



January 30: World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day

Why in News

The ongoing 74th [World Health Assembly](#) declared 30th January as 'World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day'.

- The proposal to recognise the day was **floated by the United Arab Emirates**. It was adopted unanimously by the delegates. The **first World NTD Day** was celebrated **informally in 2020**.
- The World Health Assembly is the **decision-making body of World Health Organization (WHO)**.

Key Points

- **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD):**
 - NTDs are **a group of infections that are most common among marginalised communities in the developing regions** of Africa, Asia and the Americas. They are caused by a variety of [pathogens](#) such as viruses, bacteria, protozoa and parasitic worms.
 - NTDs are especially **common in tropical areas where people do not have access to clean water** or safe ways to dispose of human waste.
 - These diseases **generally receive less funding for research and treatment than** malaises like [tuberculosis](#), [HIV-AIDS](#) and [malaria](#).
 - **Examples of NTDs are:** [snakebite envenomation](#), scabies, yaws, trachoma, [Leishmaniasis](#) and Chagas disease etc.
- **London Declaration on NTDs:**
 - It was adopted on **30th January, 2012** to **recognise the global burden of NTDs**.
 - Officials from the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), the [World Bank](#), the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, **representatives** from leading global pharmaceutical companies as well as representatives of several national governments met at **London's Royal College of physicians** to pledge to end the diseases.
- **WHO's New Roadmap for 2021-2030:**
 - From measuring process to **measuring impact**.
 - From disease-specific planning and programming to **collaborative work across sectors**.
 - From externally driven agendas reliant to programmes that are **country-owned and country-financed**.
- **NTD Scenario:**
 - NTDs **affect more than a billion people globally**.
 - They are **preventable and treatable**. However, these **diseases - and their intricate interrelationships with poverty and ecological systems** - continue to cause devastating health, social and economic consequences.
 - There are **20 NTDs** that impact over **1.7 billion** people worldwide.
 - **India carries the largest burden of at least 11 of these diseases**, with parasitic

illnesses like [kala-azar](#) and [lymphatic filariasis](#) affecting millions of people throughout the country – often the poorest and most vulnerable.

▪ **Indian Initiatives to Eliminate NTDs:**

- The **Accelerated Plan for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis (APELF)** was launched in **2018**, as part of intensifying efforts towards the elimination of NTDs.
- A **WHO-supported regional alliance established by the governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal in 2005** to expedite early diagnosis and treatment of the most vulnerable populations and improve disease surveillance and control of sandfly populations (**Kala-azar**).
- India **has already eliminated several other NTDs**, including guinea worm, trachoma, and yaws.

[Source: DTE](#)

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