

# SNAPSHOT



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## SNAPSHOT

A fortnightly information bulletin giving an overview of the latest happenings in the field of HIV/AIDS that may have policy/programme implications.

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## PROGRAMME

### Phase III of Red Ribbon Express Launched

Union Health & Family Welfare Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad launched the National AIDS Control Organisation's Red Ribbon Express Phase III on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Azad said it was satisfying that the innovative initiative of multimedia and multi-sectoral mass mobilisation project of Red Ribbon Express was commended globally as a unique example of its kind. "At various fora, India, China and South Africa are noted for their efforts at being able to reduce the instances of HIV/AIDS infection by 50 per cent over the last decade," he noted. Mr. Azad elaborated that the Red Ribbon Express in its first phase, launched in 2007, focused on information dissemination.

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/article2797229.ece>

## INFORMATION

### Australians, New Zealanders World's Biggest Cannabis Users

Sydney: Australians and New Zealanders are the biggest cannabis users in the world, said a report published in the medical journal, The Lancet. According to the report, the data showed that Australia and New Zealand have the highest rate of cannabis use in the world, Xinhua reported. About 9.3 to 14.8 percent of people aged between 15 and 64 smoked the drug in the two countries over the past year compared with 1.2 to 2.5 percent of people in Asia, said the report's co-author Wayne Hall from the University of Queensland's Centre for Clinical Research. <http://www.newkerala.com/news/2011/worldnews-140131.html>

### New, Deadlier Form of TB Hits India

Mumbai: Tuberculosis, which kills around 1,000 people a day in India, has acquired a deadlier edge. A new entity-ominously called Totally Drug-Resistant TB (TDR-TB)-has been isolated in the fluid samples of 12 TB patients in the past three months alone at Hinduja Hospital at Mahim. The hospital's laboratory has been certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) to test TB patients for drug resistance. While Iran first reported TDR-TB cases three years ago, India seems to be only the second country to report this deadly form of the disease. TDR-TB is the result of the latest mutation of the bacilli after Multi-Drug-Resistant TB (MDR-TB) and Extremely Drug-Resistant TB (XDR-TB) were diagnosed earlier. [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-07/india/30601741\\_1\\_multi-drug-resistant-tb-tb-patients-tb-germs](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-07/india/30601741_1_multi-drug-resistant-tb-tb-patients-tb-germs)

### HIV 10 Times More Prevalent Among Migrants than General Population

New Delhi: Migration is fuelling India's HIV epidemic. National AIDS Control Organisation's latest figures show that besides high risk populations like sex workers, the highest burden of HIV is among migrants - 3.6%, which is 10 times the HIV prevalence among the general population. With migration rates increasing, the prevalence will only get worse. According to the 2001 census, 30.1% of the population was considered to have migrated (314 million) - a considerable increase from 27.4% in 1991. NACO has, therefore, identified 108 railway stations - which are both source and destination of migrants travelling in search of work. These are now the focus of the country's anti-HIV fight. <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AIDS-INDIA/message/13457>

## RESEARCH

### Depression More Common Among Women than Men Living With HIV

It's not a secret that people living with HIV/AIDS are more likely to suffer from depression than the general population -- they are twice as likely, in fact. But a new study, conducted by researchers who are part of the CRANlum Study, sheds even more light on the issue. Researchers found that women living with HIV are more likely to suffer from depression than HIV-positive men. Of the 2,863 participants, more than 38 percent were women and nearly 79 percent of them had some history of ARV therapy. <http://www.thebody.com/content/65396/depression-more-common-among-women-than-men-living.html>

### New Vaccine for Monkeys Raises Hopes in Fight against Aids

Scientists have developed a new vaccine that partially protects monkeys from an infection much similar to HIV, a breakthrough which they say could be a new weapon in the battle against AIDS. Researchers at the University of Utah School of Medicine found that rhesus monkeys which received the new vaccine were 80 to 83 per cent less likely to get infected with the Simian Immunodeficiency Virus (SIV), a virus which is closely related to HIV, when exposed to it. The experimental vaccine was engineered to trigger the monkeys' immune systems to fight the virus. Researchers often study the effects of an SIV vaccine in monkeys as a way to understand how to develop an HIV vaccine in humans.

<http://www.thehindu.com/health/medicine-and-research/article2785345.ece>

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## FROM THE STATES

### Second Line Therapy Facility for HIV+ to be opened at SMS Hospital Soon

Jaipur: For people living with HIV/AIDS, who have become resistant to first line antiretroviral therapy (ART), the medical, health and family welfare department will soon open second line antiretroviral therapy centre in Jaipur and Jodhpur. In entire Rajasthan, there is not a single life-saving second line antiretroviral therapy centre, which is why AIDS patients in serious condition here are referred to Delhi or Ahmedabad.

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-13/jaipur/30622992\\_1\\_line-treatment-second-line-art-centre](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-13/jaipur/30622992_1_line-treatment-second-line-art-centre)

### Kalachakra Puja Pushes Up Condom, Abortion Pill Sales

The ongoing Kalachakra Puja at of Bodh Gaya in Bihar is making headlines for an unusual reason. On the sidelines of the ceremony, being led by exiled Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama there has been a reported spike in the sale of condoms, Viagra and abortion pills in the holy Buddhist site. "It may sound strange but it is true that condoms, Viagra, Japanese oil and abortion pills are in high demand among devotees in Bodh Gaya," Sonam Dorze, a Tibetan volunteer involved in spreading awareness of HIV/AIDS at a stall during the Kalachakra puja said. Another Tibetan volunteer, Tenzing Phunso said that more than 1,500 condoms are being distributed free of cost among devotees daily. <http://www.rediff.com/news/report/kalachakra-puja-pushes-up-condom-abortion-pill-sales/20120107.htm>

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