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27 October 2023

International & National News

<p><b>NCERT panel suggests replacing 'India' with 'Bharat' in textbooks</b></p>	<p><b>Context</b> A high-level committee set up by the <b>National Council of Educational Research and Training</b> to revise the social sciences curriculum has recommended that the name of the country be changed from <b>"India" to "Bharat"</b> in school textbooks</p> <p><b>About NCERT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is an <b>autonomous organization</b> of the Government of India.</li> <li>• <b>Established in 1961</b>, it is a literary, scientific and charitable Society under the Societies Registration Act.</li> <li>• Its headquarters are located at <b>Sri Aurbindo Marg in New Delhi</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Dinesh Prasad Saklani</b> has been the Director of the council since 2022.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nipah virus antibodies found in Wayanad bats</b></p> 	<p><b>Context</b> Nipah virus antibodies have been detected in bats in Wayanad as well in the Indian Council of Medical Research's bat surveillance studies</p> <p><b>About Bats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bats are the <b>largest mammalian group after rodents</b>, with over 1,300 species making up a quarter of all mammals.</li> <li>• They occur on all continents except Antarctica and are particularly diverse in South Asia, with 114 species of insect-eating bats and 14 fruit bats, also known as <b>"flying foxes"</b>, occurring in India.</li> <li>• They <b>roost in large colonies on trees</b>, tree hollows, caves, rock crevices and abandoned manmade structures.</li> <li>• They play a <b>unique role in maintaining ecosystem structure</b>, making a singular contribution to our food production, economy and well-being.</li> <li>• They <b>are the only mammals capable of true flight</b> and have a unique sonar-based echolocation mechanism to capture prey at night.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nipah virus (NiV)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a <b>zoonotic virus</b> (it is transmitted from animals to humans).</li> <li>• The organism that causes <b>Nipah Virus encephalitis is an RNA or Ribonucleic acid virus</b> of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus, and is closely related to Hendra virus.</li> </ul>



- **Hendra virus (HeV) infection** is a rare emerging zoonosis that causes severe and often fatal diseases in both infected horses and humans.
- It first broke out in **Malaysia and Singapore in 1998 and 1999.**
- It **first appeared in domestic pigs** and has been found among several species of domestic animals including dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep.

### NIPAH: HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS

#### NIPAH VIRUS (NIV) A ZOOBOTIC VIRUS

● Transmitted from animals to humans and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly between people ● Known to cause illness in pigs and people ● Fruit bats, also called flying foxes, are animal reservoirs for NIV in nature ● Infection with NIV linked to encephalitis (swelling of the brain) ● Can cause mild to severe illness and even death

#### HOW THE DISEASE SPREADS

Outbreaks occur almost annually in parts of Asia, primarily Bangladesh and India

People can become infected if they have close contact with an infected animal or its body fluids (such as saliva or urine)

Once it spreads to people, person-to-person transmission can also occur

Symptoms typically appear in 4-14 days following exposure to the virus

#### PREVENTION

- Wash hands regularly with soap and water
- Avoid contact with sick bats or pigs
- Avoid areas where bats are known to roost
- Avoid eating or drinking products that could be contaminated by bats, such as raw date palm sap, raw fruit, or fruit that is found on the ground
- Avoid contact with the blood or body fluids of any person known to be infected with NIV

#### HOW CASES ARE DETECTED

REAL TIME POLYMERASE CHAIN REACTION OR **RT-PCR** FROM THROAT AND NASAL SWABS, CEREBROSPINAL FLUID, URINE, AND BLOOD SAMPLES CAN CONFIRM

LATER IN THE COURSE OF ILLNESS AND AFTER RECOVERY, TESTING FOR ANTIBODIES CONDUCTED USING AN **ENZYME-LINKED IMMUNO SORBENT ASSAY (ELISA)**



**NO TREATMENT OR VACCINE AVAILABLE FOR EITHER PEOPLE OR ANIMALS; PRIMARY TREATMENT FOR HUMANS IS SUPPORTIVE CARE, AS PER WHO**



DEATH MAY OCCUR IN **40%-75%** OF CASES, ACCORDING TO CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

#### SYMPTOMS

- FEVER ● HEADACHE ● COUGH ● SORE THROAT
- DIFFICULTY IN BREATHING ● VOMITING
- DISORIENTATION, DROWSINESS OR CONFUSION
- SEIZURES ● COMA ● BRAIN SWELLING (ENCEPHALITIS)
- LONG-TERM SIDE EFFECTS, INCLUDING PERSISTENT CONVULSIONS AND PERSONALITY CHANGES, IN SURVIVORS

