

7. Shortnews

1. UHC- 2025 Global Monitoring Report

A new joint WHO–World Bank 2025 report shows progress toward universal health coverage but warns billions still face service gaps and financial hardship.

Key Highlights of the Report– Progress in Service Coverage– The Service Coverage Index (SCI) rose from 54 (2000) to 71 (2023), driven mainly by infectious–disease programmes and steady gains in noncommunicable diseases.

Persistent Financial Hardship– People facing large or impoverishing out-of-pocket (OOP) payments fell from 34% to 26%, yet 2.1 billion still experience financial hardship.

Deepening Inequalities– Three-quarters of the poorest households suffer financial hardship from health costs, while fewer than 1 in 25 richest households face similar pressure.

Major Gaps Toward 2030 Goals– At the current pace, global SCI will reach only 74/100 by 2030, with nearly 25% of the world still facing health-related financial hardship.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

Universal health coverage means all people can access quality health services without suffering financial hardship.

Global Target for UHC– In 2015, United Nations Member States committed to achieving UHC by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals, monitored through SDG indicators 3.8.1 and 3.8.2. The 2025 revision of UHC indicators now uses a 14-tracer Service Coverage Index and a refined measure of financial hardship from OOP spending.

Significance

UHC advances the human right to health and protects households from poverty caused by medical costs. It strengthens economic resilience, promotes equity by prioritizing vulnerable groups, and guides governments in designing efficient, people-centred health systems.

2. Surya Kiran-19

India and Nepal conducted a two-day battalion-level validation exercise under the 19th edition of Exercise SURYAKIRAN in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.

Highlights of the Exercise

Integration of Niche Technologies– The exercise incorporated advanced tools such as

1. Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) systems,
2. Precision-targeting drones
3. Advanced day and night weapon sights
4. AI-enabled surveillance feeds.

Counter-Terrorism Focus– The drills simulated high-intensity counter-terror operations, focusing on joint tactical responses, room intervention, Jungle and mountain warfare in difficult terrains, reconnaissance, and coordinated assault strategies.

About Exercise SURYAKIRAN

Bilateral Military Exercise– It is an annual bilateral joint military exercise held between India and Nepal, and has been conducted regularly since 2011.

Hosting– The exercise is hosted alternately by India and Nepal, ensuring equal participation and exchange of training environments.

Objectives

Strengthening Interoperability– The exercise aims to enhance interoperability between the two armies, particularly in counter-terrorism operations, jungle warfare, and mountain warfare.

Humanitarian and Disaster Response (HADR)– It seeks to improve coordination in HADR operations conducted under the United Nations (UN) framework.

Operational Preparedness– The exercise also focuses on operational readiness, including aviation support, medical preparedness, and environmental conservation practices.

Previous Editions

1. 18th Edition- Conducted in Saljhandi, Nepal, in January 2025.
2. 17th Edition- Held in Uttarakhand, India, in December 2023.

3. Operation Hinterland Brew

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has successfully dismantled a major illicit drug manufacturing operation in Maharashtra under "Operation Hinterland Brew."

Operation Hinterland Brew

Location- Target was a clandestine drug factory in Karanja (Ghadge), near Wardha, Maharashtra. Seizure of Mephedrone (a synthetic drug), with an estimated street value of Rs. 192 crores.

Legal Action- Arrests were made under the relevant provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985 (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act). The operation supports the government's "Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan" (Drug-Free India Campaign).

Mephedrone- Mephedrone is a synthetic stimulant of the cathinone and amphetamine classes. It is considered a New Psychoactive Substance (NPS).

Common Forms- White or off-white powder, crystals, capsules, or tablets.

Street Names- Meow meow, M-CAT, drone, bubbles, white magic, plant food.

Primary Effects- Produces euphoria, increased energy, talkativeness, sociability, and empathy, with effects similar to MDMA, amphetamines, and cocaine.

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) is the apex anti-smuggling intelligence, investigations and operations agency in India.

Formation- Established in 1957.

Headquarters- New Delhi.

Governing Body- Works under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in the Ministry of Finance.

4. Bharat 6G Mission

The Union Minister of Communications chaired the meeting of the Apex Council under the Bharat 6G Mission and reviewed the progress of the Bharat 6G Alliance.

Bharat 6G Mission

Launch- Launched in March 2023 by the Government of India.

Vision- Make India a global leader in 6G technology by 2030.

Objectives- Develop indigenous 6G technologies, standards, and IPR.

1. **Enable ultra-fast connectivity-** 1 Tbps speeds, 1 microsecond latency.
2. **Support emerging domains-** AI, holographic communication, metaverse, robotics, and remote healthcare.
3. Promote R&D ecosystem via academia-industry collaboration.

6G Technology Innovation Group (TIG)- Apex body to coordinate efforts; prepares roadmap- 6G Vision Document.

Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA)- The Bharat 6G Alliance is a multi-stakeholder collaborative platform bringing together academia, industry, startups and public institutions. It aims to build a world-class, future-ready 6G ecosystem in India. Focusing on R&D, innovation and standardisation, B6GA plays a pivotal role in advancing India's vision of global leadership in next-generation communication technologies.

5. India Hosts 3rd Session of The IALA Council In Mumbai

The union minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal, virtually inaugurated the 3rd Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) held in Mumbai.

Key Highlights of the 3rd Session of the IALA Council

Organiser- The summit is jointly organised by the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

Digital Ticketing Portal- The Digital Ticketing Portal for Lighthouse Tourism was launched to enable digital access and improve visitor convenience across 75 lighthouse destinations.

IALA (International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities)

It is an Intergovernmental organization (IGO) that sets global standards for marine aids to navigation.

Headquarters- Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France.

Membership- As of December 2025, IALA has 42 member states that have ratified, accepted or acceded to the Convention on the International Organisation for Marine Aids to Navigation.

IALA Council- It is the organisation's key decision-making body.

Functions

1. Develops global standards for aids to navigation (AtoN).
2. Promotes harmonisation of maritime navigation systems.
3. Provides technical guidance, training and capacity-building.
4. Supports the adoption of modern technologies such as autonomous navigation, satellite-based systems and digital navigation tools.
5. Known for its Maritime Buoyage Systems/sea mark systems, used in the pilotage of vessels at sea.

India and IALA- India has been a longstanding member of IALA since its inception in 1957 and has been a Council member since 1980 through the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships.