

Fortnightly Media Analysis Report – 16 - 28 Feb 2025

The current report analyses media coverage of health-related themes, including Routine Immunization (RI), vaccine-preventable diseases, measles and rubella elimination, polio, HPV, Td, and adverse events following immunization (AEFI), across English and Hindi online newspapers and news portals during the period **February 16 - 28, 2025**. The analysis encompasses **120** articles covering a wide range of topics, including RI policies at national and international levels, stakeholder contributions, and broader public health discussions, which cover diverse perspectives.

Key Findings:

- **Positive Portrayal:** 45% of the articles presented RI initiatives in a positive light, highlighting their significance in public health.
- **Neutral/Multi-faceted Coverage:** 54% of the articles adopted a neutral or multifaceted perspective, acknowledging both the benefits and challenges of RI programs.
- **Negative Coverage:** During the fortnight, only one article, accounting for 0.8% of the total, carried a negative tone, highlighting adverse events following immunization and measles outbreaks in several countries.

Reflection of News stories on Immunization during the fortnight (16 - 28 Feb. 2025) - at a glance

Name of Publication	Positive	Mixed (Multi-perspective)	Negative	Remark	Subject Covered
Times of India - 8	2	6			Measles, PCV, Td, Cervical cancer vaccine, Pneumonia, Immunization
Hindustan Times -3	2	1			HPV, TB vaccine, Immunization
The Hindu - 2	1	1			vaccine technology, Polio
Business world -1	1				Flu vaccine
Economic Times - 1	1				Public health
The Print -1	1				Public health
Medical Dialogue - 2	2				TCV, Pentavalent
Telegraph India - 1	1				vaccine quality
Indian Express -1		1			USAids project
Deccan Herald -1		1			Covid-19
PIB-1	1				Health care
Deccan chronicle -1		1			Cervical cancer
Dainik Bhaskar - 27	15	11	1	A 2 yrs old child died of vaccination in Barabanki UP	Zero Dose, RI session, PW, CHC, newborn, HPV, cervical cancer, ICDS, chief medical officer, Immunization, Diphtheria, Uwin, vaccination, Aarogya mandir, special immunization session, RISE, Review meeting
Hindustan Hindi - 13	7	6			RI session, task force, refusal, advocacy, vaccination, review meeting, religious leader, medical college, awareness
Punjab Keshari -1		1			Cervical cancer
Prabhat Khabar - 3	1	2			RI, BCG, U-WIN
Amar Ujala - 8	2	6			ANM, ASHA, Immunization session, block task force, HPV, Immunization, misinformation, vaccine, Hep-B
Other_National -11	5	6			Immunization, supreme court, TCV, RI, training, cervical cancer, Polio, Review meeting, district magistrate, Covid-19
International News					
Nature - 2	1	1			Hep-B, Polio
Washington Post -2		2			Measles, Immunization
New York Times - 2		2			Flu outbreak, Flu vaccine
AL Jazeera -1		1			Measles
Gavi - 2	1	1			Vaccine champions, VPD
WHO - 4	2	2			Director address, Polio, JE, vaccination
Reuters - 1	1				Polio
Forbes -1	1				Measles
UNICEF- 7	3	4			Polio, Cold chain, Immunization, disease outbreak, Malaria, Zero Dose
PATH - 1	1				vaccine supply
Other Int. web portal - 11	2	9			neonatal tetanus, immunization, Health, Measles, Media, Polio, Encephalitis, cervical cancer, vaccination,

Important stories with highlights

Times of India in a health news reports that the Union Minister of State for Health, shri Prataprao Jadhav, announced that a vaccine targeting breast, oral, and cervical cancers in women will be available in India within five to six months. Speaking in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, he stated that girls aged 9 to 16 years would be eligible for vaccination. The vaccine, he shared was in its final research stages, with ongoing trials. This initiative, he said aligned with the government's efforts to combat rising cancer cases.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/india-to-roll-out-cancer-vaccine-for-women-in-5-6-months-confirms-union-minister-jadhav/articleshow/118383387.cms>

Deccan Herald said that the Supreme Court had sought the Centre's response on the possibility of formulating a policy to address adverse effects, including deaths, linked to Covid-19 vaccination. A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was informed by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati that the pandemic was declared a disaster, but adverse effects following immunization (AEFI), including deaths, were not covered under it, and no compensation policy existed. The bench, however, emphasized that Covid-19 deaths and vaccine-related fatalities should not be considered in isolation, highlighting the need for a comprehensive approach.

