



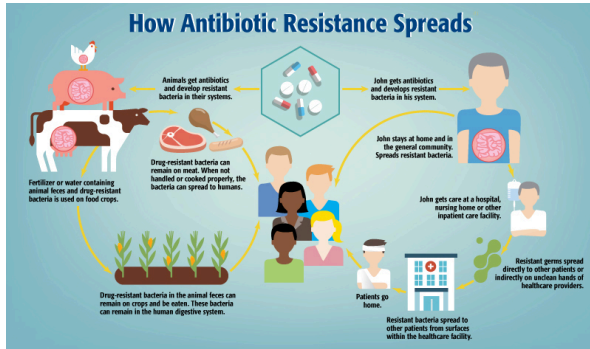
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17 January 2024

National & International News

NCDC survey on Antibiotics



Context

- According to the NCDC survey, **In 13 out of 20 hospitals, more than 70% of patients** were given at least one dose of antibiotic
- The findings of the report are worrying as India is among the few countries where **antimicrobial resistance** is notably high.
- Such resistance develops when antimicrobials, which include antibiotics, are misused or overprescribed.

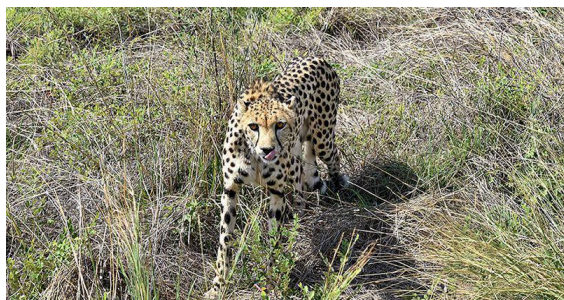
Key fact

According to the WHO, antimicrobial resistance was directly responsible for **1.27 million global deaths in 2019 and contributed to 4.95 million deaths**

About NCDC

- The National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), formerly **National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD)**, had its origin as the Central Malaria Bureau, established at **Kasauli (Himachal Pradesh) in 1909**.
- NICD was transformed into the **National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)** with a larger mandate of controlling emerging and re-emerging diseases in 2009.
- It functions as the nodal agency in the country for **disease surveillance facilitating prevention and control** of communicable diseases.
- It is also a national-level institute for training specialized manpower for public health, laboratory sciences and entomological services and is involved in various applied research activities.

Kuno National Park (KNP)



Context

One more cheetah, part of the set of 20 imported from Africa, died recently.

About Kuno National Park (KNP):

- It is located in the **Sheopur district in Madhya Pradesh**.
- It is nestled near the Vindhyan Hills.
- It is named after the **Kuno River (One of the main tributaries of the Chambal River)** that cuts across it.
- Initially established as a wildlife sanctuary, it was only in 2018 that the government changed its status into a national park.



- Kuno National Park was selected under 'Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India'.
- Vegetation: Kuno is primarily a grassland region, though a few rocky outcrops are found here too.
- **Flora:**
 - Kardhai, Salai, and Khair trees dominate the forested area of Kuno National Park, which is mostly mixed forest.
 - The park has a total of 123 tree species, 71 shrub species, 32 exotic and climbing species, and 34 bamboo and grass species.
- **Fauna:** The protected area of the forest is home to the jungle cat, Indian leopard, sloth bear, Indian wolf, striped hyena, golden jackal, Bengal fox and dhole, along with more than 120 bird species.

India, Saudi Arabia discuss defence ties

Context

- India and Saudi Arabia discussed ways to enhance **navy-to-navy cooperation**, joint training, and opportunities for joint ventures in defence production
- Discussions were held on **issues of mutual strategic interests**, bilateral defence cooperation, opportunities for joint ventures in defence production and technology collaboration and joint military training, duly affirming stronger ties between both nations

India's KABIL acquires five lithium blocks in Argentina

Context

- India announced the acquisition of five lithium blocks in Argentina.
- **Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL)**, operating under the Ministry of Mines, signed an agreement with Argentina's state-owned **Catamarca Minera Y Energética Sociedad Del Estado (CAMYEN)** based in **Catamarca province**.

Key points

- KABIL, which has obtained exploration and exclusivity rights for the blocks, will start exploration and development of the five lithium brine blocks — **Cortadera-I, Cortadera-VII, Cortadera-VIII, Cateo-2022-01810132, and Cortadera-VI** — covering an area of about 15,703 hectares.
- KABIL was preparing to set up a branch office at Catamarca, officials told business line, adding that the project cost (for development and exploration) was about ₹200 crore and would be spread over a five-year period.



INDIA'S LITHIUM EXPEDITION

■ India is dependent on China for lithium imports, total imports in FY23 were roughly **\$3 bn**

■ Imports incurred costs of **₹25,000 crore** in FY23

■ Agreement signed with Australia for exploring two lithium and three cobalt blocks in 2022

■ Started bidding on November 29 for two blocks, including a **5.9 million** block in J&K

■ In talks with Bolivia, Chile, and other nations for critical mineral extraction, development

WORLD'S TOP 5 LITHIUM RESOURCES
(in million tonnes)



Others include Germany, Congo, Canada, Mexico, Czechia, Serbia, Russia, Peru, Mali, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Spain, Portugal, Namibia, Ghana, Finland, Austria, and Kazakhstan.
Source: US Geological Survey, Mineral Commodity Summaries, January 2023



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Key fact

India's lithium requirements, amounting to about ₹24,000 crore, are met through imports, with the bulk of supplies coming from China. Often called '**white gold**', lithium is key to the 'green transition' and is used in energy storage solutions, batteries for mobile phones, and in EVs.

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