

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 20-01-2024

INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE



A recent study published in Scientific Reports investigating the potential link between migraine and the development of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Migraine

Migraine is a neurological disorder characterized by recurring, severe headaches that can be accompanied by other symptoms such as sensitivity to light and sound, nausea, and vomiting.

The impact of migraine is significant, especially for individuals under the age of 50, affecting their overall quality of life.

Migraine is not limited to headaches; it often presents with gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, diarrhoea, and vomiting. This suggests a potential connection between the neurological aspects of migraine and gut-related issues.

Previous studies have linked migraine to other gastrointestinal problems, including irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is an umbrella term for chronic disorders characterized by inflammation of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. While the exact cause remains elusive, it's believed to be a complex interplay of environmental, genetic, and immune system factors.

Symptoms

- Abdominal pain and cramping
 - Diarrhea
 - Urgency to have a bowel movement
 - Fatigue and weight loss
 - Fever, anaemia, and night sweats
- ### Diagnosis
- Assessing symptoms, family history, and potential triggers.
 - Checking for blood, bacteria, and parasites.
 - Detecting inflammation markers and ruling out other conditions.
 - X-rays, colonoscopy, CT scans, or MRI to visualize internal inflammation.

Causes

The exact cause of IBD remains unknown, but a combination of factors is likely involved:

An overactive immune system mistakenly attacks healthy gut tissue.

People with a family history of IBD are more susceptible.

Diet, stress, smoking, and certain medications might play a role.

Imbalance in gut bacteria may contribute to inflammation.

Treatment

There's no cure for IBD, but treatment aims to control inflammation, manage symptoms, and prevent complications.

Anti-inflammatory drugs, immunosuppressants, and biologics can suppress the immune response and reduce inflammation.

Eliminating certain foods or following specific diets can ease symptoms.

In severe cases, removal of damaged bowel sections may be necessary.

Living with IBD can be challenging, so emotional and psychological support are crucial.



About the Study

The study utilized data from a nationwide Korean cohort obtained from the National Health Insurance Service (NHIS) database.

- Participants included individuals who underwent routine health screenings between 2009 and 2009, excluding those with missing data.
- The study encompassed over 10 million individuals, with approximately 2.8% of them being diagnosed with IBD.

Key Findings of the Study

- **Increased Risk for IBD in Migraineurs:** Individuals with migraine were found to be 1.3 times more likely to develop IBD (both CD and UC) compared to the control group. This aligns with some previous studies suggesting IBD is a risk factor for migraine.
- **Subgroup Analysis:** Subgroup analysis revealed a higher risk of Crohn's disease (CD) specifically in migraineurs. The increased risk of CD was particularly notable five years after the initial diagnosis of migraine. This risk remained consistent across different demographic and health-related factors.
- **Comorbidities:** Migraineurs showed a higher prevalence of certain health conditions, including chronic kidney disease, hypertension, and dyslipidemia. These comorbidities are often associated with IBD, suggesting potential shared risk factors.

Limitations and Future Directions

- **Data Limitations:** The study lacked information on the severity of migraines and whether this might correlate with the severity of IBD. Important covariates, such as dietary habits, stress levels, family history, and other gastrointestinal issues, were not considered.

Call for Further Research

- Despite limitations, the study underscores migraine as a significant risk factor for the development of IBD. The need for further research, particularly exploring the gut-brain axis, is emphasized to better understand the connection and enhance the clinical management of individuals with both conditions.



Labour rules for workers abroad

With assistance from the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are hiring around 10,000 workers to go to Israel, mainly for construction work.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

About

It is a not-for-profit public limited company that was established in July 2008.

The Ministry of Finance established NSDC as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.

The Government of India, through the MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship), holds 49% of the NSDC's share capital, while the private sector holds the remaining 51%.

Currently, the NSDC is under the MSDE.

Goal

To improve the skills of people in India. It does this by encouraging private sector initiatives in skill development programs and providing funding.

To promote skill development by catalysing the creation of large, quality, and for-profit vocational institutions.

