

1. Cough Syrup Maker Under Investigation After Child Deaths

Indian authorities conducted raids at multiple premises of a pharmaceutical company linked to the deaths of at least 19 children in Madhya Pradesh. Tests revealed the presence of diethylene glycol at dangerously high levels in the cough syrup. The incident has renewed scrutiny of India's drug quality control and export oversight systems.

2. WHO Warns on Contaminated Syrup Exports

The World Health Organization issued a caution against unregulated export channels that may carry contaminated Indian-made syrups to foreign markets. The U.S. FDA confirmed that the affected syrups were not shipped to the United States.

3. "Brain-Eating Amoeba" Outbreak in Kerala

Kerala reported 104 confirmed cases and 23 deaths caused by amoebic encephalitis, an infection triggered by a pathogenic amoeba entering through the nasal route, usually from contaminated water. The state's health minister announced intensified water testing and sanitation drives to curb the outbreak.

4. Dengue Cases Rise Sharply in Rajasthan

Rajasthan saw a 22% increase in dengue cases in just 11 days, rising from 1,575 to 1,928 cases. Jaipur reported the highest spike. Health authorities have stepped up mosquito control measures and public awareness campaigns.

5. WHO Updates TB Treatment Guidelines

The World Health Organization revised its tuberculosis treatment framework, making nutritional support an official part of therapy. The update was inspired by Indian clinicians from Mangaluru who demonstrated that addressing undernutrition significantly improves TB recovery rates.

6. MPFDA Adopts Portable Drug Testing Devices

The Madhya Pradesh Food and Drugs Administration announced statewide use of handheld drug-testing devices to detect substandard medicines in real time. The move is expected to strengthen surveillance against counterfeit and adulterated drugs, especially codeine-based formulations.

7. Telangana Junior Doctors Launch Mental Health Helpline

Junior doctors in Telangana have set up a peer-support and mental health helpdesk for medical students and resident doctors. The service aims to provide confidential assistance amid growing concerns over stress, burnout, and suicide risks in medical institutions.

8. Surgeons Oppose Restrictions on Live Surgery Demonstrations

Surgeons in Kolkata voiced concern over new guidelines that limit live surgical broadcasts. They argued that such demonstrations are vital for training and skill development, urging regulators to reconsider or modify the restrictions.

9. CGHS Package Rates Revised from October 13

The Central Government Health Scheme announced revised treatment package rates applicable to empanelled hospitals. The updates factor in hospital accreditation status, city cost classifications, and ward entitlements. The changes notably impact rates for oncology and major surgical procedures.

10. Experts Call for National Strategy on Ageing and Alzheimer's

Public health experts urged the government to integrate mental health, geriatric care, and caregiver support into a unified national policy to address the rising burden of Alzheimer's disease and dementia in India's ageing population.

11. Deepika Padukone Named India's First Mental Health Ambassador

The Ministry of Health appointed actor Deepika Padukone as the country's first-ever Mental Health Ambassador to promote awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage early help-seeking behavior for mental health issues.

12. India to Host Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

India and the World Health Organization signed an agreement to host the Second Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in New Delhi in December 2025. The summit will focus on integrating evidence-based traditional practices with modern health systems.

13. Climate Change Linked to Mental Health Risks

A recent study found that rising temperatures and humidity levels increase depression risks in India, highlighting a connection between climate stress and mental well-being. Researchers recommend incorporating climate resilience into national mental health strategies.

14. Regional Committee on Health Priorities for South-East Asia

The 78th session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, held from 13 to 15 October, is focusing on primary healthcare strengthening, antimicrobial resistance, and pandemic preparedness as key priorities for the region.