



# CURRENT AFFAIRS



Argasia Education PVT. Ltd. (GST NO.-09AAPCAI478E1ZH)  
Address: Basement C59 Noida, opposite to Priyagold Building gate, Sector 02,  
Pocket I, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, 201301, CONTACT NO:-8448440231

Date -12April 2024

## WORLD HEPATITIS REPORT

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "WORLD HEPATITIS REPORT". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recently published the Global Hepatitis Report for the year 2024. According to this report, India bears one of the heaviest burdens of viral hepatitis, which can result in liver inflammation damage and potentially lead to liver cancer.

### SIGNIFICANT POINTS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE REPORT

#### High Prevalence in India:

1. An estimated 29.8 million Indians lived with Hepatitis B in 2022, and 5.5 million with Hepatitis C.
2. These numbers mirror a substantial portion of the global burden of viral hepatitis.

#### Mortality:

1. Both Hepatitis B and C can lead to chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, and cancer, significantly impacting global health.
2. Men are disproportionately affected, and a large portion of cases occur among those aged 30-54.

#### Challenges and Gaps:

1. Despite progress in prevention, diagnosis and treatment remain major challenges.
2. Many infected individuals remain unaware of their status, contributing to the rise in deaths.

#### Need for global efforts:

1. The World Health Organization (WHO) urges a concerted global effort to address viral hepatitis.
2. Expanding access to testing and treatment, strengthening prevention measures, improving data collection, and engaging communities are crucial.

#### Ending the hepatitis by 2030:

1. The WHO outlines a public health approach aiming to eliminate hepatitis by 2030.
2. This ambitious goal requires addressing disparities in access to healthcare and funding, as well as ensuring affordable medications and services.

### ABOUT HEPATITIS

- Hepatitis is characterised by inflammation of the liver, often stemming from viral infections, although other factors can also trigger it. These may include autoimmune conditions, drug reactions, toxins, and alcohol consumption.
- Autoimmune hepatitis manifests when the body produces antibodies targeting liver tissue. The liver plays a crucial role in processing nutrients, purifying the blood, and combating infections.
- Inflammation or damage to the liver can impair its functions. Viral hepatitis is classified into five main types: hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E, each caused by a distinct virus.

## **TYPES OF HEPATITIS**

### **Hepatitis A (HAV)**

- Primarily spread through ingesting contaminated food or water.
- Symptoms encompass fatigue, nausea, abdominal discomfort, loss of appetite, and jaundice.
- Most instances resolve spontaneously without medical intervention, and vaccination is an effective preventive measure.

### **Hepatitis B (HBV)**

- Transmitted through contact with infected blood, bodily fluids, or from an infected mother to her child during childbirth.
- Symptoms include abdominal pain, fatigue, joint pain, dark urine, and jaundice.
- It may progress to chronic infection, liver cirrhosis, and liver cancer.
- Highly effective vaccination is available for prevention.

### **Hepatitis C (HCV)**

- Mainly transmitted through blood-to-blood contact, such as needle sharing, or from an infected mother to her child during childbirth.
- Often asymptomatic in the initial stages.
- It can lead to chronic hepatitis, liver cirrhosis, and liver cancer.
- Advancements in antiviral medications have led to high cure rates.

### **Hepatitis D (HDV)**

- It occurs solely in individuals already infected with hepatitis B.
- Transmission routes parallel those of hepatitis B.
- It can lead to more severe liver disease compared to hepatitis B infection alone.

### **Hepatitis E (HEV)**

- Typically transmitted through consuming contaminated water.
- Symptoms resemble those of hepatitis A but can be more severe, especially in pregnant women.
- Hepatitis E is usually self-limiting but may cause acute liver failure in some cases.
- Prevalent in East and South Asia, transmitted through contaminated water. Although a vaccine is available in China, it is not widely accessible yet.

## **CAUSES OF HEPATITIS**

**Causes of hepatitis vary depending on the type of hepatitis:**

- **Viral Infections:** Hepatitis can be caused by several types of viruses, including hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E. Each type is caused by a different virus and is transmitted through different means,

such as contaminated food or water (hepatitis A and E), blood-to-blood contact (hepatitis B, C, and D), or from an infected mother to her child during childbirth (hepatitis B, C, and E).

- **Autoimmune Hepatitis:** This occurs when the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the liver, leading to inflammation and liver damage. The exact cause of autoimmune hepatitis is not fully understood, but genetic and environmental factors may play a role.
- **Alcohol and Drugs:** Excessive alcohol consumption over a prolonged period can cause alcoholic hepatitis, which is inflammation of the liver due to alcohol abuse. Certain medications, drugs, and toxins can also cause hepatitis when they are metabolised by the liver or when the body reacts adversely to them.
- **Metabolic Disorders:** Certain metabolic disorders, such as Wilson's disease and alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, can lead to the accumulation of harmful substances in the liver, causing inflammation and damage over time.
- **Other Causes:** Hepatitis can also be caused by other factors such as fatty liver disease (non-alcoholic steatohepatitis), infections from parasites or bacteria, exposure to certain chemicals or toxins, and rarely, by certain inherited disorders affecting liver function.

### **INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO TACKLE HEPATITIS**

- **National Viral Hepatitis Control Program (NVHCP):** Launched in 2018, NVHCP aims to combat viral hepatitis, particularly hepatitis B and C, by providing free testing and treatment services. The program focuses on screening high-risk populations, increasing awareness, and improving access to affordable diagnostics and treatment.
- **Immunisation Programs:** The government has integrated hepatitis B vaccination into its routine immunisation schedule for infants to prevent transmission of the virus from mother to child during childbirth. Additionally, efforts are ongoing to expand vaccination coverage among high-risk groups and healthcare workers.

### **PRELIMS PRACTISE QUESTIONS**

**Q1. Which one of the following statements is not correct? (UPSC-2019)**

- (a) Hepatitis B virus is transmitted much like HIV.
- (b) Hepatitis B, unlike Hepatitis C, does not have a vaccine.
- (c) Globally, the number of people infected with Hepatitis B and C viruses is several times more than those infected with HIV.
- (d) Some of those infected with Hepatitis B and C viruses do not show the symptoms for many years.

**Answer: B**

**Q2. Consider the following statements:**

1. Hepatitis D occurs only in individuals who are already infected with Hepatitis B
2. Vaccines are available only for Hepatitis B
3. The primary method of prevention for hepatitis E is by Boiling or treating water before consumption

**How many of the statements above are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

**Answer: B**

### **MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION**

**Q1. Analyse the role of misinformation and disinformation in fueling vaccine hesitancy, especially in the context of social media platforms. What steps can governments and public health authorities take to counteract false information and promote vaccine confidence?**

[Himanshu Mishra](#)

## STATUS OF INDIAN ECONOMY (APRIL, 2024)

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS "THE STATUS OF INDIAN ECONOMY IN APRIL 2024". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "ECONOMY" SECTION OF GS3 IN THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

According to the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**, India's economic outlook remains strong for the upcoming two years. Despite an anticipated deceleration in headline growth, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) slowing from 7.6% in the fiscal year 2023-24 to 7% in the current fiscal year, the economy is projected to rebound, reaching 7.2% growth in 2025-26.

### CURRENT STATUS OF INDIAN ECONOMY

- ❖ **GDP growth rate-** Asian Development Bank has anticipated strong economic expansion will be fueled by **significant investment demand from both the public and private sectors**, alongside a **steady uptick in consumer spending**. Nonetheless, the growth forecast for the fiscal year 2024-25 falls short of the 7.6% projection recorded for 2022-23.
- ❖ **Inflation trend-**As per its Asia Development Outlook report, **retail inflation** will ease to 4.6% this year and 4.5% in 2025-26. India's "persistent" **food inflation is expected to drop** to 5.7% as farm output returns to normal trends this year.
- ❖ **U.S. rate hike impact-**The Asian Development Bank (ADB) observed that the recent uptick in inflation reported by the United States in March has **cast doubt on the likelihood of anticipated interest rate reductions from the Federal Reserve**. Consequently, the ADB acknowledged that an extended period of **elevated interest rates could influence inflation trends across Asia**, albeit with a moderated effect on economic growth.
- ❖ **Increased consumer demand-**Increased incomes are anticipated to **drive up consumer demand, particularly in urban areas** where confidence levels among consumers have seen a boost. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) foresees a rise in demand from urban centers, caused by declining inflation rates and a gradual enhancement in the labor markets of cities..
- ❖ **Foreign Direct Investment-** The report suggested that foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows are **expected to stay subdued in the short run** owing to stringent

global financial circumstances. However, an upswing is anticipated in 2025-26, driven by increased investment in industry and infrastructure.

- ❖ **A positive monsoon outlook**-An anticipated return to **normal monsoon patterns this year is expected to rejuvenate rural consumption**. Last year, erratic rainfall adversely impacted the farm sector, leading to subdued rural spending. The surge in demand for employment opportunities under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act scheme underscores the strain caused by these conditions.

### **RISK HIGHLIGHTED BY ADB**

- ❖ The report highlighted that, **exports** are anticipated to remain subdued this year due to sluggish growth in major advanced economies, they are forecasted to rebound in 2025-26.
- ❖ Regarding **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)**, the report suggested a muted outlook in the near term due to tight global financial conditions, but expects an upswing by 2025-26, driven by increased investment in industry and infrastructure.
- ❖ Highlighting the **importance of price and financial market stability** for consumer and business confidence, the ADB underscored that its projections face **downside risks from global shocks, such as a surge in crude oil and energy prices** leading to higher global inflation and tighter financial conditions. Domestically, there's a **risk of underperformance in agriculture** due to weather shocks, potentially affecting demand and inflation.

### **IMPACT OF U.S. RATE HIKE ON INDIA**

- ❖ The impact of a rate hike by the United States Federal Reserve on the Indian economy can be multifaceted:
- ❖ **Capital Outflows:** A rate hike in the US typically leads to higher returns on dollar-denominated assets, attracting investors away from emerging markets like India. This could result in capital outflows from India, putting pressure on the domestic currency and potentially leading to depreciation of the Indian rupee.
- ❖ **Borrowing Costs:** Indian companies that have borrowed in dollars may face higher interest payments as US interest rates rise. This can increase their financial burden and affect profitability, particularly for firms with significant dollar-denominated debt.

- ❖ **Foreign Exchange Reserves:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may need to utilize its foreign exchange reserves to stabilize the currency if there is excessive volatility due to capital outflows. Depleting reserves can reduce India's ability to intervene in currency markets and could impact investor confidence.
- ❖ **Inflation:** A weaker rupee can lead to higher import costs, potentially increasing inflationary pressures in the Indian economy. This could prompt the RBI to tighten monetary policy to control inflation, which may further dampen economic growth.
- ❖ **Trade Balance:** A depreciating rupee may improve India's export competitiveness in the short term, but it could also make imports more expensive, widening the trade deficit.
- ❖ **Foreign Investment:** A rate hike in the US could make investments in US assets more attractive relative to Indian assets. This may lead to a slowdown in foreign direct investment (FDI) and foreign institutional investment (FII) inflows into India.
- ❖ On the positive side, the ADB identified faster-than-expected FDI inflows, especially into manufacturing, as an upside risk that could enhance output and productivity. Additionally, better-than-expected global growth could bolster exports and overall economic growth.

[Ankit Kumar](#)