Employment in Israel

Indian citizens working in Israel

There are about 18,000 Indian citizens in Israel, primarily caregivers employed by Israeli elders to take care of them, diamond traders, IT professionals and students.

According to a 2017 report prepared by the ILO, international migration has grown significantly in the last two decades.

The number of migrants from Asia to the Arab states has more than tripled, from 5.7 million in 1990 to 19 million in 2015.



How safe is Israel right now?

Recently, the Israel Defense Forces spokesman had told media that there is not a place in Israel that is safe now due to Hamas.

According to some estimates, about 100 people who died in Gaza are migrant workers from Asian and African countries.

Stand of Indian govt on employment in Israel

The MEA had said that India is satisfied with Israel's labour standards.

Labour laws in Israel are very strict, robust.

It is an OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) country. Hence, labour laws are such that it provides for protection of migrant rights, labour rights.

News Summary: Labour rules for workers abroad

The Uttar Pradesh and Haryana governments have started the process of recruiting about 10,000 workers to go to Israel, primarily for construction activities.

There are 2,000 openings for plastering workers, 2,000 for ceramic tile workers, and 3,000 each for iron bending and frame workers with monthly salaries of about ₹1.37 lakh (6,100 Israeli shekels).

Prescribed rules

Registration on e-migrate portal

Workers going to conflict zones or places without sufficient labour protections are required to register with the Ministry of External Affairs' 'e-migrate' portal.

The e-Migrate Project was launched in 2014.

The portal is a digital platform that aims to streamline the emigration process for Indian workers.

It allows workers to create profiles, register employment contracts, and obtain emigration clearance.



Emigration Check Required (ECR) scheme

ECR scheme is a passport category for Indian nationals who want to work abroad.

ECR passports are issued to people who have not passed the 10th grade or higher education pass certificate.

To work in ECR countries, ECR passport holders must obtain an Emigration Clearance (EC) from the Protector of Emigrants (POE).

POEs are responsible for granting emigration clearance to intending emigrants.

The POEs perform functions assigned to them under the Emigration Act, 1983.

Currently, passports issued under the ECR scheme cover workers travelling to 18 countries.

Israel is not on this list and hence the e-migrate system will not be used for those going to Israel despite continuing violence due to Israel's bombing of Gaza.

Collection of service charges from workers

The Rules say that no recruiting agent shall collect from the worker service charges more than a maximum of ₹30,000.

These service charges shall include costs of domestic travel or lodging and boarding for conducting of interviews by the recruiting agent.

International practices

The international practices for protection of migrant workers are governed by two conventions of the International Labour Organisation:

the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 and Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975.

While **India has not ratified both conventions**, Israel had ratified the 1949 convention in 1953.

Way forward

ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2024 report

As per this report, the global unemployment rate is set to increase in 2024 while growing social inequalities remain a concern.



It asked the countries to design sensible migration policies and skilling initiatives to support and develop local labour markets with growing populations.

To make this happen, they need to better predict the types of jobs needed in different countries and improve education and training in places where there are more people looking for jobs.

The Amrit Dharohar Initiative: Wetland ‘Nature Tourism’ gets a Fillip

The Central government has embarked on a mission - the Amrit Dharohar initiative - to promote tourism at ecologically-sensitive wetlands better known as Ramsar sites like **Odisha’s Chilika lake and Haryana’s Sultanpur bird sanctuary.**

A Ramsar site is a wetland designated to be of international importance under an environmental treaty signed in February 1971 at Ramsar, Iran under the auspices of UNESCO.

Ramsar identifies wetlands of international importance, especially those providing waterfowl habitat.

It provides for national action and international cooperation regarding the conservation of wetlands, and wise sustainable use of their resources.

India has 75 Ramsar sites - Odisha’s Chilka Lake and Bhitarkarnika Mangroves, West Bengal’s Sundarbans, Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary in TamilNadu are some of the well-known Ramsar sites in India.

Amrit Dharohar Initiative

The initiative is a part of the 2023-24 budget announcement and was launched during June 2023 to promote unique conservation values of the Ramsar Sites in the country.

