

Reproductive and Maternal & Child Health

Women not discriminated against in Vedas, Upanishads, then why in Sabarimala?', asks SC
Hearing the petition seeking removal of ban on entry of women of menstrual age in the revered Sabarimala, the Supreme Court, Friday, questioned the basis of such discrimination.
Questioning the Travancore Devaswom Board, the apex court observed that when holy texts like the Vedas and Upanishads do not discriminate against women then why is that they are discriminated against at Sabarimala.
http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/women-not-discriminated-against-in-vedas-upanishads-then-why-in-sabarimala-asks-sc_1855063.html

More than half of all teenage girls in Pakistan believe domestic violence is justified, report reveals
A report carried out by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has revealed that troublingly, more than half of all teenage girls in Pakistan believe that domestic violence is justified for at least one reason.
Refusing sex was just one of the reasons girls aged between 15 and 19 believed a husband would be justified in beating his wife, while more than 30 per cent of girls of the same age had already experienced physical or sexual violence in Pakistan.
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/More-than-half-of-all-teenage-girls-in-Pakistan-believe-domestic-violence-is-justified-report-reveals/articleshow/50946971.cms>

Women are not legally empowered to become surrogates: Centre to SC
Women do not have a legal right to become surrogate mothers for commercial gains, the government told the Supreme Court on Wednesday. A woman has every right to start a family within a marriage but her reproductive rights are protected and should be within the set legal framework, it said opposing an application challenging the Centre's notification banning the import of human embryos except for research purposes.
<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/women-are-not-legally-empowered-to-become-surrogates-centre-to-sc/story-LWItwPR2MOYkqhQ0vzsvDN.html>

The politics of global maternal health
The public health messages disbursed in North America and western Europe warn pregnant women to avoid travel to Zika-affected areas as a result of potential maternal health risks. Zika is a virus primarily transmitted through the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes, which are predominantly found in the Southern Hemisphere.
<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/the-politics-of-global-maternal-health-367473831.html>

Child brides born out of poverty, lack of security
Meena, 15, from Chikkaballapur ran away from her marital home last year, after she was forcibly pulled out of school and married to a man from Andhra Pradesh. After waiting for many hours for a friend who didn't come to pick her up, police rescued her and sent to the child welfare committee.
"My parents considered me a financial burden and compelled me to marry a stranger, when all I wanted was to study further," said Meena (name changed), who dropped out when she was in Class IX.
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/Child-brides-born-out-of-poverty-lack-of-security/articleshow/50947690.cms>

New research centre to focus on global child and maternal health
The Centre for International Child Health (CICH), led by Imperial's Professor Beate Kampmann, was launched last Friday to a packed lecture theatre at the St. Mary's campus in Paddington. The new centre, which is the seventh centre within Imperial's Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI), aims to move away from working in isolated research silos with a view to facilitate the interactions of research groups already active in international child health across-faculties.
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/newsandeventspggrp/imperialcollege/centres/globalhealth/newssummary/news_2-2-2016-12-43-19

