

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

(12-11-2024 – TUESDAY)

### **Tamil Nadu Declares Snakebite Envenomation a Notifiable Disease**

**News:** The Tamil Nadu government has declared snakebite envenomation as a notifiable disease under the Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939. This decision aims to improve monitoring, treatment, and preventive measures for snakebite incidents in the state.

#### **Background:**

- **About Snakebite Envenomation:**
  - Snakebite envenomation is a life-threatening condition caused by bites from venomous snakes, posing significant health risks in rural and snake-endemic regions.
  - Vulnerable groups include agricultural workers, children, and populations in tropical and subtropical areas.
- **Global and National Initiatives:**
  - The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes snakebite as a critical public health issue and has launched initiatives to reduce deaths and disabilities due to snakebites.
  - Snake antivenoms, which counteract the toxic effects of snake venom, are included in WHO's list of essential medicines.
  - India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming, aiming to reduce snakebite fatalities by 50% by 2030 through a 'One Health' approach.
- **Tamil Nadu's New Notification:**
  - By classifying snakebite envenomation as a notifiable disease, Tamil Nadu seeks to improve data collection, reinforce clinical infrastructure, and ensure anti-snake venom is readily available where needed.
  - This classification will help develop targeted prevention strategies, reduce mortality, and enhance treatment capabilities throughout the state.

### **Notifiable Disease:**

- A **notifiable disease** is any illness that, by law, must be reported to government health authorities.
- Reporting allows authorities to monitor the disease and act early to prevent outbreaks.
- Under **WHO's International Health Regulations (1969)**, certain diseases must be reported to support global health surveillance.

### **Importance of Disease Notification:**

- Legal notification by health professionals enables swift action to control infectious disease spread.
- Medical practitioners must report cases within 3 days, or verbally within 24 hours in urgent cases.
- All hospitals, labs, and clinics must inform the government of cases, aiding in disease tracking and management.
- Reporting less infectious diseases also helps understand their prevalence and distribution.

### **Examples of Notifiable Diseases:**

- Diseases like cholera, tuberculosis, AIDS, hepatitis, malaria, dengue, and more are designated as notifiable.

### **D30 De-addiction & Disability Awareness Summit in Nepal**

**News:** The D30 De-addiction and Disability Awareness Summit was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, to raise awareness about disabilities caused by drug abuse, particularly among the youth.

### **Key Highlights:**

- **Purpose of the Summit:**
  - The summit aimed to address the growing concern of drug abuse and the disabilities it causes, especially among youth.
  - It provided a platform for sharing knowledge and raising awareness about the severe health and social impacts of drug addiction, which can lead to both physical and mental disabilities.

- **Key Speakers and Contributions:**
  - **Deepa Malik**, a Paralympic silver medalist, emphasized the link between drug abuse and resulting disabilities, urging that many disabilities caused by addiction are preventable with proper intervention and care.
- **Awards and Recognition:**
  - During the event, the Nepalese President awarded the International Excellence and Youth Icon Awards to individuals who have made notable contributions in the field of drug de-addiction.
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- **Discussions at the Summit:**
  - The summit focused on understanding the nature of disabilities caused by drug abuse and explored strategies to cope with and reduce this growing issue.
  - Experts discussed the prevention of drug abuse and its societal implications, particularly the challenge it presents to individuals leading a normal lifestyle.

#### **Background:**

- **Drug Abuse and Its Consequences:** Drug addiction is a major public health issue globally, leading to physical and mental disabilities. The summit addressed this issue not only from a medical standpoint but also as a social challenge that requires collective efforts from civil society, governments, and healthcare professionals.

#### **Shigeru Ishiba Re-elected as Japan's Prime Minister**

**News:** Shigeru Ishiba, leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of Japan. Despite not reaching the majority threshold of 233 votes, Ishiba won 221 votes in the House of Representatives, allowing him to secure the position as Japan's 103rd Prime Minister.

## Key Highlights:

- **Re-election Process:**
  - The **Japanese Diet** convened an extraordinary session to elect a new Prime Minister following the ruling coalition's loss of its long-held majority in the previous month's general election. (The name of Japan's parliament is the Diet)
  - The runoff vote took place between **Shigeru Ishiba** of the **Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)** and **Yoshihiko Noda** of the **Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP)**.
- **Outcome of the Vote:**
  - Ishiba, aged 67, won the election with **221 votes** in the **House of Representatives**, defeating his opponent Noda, but still fell short of the required majority of 233 votes.
  - His victory in the election makes him the **103rd Prime Minister of Japan**.
- **Next Steps:**
  - After his re-election, Ishiba is expected to be formally inaugurated at a ceremony at the **Imperial Palace** and will address the nation through a press conference later in the day.
- **Political Context:**
  - The **Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)**, which is currently in coalition with **Komeito**, faced a significant setback in the last general election, losing its majority in the Diet.
  - The coalition had to undergo the runoff vote, highlighting the current political volatility in Japan.
- **Opposition's Challenge:**
  - **Yoshihiko Noda**, the leader of the opposition **Constitutional Democratic Party**, presented a strong challenge but ultimately could not secure enough support to win the majority.

## UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) Begins in Baku, Azerbaijan

**News:** The **29th session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29)** has commenced in **Baku, Azerbaijan**. This year's conference is being referred to as the '**Finance COP**', with a particular focus on securing a new climate finance target to support countries most vulnerable to climate impacts.

## Key Highlights:

### 1. Focus on Climate Finance:

- COP29 is centered on **climate finance**, especially securing new financial commitments for countries that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.
- The finance target is especially crucial for nations like **India**, which are striving to achieve their climate goals while facing economic and developmental challenges.

### 2. India's Role and Demands:

- India has been actively involved in shaping **global climate finance frameworks**. At COP29, India will push for the adoption of a **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)** for climate finance. This is seen as an update to the **100 billion-dollar target** set in 2009, which India believes is outdated and insufficient.
- India is advocating for climate finance that is **forward-looking and adequate** to meet the climate change mitigation and adaptation needs of vulnerable countries.

### 3. India's Financial Needs for Climate Action:

- According to **India's Economic Survey (2023-24)**, the country will require around **2.5 trillion dollars by 2030** to meet its commitments under the **Paris Agreement**. This includes both **mitigation** (reducing emissions) and **adaptation** (preparing for climate impacts) measures.
- The lack of sufficient funding poses a significant barrier to fulfilling these targets, making the outcome of COP29 particularly critical for India and other developing nations.

### 4. Global South's Needs for Technology and Resources:

- For countries in the **Global South**, including India, **access to technology, energy resources, and finance** is essential to achieve climate goals and protect communities vulnerable to climate risks.
- The conference aims to address these needs by pushing for more robust financial commitments from developed countries to support **climate adaptation** and **technology transfer** to developing nations.

## 5. Key Areas of Discussion at COP29:

- **Climate Finance:** Securing funding to meet the climate goals, particularly for developing nations.
- **Technology Transfer:** Ensuring that developing nations have access to the technologies needed for climate mitigation and adaptation.
- **Energy Resources:** Facilitating access to clean and affordable energy for countries with limited energy infrastructure.

### Background:

- **COP29** is part of the ongoing series of United Nations climate change conferences, where countries come together annually to negotiate and adopt measures to address climate change on a global scale.
- The conference in Baku is significant as it seeks to address long-standing issues around financing climate change action, which has been a point of contention in previous COP meetings.
- **India** has long been a vocal advocate for **climate justice** and **equity**, arguing that developed countries, historically responsible for most of the emissions, should take the lead in funding climate action in the Global South.

### Defence Space Agency Inaugurates First-Ever Space Exercise 'Antariksha Abhyas-2024'

**News:** The Defence Space Agency (DSA) inaugurated India's first-ever **space exercise, Antariksha Abhyas-2024**, in **New Delhi**. The three-day exercise, designed to enhance understanding of space-based assets and services, focuses on operational dependencies and potential vulnerabilities in the event of disruptions to space-based services.

### Key Highlights:

#### 1. Objective of the Exercise:

- The exercise aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of India's **space-based assets** and their crucial role in **defence and security** operations.

- It will help stakeholders, including the military and space agencies, identify vulnerabilities in the operational dependency on space-based services.
- A primary focus is on how the **denial or disruption** of these services could affect military operations and national security.

## 2. Significance of Space in India's Defence Strategy:

- The exercise marks a significant step towards strengthening India's **military space strategy**, recognizing space as a critical aspect of modern warfare and national security.
- With increasing global reliance on space-based infrastructure for communication, reconnaissance, and navigation, ensuring the security of these assets is essential.
- The exercise is designed to develop integrated strategies for responding to space-related challenges, including the **disruption of space-based services** due to external threats or cyberattacks.

## 3. Impact on India's Military Readiness:

- By simulating real-world scenarios and engaging stakeholders from various sectors, the exercise aims to bolster India's readiness to tackle threats in the space domain.
- The exercise also highlights India's growing **military space capabilities**, which are integral to the country's overall **defence modernization** efforts.

### Background:

- The **Defence Space Agency (DSA)** was established to streamline and strengthen India's military space operations and strategies. The agency works closely with **ISRO** and the **DRDO**, focusing on securing the country's interests in space.
- Space has become a critical component of modern warfare, with technologies such as **satellite communication**, **navigation**, **intelligence gathering**, and **missile guidance** being pivotal for military operations.
- The **Antariksha Abhyas-2024** exercise comes at a time when space security is becoming increasingly vital, especially with the rise of potential space threats from other nations, such as anti-satellite weaponry and space-based cyberattacks.