



Snakebite Envenoming

[Source: DTE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, a team of experts from a United Kingdom university have set up a pilot study in Burujhari village in Odisha, India to help it reduce the number of fatalities from [Snakebite Envenoming \(SE\)](#) and will look into solutions like an Early Warning System for snakes.

- India has the **biggest burden of deaths due to Snake Bites in the world**, with most of the cases in rural India.
- [WHO \(World Health Organization\)](#) formally listed Snakebite Envenoming as a **highest-priority Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)** in **June 2017**.

What is Snakebites Envenoming?

- **About:**
 - SE is a potentially life-threatening disease that typically results from the **injection of a mixture of different toxins (venom) following the bite of a Venomous Snake** and can also be caused by having venom sprayed into the eyes by certain species of snakes that have the ability to spit venom as a defence measure.
 - Snakebite poses a **significant daily health risk in rural tropical and subtropical regions of Africa**, the Middle East, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America, particularly for the hundreds of millions of people in rural and peri-urban communities reliant on agriculture and subsistence activities for survival
- **Impact:**
 - Many snakebite victims, mostly in developing countries, **suffer from long-term complications such as deformities**, contractures, amputations, visual impairment, renal complications and psychological distress.
- **Deaths from SE:**
 - According to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), around 81,410 to 137,880 people around the world die **each year because of snakebites**.
- **WHO's Roadmap for SE:**
 - WHO launched its roadmap in 2019 with an aim to halve death and disability from snakebite by 2030.
 - In order to create a sustainable market for antivenoms there is a need for a 25% increase in the number of competent manufacturers by 2030.
 - WHO has planned a pilot project to create a global antivenom stockpile.
 - Integrating snakebite treatment and response into national health plans in affected countries, including better training of health personnel and educating communities.
- **Indian Initiatives:**
 - Much before the WHO roadmap was launched, researchers from [Indian Council of Medical Research \(ICMR\)](#) started community awareness and health system capacity building from the year 2013.
 - In alignment with **WHO's Snakebite Envenoming Strategy and the United Nations' Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**, India ratified a **National Action Plan in 2015** to combat this issue.

What are Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)?

- NTDs are a **group of infections that are most common among marginalized communities** in the developing regions of Africa, Asia and the Americas.
- They are caused by a variety of **pathogens** such as viruses, bacteria, protozoa and parasitic worms.
- NTDs are especially common in tropical areas where people do not have access to clean water or safe ways to dispose of human waste.
- These diseases generally receive less funding for research and treatment than malaises like **tuberculosis, HIV-AIDS and malaria.**
 - **Examples of NTDs are: snakebite envenomation, scabies, yaws, trachoma, Leishmaniasis** and Chagas disease etc.

Neglected Tropical Diseases

