



75th Session of World Health Assembly

For Prelims: World Health Organization, World Health Assembly, Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA)

For Mains: India's participation in the World Health Assembly, World Health Organisation functioning

Why in News?

World Health Assembly's 75th session is being held at [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) Headquarters (HQ), Geneva from 22nd to 28th May, 2022.

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare emphasized upon **India's commitment towards building a more resilient global health security architecture.**
- **Health for peace, peace for health** is the theme of the World Health Assembly, 2022.
- India's six [Accredited Social Health Activists \(ASHA\)](#) workers were awarded the **Global Health Leaders Award** at the ongoing 75th World Health Assembly to recognize their "outstanding contributions to advancing global health, demonstrated leadership, and commitment to regional health issues."

What is World Health Assembly?

- **About:**
 - **World Health Assembly (WHA)** is WHO's decision-making body attended by delegations from all of WHO's member states,
 - It is held yearly at the HQ of WHO, i.e., **Geneva, Switzerland.**
 - Specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board remains the focus of this assembly.
 - Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022's assembly is the first in-person assembly.
- **Functions of WHA:**
 - Deciding on Organization's policies.
 - Appointment of the Director-General of WHO.
 - Administration of financial policies.
 - Review and approval of the proposed programme budget.
- **Key Features of the Union Minister's address at the 75th Session:**
 - **Streamlining of the WHO's approval process for vaccines and therapeutics** is needed to have a more resilient global health security architecture.
 - **An equitable access to vaccines and medicines** should be allowed including the intellectual property aspects.
 - **Cost-effective research, technology transfer and regional manufacturing capacities** must be on the priority list.
 - As per WHO, **4.7 million Covid deaths (10 times the official figure)** have been reported in India. Therefore, **concern over WHO's recent exercise on all cause excess mortality on account of Covid-19** was expressed.
 - India urged WHO to **consider the country-specific authentic data published through**

the [Civil Registration System \(CRS\)](#) by the **Registrar General of India (RGI)**.

- The use of **mathematical models of data prediction shouldn't be relied upon**. Consequently, the **Central Council of Health and Family Welfare** (set up under **Article 263** of the Constitution) **passed a unanimous resolution** condemning WHO's approach in this regard.

What is Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)?

▪ About:

- One of the key components of [National Rural Health Mission \(NHRM\)](#) is **ASHA**.
- She is a **social health activist in the age group of 25-45 years** who serves as the first point of contact to cater any **health-related requirements of deprived sections of the rural population** including women and children, who pose a difficulty in accessing the health services.
- Generally, there is **"1 ASHA per 1000 population"**. However, this norm can be relaxed in tribal, hilly and desert areas to **"1 ASHA per habitation"** depending upon the workload.

▪ Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Creating awareness about health determinants** by providing information to the people about nutrition, basic sanitation & hygienic practices, healthy living and working conditions, etc.
 - She also provides information about existing health services and encourages people for the timely utilization of health & family welfare services.
- **Counselling of women** on birth preparedness, safe delivery's importance, breastfeeding, contraception, immunization, child care and prevention of Reproductive Tract Infection/Sexually Transmitted Infection (RTIs/STIs).
- **Facilitating the access of health services** such as Ante Natal Check-up (ANC), Post Natal Check-up (PNC), immunization, sanitation and other services at the village/sub-center/primary health centers by mobilizing the community.
- **Developing a comprehensive health plan** by working in collaboration with the Village Health & Sanitation Committee of the Gram Panchayat.
- **Providing primary medical care** for minor disorders like fever, diarrhoea and minor injuries. Under Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme.
- **Arranging the escort for pregnant women and children** who need treatment or are required to be admitted in the nearest health-care facility.
- **Keeping the Sub-Centres/Primary Health Centre informed about** births and deaths in her village and any disease outbreaks/ unusual health concerns in the community.

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