



World AIDS Day 2021

Why in News

World AIDS Day is observed on **1st December every year all over the world** to spread awareness about the disease and remember all those who lost their lives to it.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It was founded in 1988 by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and was the first ever global health day with a motto of raising public awareness about [Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome \(AIDS\)](#).
 - AIDS is a pandemic disease caused by the infection of [Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\)](#), which damages the human immune system.
 - There were an estimated 37.7 million people living with HIV at the end of 2020, over two thirds of whom (25.4 million) are in the African Region.
 - In **2020**, 680 000 people died from HIV-related causes and 1.5 million people acquired HIV.

▪ Theme for 2021: 'End inequalities. End AIDS'.

- With a special focus on reaching people left behind, WHO and its partners are highlighting the growing inequalities in access to essential HIV services.
- WHO is calling on **global leaders and citizens to rally to confront the inequalities that drive AIDS** and to reach people who are currently not receiving essential HIV services.

▪ Significance:

- The very day reminds the public and government that HIV has not gone away and there is still **a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education**.
- It is an opportunity **to show solidarity with the millions of people** living with HIV worldwide.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

- HIV attacks CD4, a type of [White Blood Cell](#) (T cells) in the body's immune system. T cells are those cells that move around the body detecting anomalies and infections in cells.
- After entering the body, HIV multiplies itself and destroys CD4 cells, thus severely damaging the human immune system. Once this virus enters the body, it can never be removed.
- The CD4 count of a person infected with HIV reduces significantly. In a healthy body, CD4 count is between 500- 1600, but in an infected body, it can go as low as 200.

[Source: PIB](#)

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