The initiative to develop these sites has been taken by the Union Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the ‘**Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme’ 2023.**



Implementation of the Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme 2023:

The scheme is being implemented in convergence with various Central govt ministries, State wetland authorities and a network of formal and informal institutions, working together for a common cause.

As of now, 16 Ramsar sites have been identified out of which 5 have been taken up as a pilot project for **skill development of the facilitators**, tourism service providers, stakeholders in and around these sites.

These five wetlands are Sultanpur National Park (Haryana), Bhitarkanika Mangroves (Odisha), Chilika Lake (Odisha), Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Yashwant Sagar (Madhya Pradesh).

A total of 30 participants have been trained at each of the Ramsar sites for 15 days each under the Alternative Livelihood Programme (ALP) at Sultanpur (Haryana), Yashwant Sagar and Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh).

At Bhitarkanika and Chilika in Odisha, two training programmes of 15 days each namely ALP and **Paryatan Navik Certificate** (boatman certification for tourism) will soon be completed.

Significance of the Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme 2023:

Wetlands are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and services.

Hence, it is important that we focus on nature tourism at these Ramsar sites.

The focus would be **to shift these fragile wetlands** from high-value tourism to high-value nature tourism by -

Directly supporting conservation action and letting local communities and economies take the lead.

Generating employment opportunities and supporting local livelihoods through harnessing the nature-tourism potential of the Ramsar Sites across the country.

What is Nature Tourism and Who are High-Value Travellers?

Nature tourism is tourism based on the natural attractions of an area like birdwatching, photography, stargazing, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, and visiting parks.

These are experiential tourists who are interested in a diversity of natural and cultural resources.

The tourism industry identifies high-value travellers as those who are likely to spend more, stay longer, and disperse beyond tourist hotspots.

Nagara style

The Ram temple in Ayodhya will be inaugurated on January 22. The complex is in the Nagara style of temple architecture, designed by 81-year-old Chandrakant Sompura and his 51-year-old son Ashish.





About the Nagara style:

Nagara architecture is a classical architecture of temple design in northern India, contrasted with Dravida architecture in southern India.

Nagara temples have a shikhara (mountain peak) over the garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum), a circumambulatory passage around it, and one or more mandapas (halls).

Shikhara is a symbolic representation of the cosmic order and the divine presence.

There are five modes of shikhara design: Valabhi, Phamsana, Latina, Shekhari, and Bhumija.

Valabhi and Phamsana are Early Nagara modes, derived from barrel-roofed wooden structures.

Latina is a single, slightly curved tower with four equal sides, dominant for three centuries.

Shekhari and Bhumija are composite Latinas with attached sub-spires or miniature spires, creating a complex and ornate appearance.

These modes are scholastic classifications, not rigid categories. There is much variation and innovation within and across these modes.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024

The President of India conferred Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024 to 19 children for their exceptional achievement in six categories.

The awards are given to children in the age group 5 – 18 years for their excellence in seven categories for Bravery, Art & Culture, Environment, Innovation, Science & Technology, Social Service and Sports.

Objective: Encourage children who had shown exceptional achievement in any field including academics, arts, culture and sports etc.



The two categories covered under these Awards are as follows:

Bal Shakti Puraskar (earlier called National Child Award) –

These awards are to be given as recognition to children with exceptional abilities and outstanding achievement in the fields of innovation, scholastic achievements, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery which deserves recognition.

Each awardee will be given a medal, a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000/-, book vouchers worth Rs. 10,000/-, a certificate and citation.

Bal Kalyan Puraskar (earlier called National Child Welfare Award)

Individual - These Awards are given as recognition to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution towards service for children in the field of Child Development, Child Protection and Child Welfare for not less than 7 years and have a positive impact on the lives of children.

The number of awards would be three. The award consists of a cash prize of Rs. 1, 00,000/ - (one lakh), a citation and a certificate to each awardee.

Institution - These awards are given to institutions who have done exceptional work for the cause of children in any field of child welfare. The number of awards would be three.

The award for institution consists of a prize of Rs. 5,00,000/ - each and a citation and a certificate.