Zika Outbreak in India

Why in news?

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In India first large outbreak of Zika virus is reported in Jaipur with 80 victims.

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What is Zika?

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- Zika is a viral infection, spread by mosquitoes, the vector is the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which also spreads dengue and chikungunya.
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- Additionally, infected people can transmit Zika sexually.
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- Most people infected with the virus do not develop symptoms, the symptoms are similar to those of flu, including fever body ache, headache etc.
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- According to WHO these symptoms can be treated with common pain and fever medicines, rest and plenty of water.
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- Additional symptoms can include the occasional rash like in dengue, while some patients also have conjunctivitis.
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- The incubation period (the time from exposure to symptoms) of Zika virus disease is estimated to be 3-14 days.
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- Precautions are generally the same as for other dengue use mosquito nets and repellents apart from taking steps to prevent sexual transmission.
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How dangerous is Zika?

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- Fears around Zika primarily involve microcephaly, especially when pregnant women are infected.
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- Microcephaly is a condition in which babies are born with small and underdeveloped brains.
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- Generally, the virus is not considered dangerous to anyone other than pregnant women.
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- Some countries that have had a Zika outbreak, including Brazil, reported a steep increase in Guillain-Barré syndrome — a neurological disorder that could lead to paralysis and death, according to WHO.
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- In 2017, following a study on Brazil's confirmed cases, the US National Institutes of Health study estimated the fatality rate at 8.3%.
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What is the incidence of Zika in India?

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- In 2017, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare-Government of India (MoHFW) reported three laboratory-confirmed cases of Zika virus disease in Bapunagar area, Ahmedabad District, Gujarat State, India.
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- Recently 80 cases reported since September 23 have been concentrated in parts of Jaipur.
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What measures are taken to address the recent outbreak?

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- Rajasthan government has deployed 330 and checked 4.34 lakh people and over 2.04 lakh breeding sites, of which over 74,000 were found to have mosquito larvae.
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- Apart from this the state government is doing house-to-house surveys, and noting the number of pregnant women in each house in affected areas.

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- The Rajasthan Health Department has advised people in the affected areas to stay indoors.
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Source: Indian Express

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