Read more at:

<https://www.deccanherald.com//india/covid-19-vaccine-side-effect-sc-seeks-reply-on-framing-policy-after-centre-says-no-compensation-scheme-3421351>

The Hindu in its health section published that the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented global disruptions, including lockdowns, economic setbacks, and mass casualties. However, it also led to the rapid development of vaccines, preventing further loss of life. Indian research institutes and vaccine manufacturers, it said, played a crucial role, producing vaccines that benefited both India and other nations. The crisis also energized the global scientific community to prepare for future pandemics.

Read more at:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/advances-in-vaccine-technology-and-the-road-ahead/article69246013.ece>

Business World in an article, reported that Zydus Lifesciences had introduced VaxiFlu-4, India's first quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine, designed to protect against the latest flu strains identified for the 2025 southern hemisphere season. Developed in accordance with WHO recommendations, VaxiFlu-4 provides broader protection by covering four virus strains, minimizing the risk of vaccine mismatch.

Read more at:

<https://www.bwhealthcareworld.com/article/zydus-lifesciences-introduces-indias-first-flu-vaccine-for-new-influenza-strains-549245>

Hindustan Times in its health section reports that researchers at Weill Cornell Medicine have developed two mycobacteria strains with "kill switches" to enhance tuberculosis (TB) vaccinations. These preclinical studies aimed to create safer bacteria for controlled human infection trials or improved vaccines. While TB, the report said was under control in many developed nations, it still claimed over a million lives annually. The existing BCG vaccine, made from a weakened Mycobacterium bovis strain, has been available for over a century but offers limited protection. The new research seeks to improve TB prevention and global health outcomes.

Read more at:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/designing-self-destructing-bacteria-make-effective-tuberculosis-vaccines-study-101740645652813.html>

Economic Times reports that declining immunization rates, resurging childhood diseases, and the appointment of a vaccine skeptic as health secretary have sparked concerns among US experts about an impending public health crisis. Since the beginning of the year, nearly 100 measles cases have been recorded in Texas and neighboring New Mexico, raising fears of a resurgence of the highly contagious disease. Pediatrician and immunologist Paul Oit warned, "Measles is the canary in the coal mine," emphasizing the drop-in vaccination rates since the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential for further outbreaks if immunization efforts are not reinforced.

Read more at:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/global-trends/fears-of-us-public-health-crises-grow-amid-falling-vaccination-rates/articleshow/118543495.cms>

The New York Times reports that measles outbreaks in Texas and New Mexico have infected nearly 100 people, with cases expected to rise, according to state health officials. Since late January, the outbreak has spread through Texas' South Plains region, where vaccination rates fall below federal targets. The Texas Department of State Health Services confirmed 90 cases, including 77 children, with 16 hospitalizations. Public health experts are increasingly concerned about declining vaccination rates, especially following the confirmation of vaccine skeptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as the U.S. health secretary, raising fears of further outbreaks of preventable diseases.

Read more at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/22/us/texas-measles-outbreak.html>

UNICEF in a press release reports that public health emergencies, including cholera, mpox, and viral hemorrhagic fever outbreaks, are endangering millions of children in Eastern and Southern Africa. These crises, often intensified by climate shocks, were worsening vulnerabilities and threatening children's well-being. UNICEF Regional Director Etleva Kadilli emphasized that the rising frequency of outbreaks was dismantling safety nets and depriving children of a secure environment. She urged global and regional stakeholders to strengthen protection systems within families, communities, and state services to ensure that children can thrive despite these challenges. UNICEF calls for urgent action to safeguard children amid multiple health crises.

Read more at:

<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/multiple-disease-outbreaks-heighten-public-health-emergencies-children-across>

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