<p>Sex education: awareness programmes planned Family Planning Association of India (FPAI), Dharwad, unit will launch programmes to create awareness among adolescents and youth through comprehensive sexuality education in high schools and colleges. FPAI office-bearers Hemal Desai and Shubhendu Akalwadi told presspersons here on Thursday that in India, there are 2.1 million HIV-infected people and among them 50 per cent are youth. http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/sex-education-awareness-programmes-planned/article8200897.ece?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication</p>	<p>Focus on basic determinants to address stunting globally: Prof Bhutta Mother and child malnutrition in low- and middle-income countries encompasses a range of conditions including maternal wasting, micronutrient deficiencies, foetal growth restriction and stunting - a height that is below the World Health Organization Child Growth Standards median - of children younger than five years. http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2016-02/aku-fob021216.php</p>
<p>Why India has the world's most stillborn babies Worldwide, the rate of stillbirths decreased to 18.4 per 1,000 births in 2015 from 24.7 in 2000. In India, the stillbirth rate fell from 33.3 to 23 over the same period, the same as Uganda, Ghana and Mozambique, all poorer countries. The global average annual rate of reduction of stillbirths at 2% is slower than either maternal (3%) or post-neonatal mortality of children younger than five years (4.5%). In India too, the annual rate for reduction for maternal (5.7%) and neo-natal mortality (4.6%) was better than that of stillbirths (2.4%). http://scroll.in/article/803071/why-india-has-the-worlds-most-stillborn-babies</p>	<p>The Health Requisite for Development Last month, as I attended presentations at the World Economic Forum, I came away impressed by many of the conversations on addressing the world's overlapping economic, social, and environmental threats. But I also came away hoping for more discussion about health as central to meeting these global challenges. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-health-requisite-for_b_9215294.html?section=india</p>
<p>A smear of maternal microbes given at birth In a pilot study, U.S.-based scientists have studied what happens when children born through cesarean sections (C-sections) are swabbed just after birth with the microbiome collected from the mother. Observed over a period of thirty days, the microbiota of the children born vaginally and those born through c-sections and swabbed at the time of birth were found to show some similarities, while those of the c-section babies not exposed to the mother's vaginal microbiome behaved differently. The results of the study were published in <i>Nature Medicine</i> recently. http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/a-smear-of-maternal-microbes-given-at-birth-is-beneficial/article8203120.ece</p>	<p>How We Are Failing Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies Every day, 507 women and adolescent girls die due to a lack of reproductive health services in humanitarian emergencies. There are now 13 million displaced refugees globally. This number will only continue to grow as more people seek refuge from war and violence. http://rhrealitycheck.org/article/2016/02/03/failing-women-girls-humanitarian-emergencies/</p>
<p>Family Planning International & India News</p>	
<p>Family Planning in India is Still Deeply Sexist The tragic death of 12 women after a state-run mass sterilisation campaign in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh went horribly wrong in 2014 made global headlines. The episode saw about 80 women "herded like cattle" into makeshift camps without being properly examined before the laparoscopic tubectomies that snuffed out their lives. In another incident in 2013, police in the eastern Indian state of Bihar arrested three men after they performed a botched sterilisation surgery without anaesthesia on 53 women over two hours in a field. http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/02/family-planning-in-india-is-still-deeply-sexist/</p>	

Gates Foundation gives shot in the arm for family planning

Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, announced last November that the organization would invest an additional \$120 million in family planning programs over the next three years — a 25 percent rise on its current funding levels — to meet the Family Planning 2020 goal of giving 120 million additional women and girls voluntary access to these contraceptives by 2020.

<https://www.devex.com/news/gates-foundation-gives-shot-in-the-arm-for-family-planning-87720>

Tanzania: Gender Violence Impact Family Planning – Report

Women in Bunda district, Mara region are afraid of family planning methods due to the gender based violence incidents in their areas, health research revealed. Speaking to The Citizen in a special interview, the Director of Community Development Department from Anglican Church, Diocese of Mara Dr. Theophil Kayombo said that the research done within seven villages in Bunda district revealed that women were willing to use family planning to control births in their areas, but they fear brutal punishment from their husbands.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201602091627.html>

Men, the Weak Link in the Push for Contraception and Sterilisation

The latest data from the fourth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) suggests that women continue to bear the burden of contraception, with female sterilisation accounting for 34% of total modern methods of contraception but less than 1% of men opting for a vasectomy, which is the most reliable form of birth control.

<http://thewire.in/2016/02/02/men-the-weak-link-in-the-push-for-contraception-and-sterilisation-20595/>

Abortion

National

India must make foetal gender tests compulsory to stop abortion of girls, says minister

India's children's minister has called for mandatory prenatal gender tests to try to counter the illegal abortion of unborn girls. Maneka Gandhi, minister for women and child development, said that the ban on prenatal testing should be lifted, and instead, every foetus should have its sex determined and registered by law.

