings will feature posters with clear warnings on the health risks of frequent snack consumption.
- **Healthy choices** - Departments must offer nutritious food options, like fruits, vegetables, and low-fat items, while limiting sugary drinks and fried snacks.
- **Active lifestyle** - Offices *should promote physical activity* through practical initiatives

like using stairs, walking breaks, and organized exercise sessions.

- **Obesity concerns** - A Lancet study highlights that 450 million Indians could be overweight or obese by 2050, placing India second globally after China.
- **WHO perspective** - It states many everyday foods are ultra-processed and cheap, this unhealthy environment making it harder for people to choose healthy diets.
- **Disease link** - Poor eating habits are linked to major health issues such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and even cancer.

## Reference

[The Hindu| Sugar Boards of Indian Snacks](#)

## Annual Estimate of Global Vaccine Coverage

**Prelims:** *Current events of national and international importance.*

### Why in News?

*Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF released their annual estimates of global vaccine coverage.*

### Recent Findings

- **Zero-dose children** - More than 14 million children did not receive a single vaccine last year, about the same number as the year before.
- **Geographic concentration** - 9 countries accounted for over half of these unvaccinated children, including Nigeria, India, Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Angola.

*Sudan has the lowest reported coverage against diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough.*

- **First dose of vaccines** - **89%** of children under one year old got a first dose of the [diphtheria](#), [tetanus](#), and [Whooping cough](#) vaccine in 2024, the same as in 2023.
- About **85%** completed the three-dose series, up from 84% in 2023.
- **Coverage against measles** - Rose slightly, with 76% of children worldwide receiving both vaccine doses.

### Issues Associated with vaccination

- **Collapse of international aid** - Due to ongoing conflicts and worldwide tensions.
- **Withdrawal of assistance** - U.S. President Trump withdrew the country from the WHO, froze nearly all humanitarian aid, and later moved to close the U.S. AID Agency.
- **Misinformation** - About the safety of vaccines, threaten to unwind decades of progress.
- **Unequal access** - Vaccine access remained “deeply unequal” and that conflict and

humanitarian crises quickly unravelled progress.

- **Measles outbreak** - 60 countries reported big measles outbreaks in 2024.
- **Cases of measles** - U.S. is now having its worst measles outbreak in more than three decades.
- It has also surged across Europe, with twice as many as the previous year.
- **Need for measles vaccine coverage** - Need to reach 95% to prevent outbreaks of the extremely contagious disease.
- Even an adult can get vaccinated. It is the only way to stop measles spreading.
- **Safety of vaccines** - The diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough vaccine has proven to be *safe and effective* after years of study and real-world use.
- **Significance of Vaccines** - It *prevents 3.5 million to 5 million deaths* a year, according to U.N. estimates.

## Quick facts

### Measles

- It is an **RNA viral disease**.
- **Infection** - Virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body.
- **Transmission** - Through direct contact and air.
- **Symptoms** - High fever, runny nose, cough, red and watery eyes, rash erupts after several days, usually on the face and upper neck.
- **Treatment** - No specific antiviral treatment exists for measles.
- **Prevention** - Measles can be prevented through a two-dose vaccine.
- **Global Initiatives**
  - The Measles & Rubella Initiative
  - Measles-Rubella (MR) Vaccination

## Reference

[The Hindu| WHO- Global Vaccine Coverage](#)