

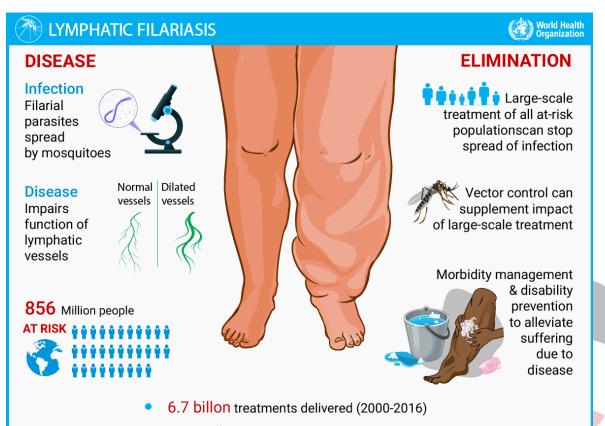
Lymphatic Filariasis

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare launched the first phase of the Biannual Nationwide <u>Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign</u> for <u>Lymphatic filariasis (LF)</u> elimination.

Key Points

- Lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis, is a <u>Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)</u>
 caused by infection with filarial parasites transmitted through mosquitoes.
- In 2021, approximately **882.5 million people in 44 countries** lived in areas requiring preventive chemotherapy to halt the spread of infection.
- LF is a **serious public health problem in India.** Currently, there are 345 lymphatic filariasis endemic districts in 20 states and union territories of the country.
 - 75% of MDA districts are from 5 states Bihar, Jharkhand, UP, Odisha and Telangana.
- LF is more prevalent among the urban poor and affects all segments of the rural population.
- The **infection starts in childhood** and accumulates through adulthood, resulting in irreversible chronic disease conditions.
 - The disease inflicts stigma, mental suffering, social deprivation and economic loss and is a major cause of poverty in the affected communities.
- It is **caused by infection with parasites classified as nematodes** (roundworms) of the family Filariodidea. There are 3 types of these thread-like filarial worms:
 - Wuchereria bancrofti (responsible for 90% of the cases)
 - Brugia malayi (causes most of the remainder of the cases)
 - Brugia timori (which also causes the disease)
- India's Initiatives:
 - MDA Campaign twice a year synchronized with National Deworming Day (10th Feb and 10th August)
 - India is committed to eliminating LF by 2027, three years before the global target.



499 million people no longer require treatment

Prevented or cured more than 97 million cases

US\$ 100 billion averted lifetime economic loss

Lymphatic Filariasis eliminated as a public health problem in 10 countries

PDF Refernece URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/lymphatic-filariasis-4