**NIPAH KILLS 2 PERSONS IN KERALA; 2 OTHERS, INCLUDING A 9-YEAR-OLD BOY TESTED POSITIVE**

**On May 19, 2018:**

**Outbreak reported from Kozhikode district of Kerala; 17 deaths and 18 confirmed cases as of June 1, 2018**

TWO AFFECTED DISTRICTS ARE KOZHIKODE AND MALAPPURAM. THE NIPAH OUTBREAK REPORTED IN THE TWO DISTRICTS OF KERALA IN MAY 2018 WAS THE THIRD OF NIPAH VIRUS OUTBREAKS IN INDIA, THE EARLIER BEING IN 2001 AND 2007, BOTH IN WEST BENGAL. It was first discovered in 1999 following an outbreak of disease in pigs and people in Malaysia and Singapore. The outbreak resulted in nearly 300 cases and more than 100 deaths. Over 1 million pigs were killed to help control the outbreak

(Compiled by Kavita Bajaj-Datt)

### White phosphorus



#### Context

**Human Rights Watch** recently accused Israel of using white phosphorus munitions in Gaza and said that such weapons put civilians at risk of serious and long-term injury

#### About White phosphorus


- It is useful in **military operations**. But it also poses environmental dangers.
- White phosphorus can be employed to **create dense smoke screens** in the context of combat, hindering visibility and providing cover for military manoeuvres.
- It can be used in **incendiary devices such as grenades and artillery shells**, which can result in persistent and intense fires, effective against people, equipment, and structures.



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## Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

	<p><b>Legality issue</b> The <b>Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)</b> imposes restrictions on the use of incendiary weapons, including white phosphorus, with the aim of safeguarding civilians.</p>
<p><b>Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was <b>adopted on 10 October 1980</b> and entered into force in 1983.</li> <li>• The purpose of the Convention is <b>to ban or restrict the use of specific types of weapons</b> that are considered to cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to combatants or to affect civilians indiscriminately.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>ISA to release a report on global adoption of solar technology</b></p> 	<p><b>Context</b> The International Solar Alliance (ISA) will for the first time compile and release a <b>'global solar stocktake report'</b>.</p> <p><b>Key points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is inspired by the first ever <b>'Global Stocktake'</b> of the United Nations Conference of Parties</li> <li>• A key focus area for ISA is expanding solar installations in Africa and to that end the organization has set up the <b>Global Solar Facility</b>.</li> <li>• The aim is <b>to boost the scale of solar investment</b> there and following that expand to West Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.</li> <li>• The <b>Global Solar Facility will have three funds</b>: a payment guarantee fund, an insurance fund to mitigate project risks, and an investment fund for technical assistance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar photovoltaic installations globally touched <b>1,133 gigawatts (GW) as of 2022</b>, with 191 GW being added in 2022.</li> <li>• Nearly a fourth, or about 350 MW, is installed in China, which is not a member of the ISA.</li> <li>• China is followed by the United States, a member country, at 111 GW.</li> <li>• India ranks among the <b>top five countries globally with 62 GW</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>International Solar Alliance (ISA)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an <b>intergovernmental organization</b> that was launched in 2015, by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France, at the <b>United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris</b>.</li> <li>• ISA is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies.</li> </ul>



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- The ISA is guided by its 'Towards 1000' strategy, which aims:
  1. To mobilize USD 1000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030
  2. To deliver energy access to 1000 million people using clean energy solutions
  3. To install 1000 GW of solar energy capacity.
  4. To mitigate global solar emissions to the tune of 1000 million tonnes of CO2 every year.
- **Vision:** Let us together make the sun brighter.
- **Mission:** Every home, no matter how far away, will have a light at home.
- **Headquarters:** National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gurugram, India.

Hong Kong to have own national security law in 2024

### Context

- The semi-autonomous city would create its own national security law in 2024, four years after Beijing imposed sweeping legislation aimed at silencing dissent.

### About

- Hong Kong, officially the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the **People's Republic of China**
- It is a city and a special administrative region in China.
- With **7.4 million residents** of various nationalities in a 1,104-square-kilometre (426 sq mi) territory, Hong Kong is one of the **most densely populated territories** in the world.

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