



Child health in India

Why in news?

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- The recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS) report has highlighted that economic growth has not transformed positively in regards with health of poor children.
- The survey has evaluated the growth among states in the period from 2006-2016.

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What are the highlights of the report?

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- Almost all States have made progress with regard to **stunting** of children under five.
- For the country as a whole there is a decline in stunting rate.
- The childhood illness of **diarrhoea** has increased.
- This is indicative of the endemic insanitary conditions and unsafe drinking water prevailing in the country.
- The survey numbers on **Wasting** has raised huge concerns.
- Even Kerala, known for its outstanding health attainments, has slipped down in this regard is of serious concern.
- Wasting is indicative of poor nutritional status and may be the result of inadequate food intake.

- A decline in the percentage coverage of BCG, measles, polio and DPT.
- Notable increase in the social sector expenditure in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh compared to other States has yielded returns.
- These states have performed better than high growth states like Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.

What do the findings imply?

- The report has brought out that appropriate policy choices and social intermediation are more important than mere economic growth.
- An increased need for stepping up social sector expenditure.

Quick Facts

- **Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG)** vaccine is a vaccine primarily used against tuberculosis.
- **DPT** refers to a class of combination vaccines against three infectious diseases diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus.
- **Stunting** (height-for-age ratio), **Wasting** ((weight-for-height).

Source: The Hindu, BusinessLine



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