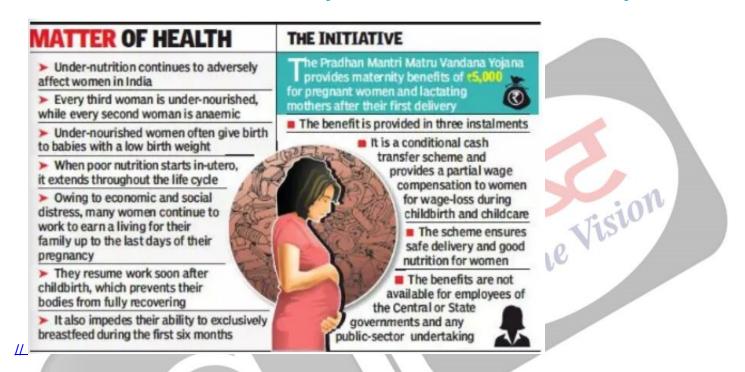


## **Rapid Fire Current Affairs**

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana As a 'Godh Bharai' Ceremony



The Prime Minister of India has lauded the new initiative of celebrating <u>Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana</u> <u>Yojana</u> as a 'Godh Bharai' ceremony in Dausa, Rajasthan. The pregnant women gather for this celebration, where they are provided with <u>Poshan Kits</u> to promote the health of their babies. In <u>Rajasthan alone</u>, approximately 3.5 lakh women have benefited from this scheme in the year 2022-23. Godh Bharai' is a traditional Indian ceremony to celebrate the impending arrival of a baby, often referred to as a baby shower.

**Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana is a maternity benefit program** in India that provides financial assistance to pregnant and lactating women for their healthcare and nutrition needs. It is a centrally sponsored scheme being executed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Read more: Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

## **Living at High Altitudes: Challenges and Adaptations**

Living at high altitudes presents unique challenges and adaptations for the inhabitants of these regions. The village of Karzok in <u>Ladakh</u> stands as the highest settlement in India, situated at an elevation of **4,570 meters above sea level**. Similarly, Komic in Himachal Pradesh also boast altitudes exceeding **4,500 meters**. On a global scale, approximately **6.4 million individuals**, which accounts for nearly **0.1%** of the world's population, reside at elevations surpassing **4,000 metres**. Many of these individuals have called the high-altitude plains of the Andes in South America and Tibet in Asia home for over ten millennia. However, people accustomed to lower altitudes often

struggle with the cold, reduced atmospheric pressure, and diminished oxygen levels found at such heights.

Life in high-altitude regions presents unique challenges for its inhabitants. The **economic outlook is often hindered by limited opportunities,** especially in <u>agriculture</u> due to the need for terracing and irrigation challenges. However, <u>activities such as livestock grazing</u> and mining provide alternative sources of income.

Physiological adaptations, including increased basal metabolic rate and enhanced lung capacities, allow high-altitude residents to thrive in low-oxygen environments. High-altitude natives, such as the Quechua people of South America, known for their deep chests, display higher forced vital capacity (FVC) than their counterparts who grew up closer to sea level.

Despite the difficulties, living at high altitudes may have compensatory benefits for overall health and fitness. A study conducted in the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh revealed that individuals in the 70-74 age group exhibited an average blood pressure of 120/80, highlighting the potential positive effects of the difficult living conditions on overall fitness.

Read more: Importance of Ladakh



The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the joint military exercise "Ex Ekuverin" between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force commenced at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand from 11 to 24 June 2023.

This bilateral annual exercise, alternately conducted in India and Maldives, aims to enhance interoperability in Counter Insurgency/Counter Terrorism Operations under the UN mandate and conduct joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations.

The Maldives is an **archipelago located in the Indian Ocean**, southwest of Sri Lanka.It consists of a chain of almost **1200 small coral islands that are grouped into clusters of atolls.** The capital and largest city of the Maldives is Malé. The majority of the population follows Islam. The official language of the Maldives is **Dhivehi.** English is also widely spoken, especially in the tourist areas.

Recently, reports suggested that the Islamic State (IS) and Syrian fighters widely consumed Captagon to increase alertness and suppress appetite during their gruelling battles. Captagon, a potent amphetamine-type drug, is known for its highly addictive nature and is primarily manufactured in Syria. These pills act as stimulants on the central nervous system, providing users with increased energy, improved focus, extended wakefulness, and a sense of euphoria.

Originally developed in the 1960s, the genuine Captagon medication, which shares the same brand name, contained fenetylline, a synthetic drug belonging to the phenethylamine family, which also includes amphetamines. However, this authentic version was banned in the 1980s.

