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**News: Filariasis**

- Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched a nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign aimed at ending filariasis disease.

**Filariasis**

- Filariasis is a parasitic infection caused by microscopic, thread-like worms known as filariae.
- It is spread by the bite of infected mosquitoes, and it affects millions of people in tropical and subtropical regions worldwide.

**Causes and Transmission**

- Lymphatic filariasis is caused by infection with parasites classified as nematodes (roundworms) of the family Filarioididea.

There are 3 types of these thread-like filarial worms:

- *Wuchereria bancrofti*, which is responsible for 90% of the cases,
- *Brugia malayi*, which causes most of the remainder of the cases,
- *Brugia timori*, which also causes the disease.

## Symptoms

- Lymphatic filariasis infection involves asymptomatic, acute, and chronic conditions.
- In chronic conditions, it leads to lymphoedema (tissue swelling) or elephantiasis (skin/tissue thickening) of limbs and hydrocele (scrotal swelling).

## Treatment

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends three drug treatments to accelerate the global elimination of lymphatic filariasis. The treatment, known as IDA, involves a combination of ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole.
- The plan is to administer these drugs for two consecutive years. The life of the adult worm is hardly four years, so it would die a natural death without causing any harm to the person.
- India aims to eliminate filariasis by 2027, three years ahead of the global target.
- High-burdened areas in India are Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.