

Zika virus



ALL ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE

Zika virus disease is an emerging viral disease transmitted through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito

Symptoms

Most of those infected with Zika virus disease either remain asymptomatic or show mild symptoms of fever, rash, conjunctivitis, body ache, joint pain

Severe forms of disease requiring hos-

pitalization is uncommon and fatalities are rare

There is no vaccine or drug available to prevent/treat Zika virus disease at present

Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause infants to be born with microcephaly and other congenital malformation



microcephaly and other congenital malformations as well as preterm birth and miscarriage.

- Zika virus infection is associated with Guillain-Barre syndrome, neuropathy and myelitis in adults and children.
- In February 2016, WHO declared Zika-related microcephaly a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), and the causal link between the Zika virus and congenital malformations was confirmed.
- Zika virus is a mosquito-borne virus first identified in Uganda in 1947 in a Rhesus macaque monkey followed by evidence of infection and disease in humans in other African countries in the 1950s.

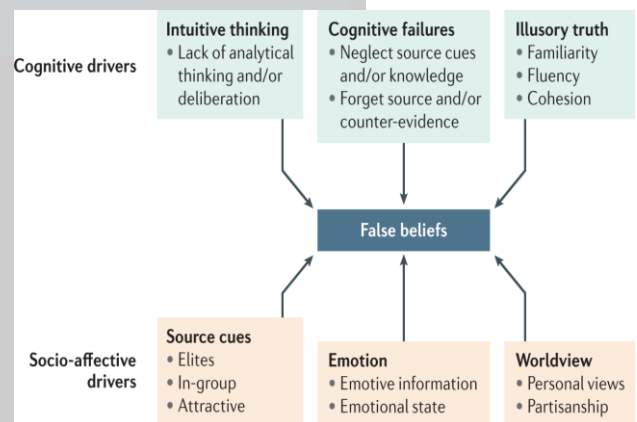
The Hindu

UPSC BRILLIANCE

State government and misinformation

- Zika virus is transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes, which bite mostly during the day.
- Most people with Zika virus infection do not develop symptoms; those who do typically have symptoms including rash, fever, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise and headache that last for 2–7 days.
- Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause infants to be born with

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The Tamil Nadu government's decision to constitute a fact checking unit to deal with "misinformation and disinformation pertaining to the State government" emanating from "all media platforms", sounds, on the face of it, a reactive step.

- This decision follows a similar move by the Karnataka government.
- But for the governments to deem themselves or units constituted by them as the adjudicator of what is false is a retrograde move as an interested party deciding upon what is factual or not is problematic.
- Tamil Nadu's move must be seen along with the Centre's notification of the IT Rules earlier this year, which amended the Information Technology Rules, 2021, and allowed the Ministry of Electronics and IT to appoint a similar fact checking unit.
- Several parties including the Editors Guild of India, the Association of Indian Magazines and the political satirist Kunal Kamra had challenged the IT rule enabling the unit.
- During the hearing, the Bombay High Court had raised the issue of the lack of necessary safeguards that will allow fair criticism of the government.

- It had also remarked that even if the motives for the introduction of such a rule was laudable to tackle false news it could be done away with, if its effects were unconstitutional, that is, if it infringed upon freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

The Hindu

Water dispute /mekedatu projects

WATER LAWS AND BATTLES

- **No national (unified) law** | Many countries like Israel, South Africa and Australia have national water laws
- **Primarily, water is a 'State' subject in India** | States free to deal with issues of water supply, irrigation and canals, and drainage embankments in their own way
- Centre can only regulate, develop inter-state rivers
- Absence of concrete regulatory regime leads to mismanagement of water resources
- Centre, however, assists states in conservation, river cleaning, building infra
- Centre can also deal with issue under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

Five tribunals are hearing river water disputes

Ravi-Beas | Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan

Mahanadi | Odisha, C'garh

Mahadayi | Goa, Karnataka & Maharashtra

Vansadhara | Andhra Pradesh & Odisha

Krishna | Maha, K'taka, T'gana, AP

For Cauvery, a tribunal has issued a final award and Centre has set up a panel for release of water as per orders. However, the two states still have differences on several counts

What is the project?

