

# Wild Poliovirus detected in Mozambique

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**In news-** Mozambique recently identified its first case of wild poliovirus Type 1 after a child contracted the disease. It is the country's first such case since 1992 and the second imported case of wild poliovirus in Southern Africa in 2022 as an outbreak was reported in Malawi earlier this year.

## **About Wild poliovirus**

- According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Polio is a crippling and potentially deadly disease that affects the nervous system".
- People can be infected if they drink water or eat food contaminated with infected faeces.
- Minor symptoms include fever, tiredness, nausea, headache, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, stiffness in the neck and back, and pain in the arms and legs.
- Polio may be fatal if the muscles used for breathing are paralysed or if there is an infection of the brain.
- The virus multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and can cause paralysis.
- Once that happens, the patient is crippled for life because there is no treatment for the affliction.
- Polio infection, however, is easily preventable by a vaccine.
- There are three variants of the poliovirus, numbered 1 to 3.
- For a country to be declared polio-free, the wild transmission of all three kinds has to be stopped.
- For eradication, cases of both wild and vaccine-derived polio infection have to be reduced to zero.
- Africa was declared free of indigenous wild polio in

2020, and the latest case would not affect that certification as it appeared to be an imported strain.

### **Polio cases in India**

- **India was declared polio-free in January 2014**, after three years of zero cases.
- The last case due to wild poliovirus in the country was detected on January 13, 2011.
- The WHO on February 24, 2012, removed India from the list of countries with active endemic wild poliovirus transmission.
- India launched the Pulse Polio immunisation programme in 1995, after a resolution for a global initiative of polio eradication was adopted by the World Health Assembly (WHA) in 1988.
- Under the Pulse Polio programme, all states and Union Territories have developed Rapid Response Teams (RRT) to respond to any polio outbreak in the country.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRP) have also been developed by states, indicating steps to be undertaken in case of detection of a polio case.
- The government has since March 2014 made the Oral Polio Vaccination (OPV) mandatory for those travelling between India and polio-affected countries, such as Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Syria and Cameroon.
- As of today, **wild poliovirus is endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan.**