



## International Nurses Day

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### Why in News

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The International Nurses Day is annually observed on **May 12**.

May 12 was chosen for celebrating the day as it is the **birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale**, the foundational philosopher of modern nursing.

### Key Points

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- **2020 Theme:** Nursing the World to Health
- **Importance:** The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has designated **2020 as The Year of the Nurse and the Midwife**.
- **Need:** Nurses account for more than half of all the world's health workers. It will encourage the entire nurse community and the public to celebrate the day as well as would provide necessary information and resources to raise the profile of the nursing profession.
- **Significance:**
  - Nurses are at the forefront of fighting epidemics and pandemics providing high quality and respectful treatment and care.
  - The **Covid-19** pandemic is a stark reminder of the vital role nurses play. Without nurses and other health workers, it is not possible to win the battle against outbreaks, and achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals** or **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.

- **Suggestions provided by the WHO and Others:**
  - To provide occupational safety and health of nurses and all health workers, including access to personal protective equipment so that they can safely provide care and reduce infections in health care settings.
  - Nurses and all health care workers should have access to mental health support, timely pay, sick leave and insurance.
  - They should be provided with access to the knowledge and guidance required to respond to all health needs, including outbreaks.
  - Nurses should be given the financial support and other resources required to respond to future outbreaks.
- **Step Taken by the Indian Government:**
  - The **Indian Nursing Council** is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that establishes uniform standards of training for nurses, midwives and health visitors.
  - The Government has announced **Rs. 50 lakh insurance cover per person** (part of the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana**) for frontline health workers involved in managing the Covid-19 outbreak.
  - The Government has also passed an **ordinance for the protection of healthcare workers** battling Covid-19 on the frontline.
  - Recently, the Supreme Court directed the government to ensure the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), to all health workers, including doctors, nurses, ward boys, other medical and paramedical professionals.