



## Rapid Fire Current Affairs

### Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana As a 'Godh Bharai' Ceremony

MATTER OF HEALTH	THE INITIATIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Under-nutrition continues to adversely affect women in India</li><li>➤ Every third woman is under-nourished, while every second woman is anaemic</li><li>➤ Under-nourished women often give birth to babies with a low birth weight</li><li>➤ When poor nutrition starts in-utero, it extends throughout the life cycle</li><li>➤ Owing to economic and social distress, many women continue to work to earn a living for their family up to the last days of their pregnancy</li><li>➤ They resume work soon after childbirth, which prevents their bodies from fully recovering</li><li>➤ It also impedes their ability to exclusively breastfeed during the first six months</li></ul>	<p>The Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana provides maternity benefits of ₹5,000 for pregnant women and lactating mothers after their first delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The benefit is provided in three instalments</li><li>■ It is a conditional cash transfer scheme and provides a partial wage compensation to women for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare</li><li>■ The scheme ensures safe delivery and good nutrition for women</li><li>■ The benefits are not available for employees of the Central or State governments and any public-sector undertaking</li></ul>

The Prime Minister of India has lauded the new initiative of celebrating [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana](#) as a 'Godh Bharai' ceremony in Dausa, Rajasthan. The pregnant women gather for this celebration, where they are provided with **Poshan Kits to promote the health of their babies**. In **Rajasthan alone, approximately 3.5 lakh women have benefited from this scheme in the year 2022-23**. Godh Bharai' is a traditional Indian ceremony to celebrate the impending arrival of a baby, often referred to as a baby shower.

**Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana is a maternity benefit program** in India that provides financial assistance to pregnant and lactating women for their healthcare and nutrition needs. It is a centrally sponsored scheme being executed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

**Read more:** [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana](#)

### Living at High Altitudes: Challenges and Adaptations

**Living at high altitudes** presents unique challenges and adaptations for the inhabitants of these regions. The **village of Karzok in Ladakh** stands as the **highest settlement in India**, situated at an elevation of **4,570 meters above sea level**. Similarly, **Komic in Himachal Pradesh also boast altitudes exceeding 4,500 meters**. On a global scale, **approximately 6.4 million individuals**, which accounts for nearly **0.1% of the world's population**, reside at elevations surpassing **4,000 metres**. Many of these individuals have called the **high-altitude plains of the Andes in South America and Tibet in Asia home for over ten millennia**. However, people accustomed to lower altitudes often struggle with the cold, reduced atmospheric pressure, and diminished oxygen levels found at such

heights.

Life in high-altitude regions presents unique challenges for its inhabitants. The **economic outlook is often hindered by limited opportunities**, especially in [agriculture](#) due to the need for terracing and irrigation challenges. However, **activities such as [livestock grazing](#) and mining provide alternative sources of income.**

**Physiological adaptations**, including increased **basal metabolic rate** and enhanced lung capacities, **allow high-altitude residents to thrive in low-oxygen environments.** High-altitude natives, such as the **Quechua people of South America**, known for their deep chests, display **higher forced vital capacity (FVC)** than their counterparts who grew up closer to sea level.

Despite the difficulties, living at high altitudes may have compensatory benefits for overall health and fitness. A study conducted in the **Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh revealed that individuals in the 70-74 age group exhibited an average blood pressure of 120/80**, highlighting the **potential positive effects of the difficult living conditions on overall fitness.**

Read more: [Importance of Ladakh](#)

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## Ex Ekuverin



The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the joint military exercise "Ex Ekuverin" **between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force commenced at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand** from 11 to 24 June 2023.

This bilateral annual exercise, **alternately conducted in India and Maldives, aims to enhance interoperability in Counter Insurgency/Counter Terrorism Operations** under the UN mandate and **conduct joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations.**

The Maldives is an **archipelago located in the Indian Ocean**, southwest of Sri Lanka. It consists of a chain of almost **1200 small coral islands that are grouped into clusters of atolls.** The capital and largest city of the Maldives is Malé. The majority of the population follows Islam. The official language of the Maldives is **Dhivehi**. English is also widely spoken, especially in the tourist areas.

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## Captagon Pills Crisis

Recently, reports suggested that the **Islamic State (IS)** and **Syrian** fighters **widely consumed Captagon to increase alertness and suppress appetite** during their gruelling battles. Captagon, a potent amphetamine-type drug, is known for its highly addictive nature and is primarily manufactured in Syria. These pills act as **stimulants on the central nervous system, providing users with increased energy, improved focus**, extended wakefulness, and a sense of euphoria.

Originally developed in the 1960s, the genuine Captagon medication, which shares the same brand name, contained fenetylline, a synthetic drug belonging to the phenethylamine family, which also includes amphetamines. However, this authentic version was banned in the 1980s.

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