

Pulse Polio Programme

February 1, 2021

In news : President of India launched the Pulse Polio Programme for 2021

Key updates

- The Hon. President and First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind administered polio drops to children on the eve of the Polio National Immunization Day, which is observed on the 31st January 2021 (Sunday), also popularly known as Polio Ravivar
- Around 17 crore children of less than 5 years of age will be given polio drops as part of the drive of the Government of India to sustain polio free status of the country. The countrywide drive will be supported by about 24 lakh volunteers, 1.5 lakh supervisors and many Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), WHO, UNICEF, Rotary etc. Healthcare workers will be visiting as many as 2 crore households to ensure that no child is left without the protection of the polio vaccine.

About Pulse Polio Programme

Origin of the programme

- With the global initiative of eradication of polio in 1988 following World Health Assembly resolution in 1988, Pulse Polio Immunization programme was launched in India in 1995.
- Children in the age group of 0-5 years administered polio drops during National and Sub-national immunization rounds (in high risk areas) every year.
- Around 17.4 crore children of less than five years across the country are given polio drops as part of the drive of the Government of India to sustain polio eradication from the country.

- Before the start of the program, India had 60% caseload of Polio worldwide

Objective of the programme

The Pulse Polio Initiative was started with an objective of achieving hundred per cent coverage under Oral Polio Vaccine. It aimed to immunize children through improved social mobilization, plan mop-up operations in areas where poliovirus has almost disappeared and maintain high level of morale among the public.

Last case of Polio in India

The last polio case in the country was reported from Howrah district of West Bengal with date of onset 13th January 2011. Thereafter no polio case has been reported in the country. WHO on 24th February 2012 removed India from the list of countries with active endemic wild polio virus transmission.

Declaration of India free of Polio

South-East Asia Region of WHO including India has been certified polio free by "The Regional Certification Commission (RCC)" on 27th March 2014

Introduction of Injectable Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV) in India

- In May 2012, the World Health Assembly endorsed the Polio Eradication & Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018, calling on countries to strengthen routine immunization programmes and introduce at least one dose of injectable Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV) in all countries using only oral polio vaccine (OPV).
- India joined 125 other countries to introduce Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV) into routine immunization as part of **Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic plan in 2015.**

- It was decided that IPV would be given along with third dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV) at 14 weeks of age for children under one year of age.

Lessons learnt from Polio programme

The lessons learnt from polio programme are being implemented to strengthen routine immunization by carrying out Mission Indradhanush, Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyan and Intensified Mission Indradhanush I and II– a drive toward 90% full immunization coverage of India by year 2018 and to sustain it thereafter. In order to close gaps that might have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, another phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 3.0) has been planned in 250 high risk districts of the country during February and March 2021. In addition to this, guidance for conduction of Sub-National Immunization days for polio and sensitive surveillance of vaccine preventable diseases during pandemic has also been issued to States

Do you know?

Polio is a virus that may cause paralysis and is easily preventable by the polio vaccine. Polio is **transmitted through** contaminated water or food, or contact with an infected person. The virus enters the body through the mouth. It is spread through contact with the feces (stool) of an infected person or through exposure to phlegm or mucus when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Many people who are infected with the poliovirus don't become sick and have no symptoms. However, those who do become ill develop paralysis, which can sometimes be fatal.