



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Department of Health Research – Ministry Health & Family Welfare
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Superbugs exhibition to come to Calcutta

October 27,2018/The Telegraph

Antreatable superbugs kill 700,000 people every year. The figure will reach 10 million by 2050, overtaking cancer as a cause of death, according to estimates. Antibiotic resistance threatens to render more and more medicines obsolete in future. An international exhibition, titled Superbugs: The Fight for Our Lives, has been planned to raise awareness about the situation. The show is currently on in London and a localised version will travel to Calcutta in September 2019 as part of an eight-city tour of India and China. Antimicrobial resistance occurs when microbes, including bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, no longer respond to the drugs, including antibiotics, used to treat them. The Science Museum Group, UK, is organising the tour to help address the lack of public awareness and understanding about antibiotic resistance, supported by Wellcome, a global charitable foundation, and The British Council in India. According to Simon Chaplin, director, culture and society at Wellcome, “at a time when more than 700,000 people die each year from drug-resistant infections, and rising, it is vitally important to find new treatments, reduce unnecessary antibiotic use and engage the public with this complex issue”. In India, the exhibition will be localised in partnership with the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), headquartered in Calcutta. “Resistance to antibiotics is developing because of rampant use and failure to complete the full course. In India, you can buy antibiotics over the counter at a chemist’s. We are discussing with the **Indian Council of Medical Research** and other research bodies about the latest findings to highlight and the global scenario. The department of biotechnology is also doing a lot of work,” Samarendra Kumar, director, NCSM told Metro.

Shut every container to shoo away Zika

October 29,2018/DNA

To give a shake-up to our humdrum existence, science often comes up with forebodings of mishaps and calamities. While panic and terror are unwarranted, yet, these rare occasions are when people collectively and attentively make shifts in their behaviour. They can gain knowledge, attitude and practices to prevent, deal with or cope with the condition. The latest buzz is the Zika virus, which belongs to the Flaviviridae family. When I first came to hear of it, I was puzzled that such a sweet sounding name should be associated with a disease, that has the possibilities of causing damage to unborn babies, whose mothers contract it. The Zika Forest of Uganda where it was first isolated gives this name. As a friend shared a few days ago, when a disease is named after a place, river or region, it lends unnecessary notoriety and infamy. German measles, Guinea worm, Japanese encephalitis and Ebola are some examples that immediately spring to the mind. As I got acquainted with more about the Zika virus, I came across another silver lining. India is at the forefront in research for a Zika vaccine supported by **ICMR**. The Journal of Experimental Medicine had reported that Zika virus can become our ally in fighting life-threatening brain tumours. On this positive note, let's shut every vessel holding water, and shoo away Zika to contain the disease.

17 districts in Odisha hit by iodine deficiency disorders

October 30,2018/Odisha Sun Times



Bhubaneswar: As many as 17 districts in Odisha have been identified as high burden areas for Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD). As per a survey conducted by the Directorate General of Health Services, **Indian Council of Medical Research**, Angul, Bargarh, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Khurda, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabrangpur, Nuapada, Puri, Rayagada, Sambalpur, Sundargarh districts are endemic, where prevalence of IDDs is more than five per cent. The Department of Public Health, Government of Odisha in collaboration with UNICEF today organized a press conference to generate awareness regarding IDD. Health officials called on the people to consume adequately iodized salt in their daily diet in order to prevent Iodine Deficiency Disorders. Drawing attention to the importance of iodine as a micronutrient for ensuring better health of all, Director Public Health Sapaneswar Gadanaik said, "Iodine is an essential micronutrient for normal human growth and mental development. It is required by our bodies every day in very minute quantities (100 – 150 micrograms), most of which we get from our diet. When there is a deficiency of nutritional iodine in the food, it can lead to Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD). IDD is a worldwide major public health problem and results in physical and mental retardation, cretinism, abortions, stillbirth, deaf mutism, squint and various types of Goitre. It can affect everyone irrespective of gender and socioeconomic status."

Lung cancer on rise in Kashmir as tobacco abuse goes rampant

October 31, 2018/Greater Kashmir

While high rate of stomach and esophageal cancers in the Valley has been a major cause of concern for the medicos, the region has off late been witnessing a rise in lung cancer among men. In 2017, at least 507 new cases of lung cancer were registered at Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), the highest among all cancers. Expert term this rise in cancers as a trend "similar to that in other metropolitan cities". The biggest risk factor for lung cancer and many other types of cancers, world over is tobacco. International researches have attributed smoking as the cause of cancer in around 90 percent of cases. Moreover, according to a report by **Indian Council of Medical Research** titled "Health of the Nation's States", tobacco use was the third leading cause of death and disability in J&K. What is worrying is that Kashmir for long has been standing at top among all states in terms of tobacco use. As per latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS 4), as many as 38.2 percent men in J&K use some or the other kind of tobacco. The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2016-2017 puts J&K at number six among all states in terms of tobacco smoking. The only states that have a higher prevalence of smoking than that of J&K are five north-eastern states of Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Manipur.

Liver institute to aid organ transplant unit at KGMU

October 31,2018/The Times of India

LUCKNOW: There was more than one reason to smile for KGMU authorities on Tuesday as besides its students being awarded degrees, medals and awards, they got assurance from Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) for full assistance in setting up its liver and organ transplant unit. ILBS director Prof Shiv Kumar Sarin, who was conferred DSc honoris causa degree along with **Indian Council of Medical Research** director general **Prof Balram Bhargava**, said, "If KGMU starts its own full-



fledged liver and organ transplant unit, I commit that we will share whatever we have learnt with the university." Convocation chief guest Prof M V S Valithan, National Research Professor at Manipal University's School of Life Sciences, told the young doctors to keep their economics and ethics in check as future challenges. Governor Ram Naik, who is chancellor of universities, lauded women empowerment in the state. "Last year, 15 lakh students had received degrees of whom 51% were girls. This year, 22 convocations have been held till now and 15.97 lakh students have already received their degrees of whom 52% were girls," he said.

In Pune's tribal areas: ICMR study to assess challenges in giving LPG connections under govt scheme

November 1, 2018/The Indian Express

The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has embarked on a study to assess the challenges faced by LPG distributors and recipients under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in tribal areas of Pune district. The study — 'Short term assessments to inform accelerated distribution, uptake, and promotion of increased use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) through Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)' — will be conducted in tribal areas of Junnar block in Pune district. It comes close on the heels of a report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which stated that household air pollution contributed to the deaths of about 67,000 children below the age of five years in India in 2016. In the same report, WHO said over 1.25 lakh children in India below the age of five died in 2016 due to the impact of polluted air. The aim of the study is to get information about challenges faced by households in receiving LPG connections and sustaining LPG use, as well as issues faced by distributors in providing connections and refills in tribal areas, said Rutuja Patil of the KEM Hospital Research Centre in Pune, who is the study investigator.

Amity confers degrees and diplomas upon 2,409 graduands

November 1, 2018/News Careers

Thousands of students of Amity of class 2018 enrolled under Science, Engineering & Technology received their degrees and diplomas during the three-day 'Convocation 2018' of Amity University Uttar Pradesh. The convocation commenced at the University Campus in Noida where graduands from over 30 Institutions from different parts of the country received their degrees and diplomas. 65 Gold Medals, 64 Silver Medals, 37 Bronze Medals and 73 PhDs were awarded to the meritorious students and 47 students were awarded Baljit Shastri Award and 12 were awarded best All Round Student Trophies.

Dr. Balram Bhargava, Secretary, Department of Health Research (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare), Govt of India, Director General Indian Council of Medical Research; Prof. (Dr.) Shashank Sharad Kale, Head of Department (Neurosurgery), AIIMS and Padmashree and Padmabhushan Vaidya Devendra Triguna, Former Honorary Physician to President of India were among those awarded doctorate degrees. Accepting the doctorate degree, **Dr. Balram Bhargava, Secretary, Department of Health Research (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare), Govt of India, Director General Indian Council of Medical Research** said that he sees Amity as the 'Modern Day Gurukul of India' and averred that there have been two major frontiers in healthcare, one is emergency medicine and second is universal health coverage that needs to be taken care. He called upon scientists and researchers of Amity to be the part of this healthcare development by contributing through biomedical research.

As the winter sets in Pune, doctors say there is no threat from Zika in the state

November 1, 2018/Hindustan Times



The **Indian council of medical research (ICMR)** has declared that Maharashtra has no need to worry about Zika virus even after cases were detected in Rajasthan and Gujarat last week. As the winter is setting in, doctors felt that the virus and the susceptibility to the infection may die down naturally. Cold air reduces the susceptibility of this mosquito borne infection and makes the Aedes egypti mosquito less active. “Now, we can safely say that there could be a lull in Maharashtra when it comes to mosquito-borne infections which includes dengue, chikugunya and zika,” said Dr RR Gangakhedkar, national director of epidemiology, ICMR. He heads 13 institutes in non communicable diseases in India. “So far this year , Rajasthan has seen more than 140 cases of Zika while not many have been detected in the state of Gujarat so far. However looking at the rate of its spread and the season, we are sure it will not affect the people in Maharashtra as winter is setting in. There is nothing to panic about, especially for Maharashtra,” he said.

Brazilian gene resulting in birth defects missing in Indian zika virus: ICMR

November 2, 2018/The Indian Express

The zika virus that has currently infected 163 persons in India lacks a particular gene that had led to serious birth disorders in new-born babies delivered by infected mothers in Brazil three years ago, scientists have said. A total of 163 persons have tested positive for zika virus in the country in the last three months, of which 64 are pregnant women. All but four of them, including all pregnant women, are in Jaipur. Two persons in Bhopal and one person each in Bihar and Gujarat have also tested positive. In 2015, a similar outbreak in Brazil was found to have been responsible for serious birth defects in some newborns. Pregnant women infected with the virus had delivered babies with abnormally small heads, a condition referred to as microcephaly. A team of scientists from National Institute of Virology in Pune have just finished a full genome sequencing of the zika virus spreading in India and concluded that the gene responsible for causing microcephaly in Brazil was absent in the Indian strain. “The good news is that this mutation associated with microcephaly is not found in strains of zika virus that has infected persons in Jaipur,” **Dr Balram Bhargava, director general of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, told The Indian Express. However, the scientists say this still does not conclusively rule out the possibility of microcephaly in Indian cases, and all pregnant women were under close medical watch. “We cannot say microcephaly will surely not occur because there are several unknown factors that may still lead to the disorder,” said Bhargava.

With regards,

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