



HIV Prevalence Rising among North Eastern States

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have emerged as the new hotspots for HIV.

- According to MOHFW, HIV cases are rising in the north eastern states due to the high-risk behavior of Injecting Drug Users (IDUs), and unsafe sexual practices.
- The single most critical factor in spread of drug abuse in the Northeast Region, is its long boundary with Myanmar, part of the Golden Triangle, the world's major sources of IV drugs of abuse, specifically heroin.
- There is a need for prevention and intervention strategies for the most-at-risk population in these pockets, with good coverage.
- According to the National AIDS Research Institute (NARI), the target is to bring 90% of the 21 lakh people living with the HIV infection in India under Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART). The challenge is to encourage more people to take the test and then provide them with ART.

Key facts

- According to a study by the The National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in 2017, HIV prevalence is highest in Mizoram (1.19 percent), Nagaland (0.82 percent), Meghalaya (0.73 percent), Tripura (0.56 percent) and Manipur (0.47 percent).
- HIV prevalence in the case of pregnant women visiting ante-natal clinics (ANC) in the northeastern States of Mizoram (1.19%), Nagaland (0.82%), Meghalaya (0.73%), Tripura (0.56%) and Manipur (0.47%) were among the highest.
- In case of sex workers, prevalence of HIV was as high as 24.68 percent in Aizwal district compared with 1.6 percent for other sites in the country.

Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART)

- Standard antiretroviral therapy (ART) consists of the combination of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to maximally suppress the HIV virus and stop the progression of HIV disease.
- ART are medications that treat HIV. The drugs do not kill or cure the virus. However, when taken in combination they can prevent the growth of the virus.