



Punjab, Gujarat, Haryana Lead in H1N1 Deaths

Why in News?

Recently, Punjab, Gujarat, and Haryana have reported the highest number of **H1N1** deaths in India, with **41, 27, and 26** deaths respectively.

Key Points

- **Total Cases:** India has recorded over **7,000 H1N1** cases so far.
- **Top States for Cases:** Delhi (1,563), Gujarat (1,049), and Rajasthan (1,008) have the highest number of cases.
- **Health Ministry Guidelines:** The Health Ministry has issued guidelines on **screening, categorization, laboratory diagnosis, infection control, home care, and clinical management.**
- **Prevention Measures:** Public awareness campaigns emphasize **hand washing, covering the mouth while coughing or sneezing, and avoiding crowded places.**
- **Vaccination:** Vaccination is highlighted as the best preventive measure against influenza.

H1N1

- **H1N1 influenza** causes a **respiratory illness** that can affect the **respiratory tracts of pigs.**
- Humans are at risk of **swine flu**, a **zoonotic disease**, through close contact with infected pigs.
- **Swine influenza viruses** can infect humans if their antigenic properties change due to reassortment with other influenza strains.
- This genetic shift can improve the virus's ability to replicate and spread, making it easier for human transmission.
- Such changes have led to pandemics, as seen in **1918** and **2009**, when the virus gained the ability for efficient **human-to-human transmission.**

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