<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/3003/0/india-must-make-foetal-gender-tests-compulsory-to-stop-abortion-of-girls-says-minister>

Gangaram hospital first in India to perform IVF from parents with translocation defects

A hospital here has emerged as the first medical institution in India to successfully perform in vitro fertilization (IVF) from parents with 'translocation defects'. A translocation defect is a genetic defect in the structural arrangements of chromosomes, which interferes in the production of normal eggs and sperms, leading to repeated abortions.

http://zeenews.india.com/news/health/health-news/gangaram-hospital-first-in-india-to-perform-ivf-from-parents-with-translocation-defects_1855456.html

Lack of awareness hits PCPNDT helpline

Nashik: A few sonography centres in the district are facing court cases and a few others have been

International

UN rights boss urges abortion right upheld in Zika outbreak

The top UN human rights official called on Friday for countries with the Zika virus to make available sexual and reproductive health counselling to women and uphold their right to terminate pregnancies. "Laws and policies that restrict her access to these services must be urgently reviewed in line with human rights obligations in order to ensure the right to health for all in practice," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said in a statement.

<http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-un-rights-boss-urges-abortion-right-upheld-in-zika-outbreak-2174300>

Countries Where Abortion Is Illegal Under Most Circumstances

The abortion debate has intensified in South and Central America as the Zika virus, linked to severe birth defects, spreads throughout the region. Latin America has the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, according to Jennifer Kates, vice president and director of global health and HIV Policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, a nonprofit focusing on U.S. and global health issues.

<http://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2016-02-08/10-countries-where-abortion-is-illegal-under-most-circumstances>

The middle ground in the abortion argument

We are taught that there are those two ways only. Indeed, where abortion is concerned, that's the fundament of every

<p>suspended or sealed but the awareness about reporting malpractices by sonography centres is missing. Two brothers from Malegaon have been charged under the Pre-Conception Pre-Natal diagnostics Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994, while court procedures are underway against five other sonography centres in the rural areas and charges are to be framed against one more centre.</p> <p>http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nashik/Lack-of-awareness-hits-PCPNDT-helpline/articleshow/50970692.cms</p>	<p>policy debate and political speech. But it seems ever clearer to me that it's a false dichotomy, a narrative of hard, diametrical opposition that, while it makes for great headlines, fails to acknowledge the mushy middle ground where many, if not most of us, reside. http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/the-middle-ground-in-the-abortion-argument/</p>
Other Health Related News	
<p>India on track to achieve health related MDGs: J P Nadda</p> <p>India is on track to achieve the three health sector related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the UN in 2000, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J P Nadda said here today. Of the eight MDGs to be achieved by 2015, three were related to health - reducing child mortality, improve maternal health, and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.</p> <p>"India's under-five mortality rate and maternal mortality ratio has declined much faster than the global average," he said.</p> <p>http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-on-track-to-achieve-health-related-mdgs-j-p-nadda/articleshow/50963286.cms</p>	<p>Global Justice for Women Symposium Being Held at Santa Clara University Feb. 19.</p> <p>Some of the most pressing legal and social issues confronting women worldwide will be the focus of a daylong legal symposium at Santa Clara University Feb. 19. The internationally known CEO of the Global Fund for Women, Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro, will be the keynote speaker.</p> <p>http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20160211006262/en/Global-Justice-Women-Symposium-Held-Santa-Clara</p>
<p>For a healthy young India</p> <p>About 27 crore children between the age group of one and 19 years would be given chewable 'albendazole' 400 mg tablets at all schools and Anganwadis on February 10 across the country as part of the National De-worming Day (NDD). A follow up on those children who miss the dose would be done on February 15.</p> <p>http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/for-a-healthy-young-india/article8216548.ece</p>	<p>South Dakota World Affairs Council hosts seventh annual symposium</p> <p>Each year the South Dakota World Affairs Council organizes a symposium to address issues affecting our region and the world; this year's topic was global health. The Harding Distinguished Lecturer was Katherine Bliss, senior associate with the Global Health Policy Center at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. She spoke at the Volstorff Ballroom Jan. 28 at 7 p.m.</p> <p>http://www.sdsucollegian.com/news/article_4c93aa62-ca84-11e5-9d76-a32f4d216831.html</p>
<p>\$Woman officer becomes 'Devi Maa' for J'khand tribals</p> <p>Appalled at the sight of the menfolk of a primitive Jharkhand tribe lolling around in a drunken stupor while the women crafted a range of artifacts for which unfortunately there was no market, a woman bureaucrat took matters in hand and effected a social miracle of sorts, for which she is worshipped as a "Mother Goddess" in more than 25 villages of the area.</p> <p>http://www.thestatesman.com/news/india/woman-officer-becomes-devi-maa-for-j-khand-tribals/123456.html</p>	<p>To harness the private sector to achieve the SDGs, we need real measurement of impact</p> <p>One of the most welcome improvements of the recently released Sustainable Development Goals over their predecessor the Millennium Development Goals is the recognized role of the private sector in achieving them. The creators of the goals have rightfully understood that bilateral aid and development projects alone have no chance of achieving the goals. All hands are going to need to be on deck, and that means the multinational companies who invest in developing countries will need to be active partners in all our efforts to achieve the SDGs.</p> <p>https://www.devex.com/news/to-harness-the-private-sector-to-achieve-the-sdgs-we-need-real-measurement-of-impact-87721</p>