- Originally mooted in 1948, Mekedatu (which translates as Goat's crossing) is a drinking water cum power generation project across river Cauvery.
- The ₹9,000 crore balancing reservoir at Mekedatu on the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border envisages impounding

of 67.15 tmc (thousand million cubic) ft. of water.

- The project, which will involve submergence of nearly 5,100 hectares of forest in Cauvery wildlife sanctuary hosting rich flora and fauna, will help the state in utilizing the additional 4.75 tmc ft. of water allocated by Supreme Court in 2018 for consumptive use for drinking purpose for Bengaluru and neighboring areas

How will it benefit Karnataka?

- The water from Mekedatu is to be pumped to quench the thirst of the burgeoning population of Bengaluru which is estimated to be around 1.3 crore.
- Besides, there are also plans to generate 400 MW of power.
- The revenue earned from power generation is expected to compensate the Government its investment on the project within a few years

Why is Tamil Nadu opposed to it?

- Tamil Nadu feels that Karnataka, through the project, will impound and divert flows from “uncontrolled catchments” to it, a component which was taken into account by the

Tribunal in the 2007 order while arriving at the water allocation plan for the State.

- As per an estimate, around 80 tmc ft of water flows annually to Tamil Nadu, thanks to the catchments including the area between Kabini dam in Karnataka and Billigundulu gauging site on the inter-State border, and the area between Krishna raja Sagar dam in Karnataka and the gauging site.

- As the upper riparian State has adequate infrastructure even now to address the water needs of Bengaluru, there is no need for the Mekedatu project, according to Tamil Nadu.

- Mekedatu also does not find mention in the Tribunal’s final order or the Supreme Court judgement

Extended fund facility

- 'NAAM 200' organised by the Government of Sri Lanka to commemorate the 200th anniversary of arrival of India-Origin Tamils (IOTs)

About Extended fund facility

The Extended Fund Facility (EFF) The Extended Fund Facility (EFF) provides financial assistance to countries facing serious medium-term balance

of payments problems because of structural weaknesses that require time to address.

- To help countries implement medium-term structural reforms, the EFF offers longer program engagement and a longer repayment period.

Purpose

- Provide assistance to countries experiencing serious payment imbalances because of structural impediments or slow growth and an inherently weak balance-of-payments position.
- Support comprehensive programs with a focus on policies needed to correct structural imbalances over an extended period.
- Countries' policy commitments expected to focus on structural reforms to address institutional or economic weaknesses, in addition to policies to maintain macroeconomic stability.
- Disbursements conditional on the observance of quantitative performance criteria.
- Progress in implementing structural measures that are critical to achieving the objectives of the

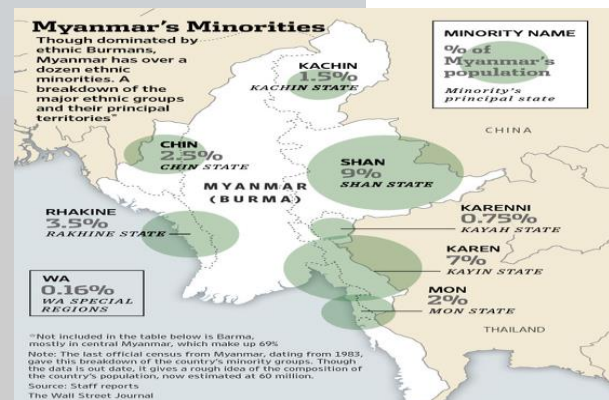
program is assessed in a holistic way, including via benchmarks. See more on conditionality.

- Typically approved for periods of 3 years, but may be approved for periods as long as 4 years to implement deep and sustained structural reforms. Over 4½–10 years in 12 equal semiannual installments.

The Hindu

Separatist in Myanmar

- The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA), the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Arakan Army (AA) say they have captured dozens of outposts and four towns and blocked vital trade routes to China.
- TNLA fighters seized an outpost from the military near the town of Namhkam near the China border



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Protest in Bangladesh

- Levi's and H&M are among the top global clothing brands to suffer production halts in Bangladesh, a garment union leader said on, after days of violent protests by workers demanding a near tripling of their wages.
- Bangladesh's 3,500 garment factories account for around 85% of the South Asian country's \$55 billion annual exports.
- But workers' monthly wages start at as low as 8,300 taka (\$75). Dozens of factories have been ransacked by striking workers, with several hundred others shuttered by their owners to avoid vandalism.

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