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- News: Rabies
- The **World Rabies Day** is observed annually on September 28 to promote reflection on past misconceptions surrounding this fatal disease, while also highlighting the continued efforts to advance vaccines and modern strategies for rabies prevention and control.

World Rabies Day

- World Rabies Day is **celebrated on September 28th annually**.
- It was **first launched in 2007**. It marks the death anniversary of Louis Pasteur, **who developed the first rabies vaccine**.
- Louis Pasteur was a French chemist, pharmacist, and microbiologist renowned for his discoveries of the principles of vaccination, microbial fermentation, and pasteurisation.
- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** has set an ambitious goal to eliminate **dog-mediated rabies by 2030**.
- The theme for WRD 2024 is **“Breaking Rabies Boundaries”**.
- It **emphasises the One Health approach**, which stresses the importance of **collaboration between human health, animal health, and environmental sectors**.

Rabies

- Rabies is a viral, vaccine-preventable zoonotic disease.
- It is caused by a Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) virus that is present in the saliva of a rabid animal (dog, cat, monkey, etc).
- It is primarily transmitted to humans through bites from infected dogs, and despite being entirely preventable with timely vaccinations.
- Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal. The death invariably occurs in four days to two weeks due to cardio-respiratory failure.
- The incubation period varies from 2–3 months but may vary from 1 week to 1 year, or rarely even more.
- **Symptoms:** The first symptoms of rabies may be similar to flu and may last for a few days.
- Symptoms also include Fever, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Anxiety, Hyperactivity, Difficulty swallowing, Excessive salivation, Hallucinations (illusions), Insomnia (sleep disorder).
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Rabies in India

- In 2021, rabies in India accounted for 59,000 deaths, constituting 35% of the global total, with 96% of these cases stemming from dog bites.
- The economic burden of dog-mediated rabies in India was estimated at USD 8.6 billion.
- Newer rabies immunoglobulin (Rabies Ig) vaccines are used for rabies prevention.

India's National Action Plan for Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE)

- Unveiled in 2023 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to eliminate rabies by 2030.

It includes:

- **Awareness:** Building awareness about rabies.
- **Surveillance:** Strengthening surveillance and health systems.
- **Vaccination:** Prophylactic vaccination for humans and dogs.
- Dog population management.
- Real-time monitoring of rabies vaccine stocks and tracking of beneficiaries.