National Health Mission: Spending up, health ministry wants Rs 40,000 cr in Budget

Buoyed by a significant increase in spending by states under the National Health Mission from 66 per cent to 79 per cent of the total funds, the health ministry has asked for Rs 40,000 crore in the Union Budget this year — a 21 per cent jump from last year's allocation of Rs 33,152 crore.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/national-health-mission-spending-up-health-ministry-wants-rs-40000-cr-in-budget/>

Corporations Killed Medicine. Here's How to Take It Back.

Playing the role of modern-day lords of the manor are pharmaceutical corporations, which have taken a good that was once considered off-limits for private profiteering and turned it into an expensive commodity. Instead of displacing small landholders, this enclosure movement causes suffering and death: Billions of people across the globe go without essential medicines, and 10 million die each year as a result.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/corporations-killed-medicine-heres-how-to-take-it-back/>

Latest Articles on Maternal and Reproductive Health**Do efforts to standardize, assess and improve the quality of health service provision to adolescents by government-run health services in low and middle income countries, lead to improvements in service-quality and service-utilization by adolescents?**

Researchers and implementers working in adolescent health, and adolescents themselves question whether government-run health services in conservative and resource-constrained settings can be made adolescent friendly. This paper aims to find out what selected low and middle income country (LMIC) governments have set out to do to improve the quality of health service provision to adolescents; whether their efforts led to measurable improvements in quality and to increased health service-utilization by adolescents.

<http://reproductive-health-journal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12978-015-0111-y>

How can midwives promote a normal birth and a positive birth experience? The experience of first-time Norwegian mothers

Childbirth is one of the most powerful life events for a woman and her family, and something that women carry with them for life. This major life event may affect the woman positively or negatively, depending on her experiences. Nilsson found that a positive birth experience depends on an attentive and trustful relationship between the women giving birth and professionals, enabling the women to have a feeling of control, strength, satisfaction and reassurance. It is also emphasized that relational, trustful care is a key concept in the context of a positive birth experience. Other studies show that a holistic approach to care and the midwife's support and presence are important factors for women, who become more able to cope with birth and thus achieve a positive birth experience.

<http://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-015-0281-3>

Inequalities in utilization of maternal and child health services in Ethiopia: the role of primary health care

Health systems aim to narrow inequality in access to health care across socioeconomic groups and area of residency. However, in low-income countries, studies are lacking that systematically monitor and evaluate health programs with regard to their effect on specific inequalities. We aimed to measure changes in inequality in access to maternal and child health (MCH) interventions and the effect of Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities expansion on the inequality in access to care in Ethiopia.

<http://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-016-1296-7>