



HIV/AIDS Outreach

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) for enhanced HIV/AIDS outreach.

- The MoU signing ceremony took place between the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) and the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE).
- **Objective:** To reduce the incidence of social stigma and discrimination against victims of drug abuse and Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.
- **Expected Outcome:** The MoU will help in developing specific strategies and action plans for [HIV](#) and [AIDS](#) prevention and mechanisms for drug addiction treatment and extending social protection schemes to the vulnerable populations.

Situation in India

- The **National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO)** is a division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that provides **leadership to HIV/AIDS control programme** in India through 35 HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Societies.
- NACO has played a very big role in significantly reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country and that too faster than the global rates.
 - More than 80% decline in estimated new infections from the peak of epidemic in 1995.
 - **Estimated AIDS-related deaths declined by 71% since its peak in 2005.**
 - As per the UNAIDS 2018 report, the global average for the decline in new infections and AIDS-related deaths from peak has been 47% and 51% respectively.
 - Established in 1996, **UNAIDS** has been leading and inspiring global, regional, national and local leadership, innovation and partnership to consign HIV to history. It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland.**

India's Role in the Global Fight against AIDS

- There are 2 million new AIDS infections every year, and **about 66% of the world population** currently on antiretroviral therapy **consumes drugs manufactured in India.**
- Globally, the ART market is valued at .48 billion (in 2018) and is expected to reach .83 billion by 2025.
- Thus, **Indian pharmaceutical companies**, with their ability to **manufacture high-quality, affordable medicines** are very important in the global battle against AIDS.

Antiretroviral Therapy

- With neither a vaccine nor a cure in sight, **Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) is the only option available for people living with HIV-AIDS.**
- HIV is a type of virus called a retrovirus, and the combination of drugs used to treat it is called Antiretroviral Therapy (ART).
- According to the [World Health Organization](#), standard ART consists of a combination of at least three antiretroviral drugs to suppress the HIV virus and stop the progression of the disease.
- Significant reductions have been seen in rates of death and suffering by the use of potent ART regimen, particularly in the early stages of the disease.

Source: PIB

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