

The Health News Updates (1st November 2015)
From the desk of Reproductive Health Observatory
<http://www.rhobservatory.net/>

National	International
Reproductive and Maternal & Child Health	
<p>Why India needs to reconsider its stand on banning surrogacy options for foreign couples</p> <p>The Centre’s plan to ban commercial surrogacy and prevent foreigners from having children by surrogate mothers in India, merits reconsideration. While the State must intervene to ensure that women do not opt for becoming surrogate mothers at the expense of their health, and that they are not tied down by unfair contracts, the move to ban commercial surrogacy is unrealistic and intrusive.</p> <p>http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/editorial-dnaedit-don-t-stifle-2139922</p>	<p>Opinion: Women on Reproductive Strike</p> <p>Women are having fewer than two children on average in 83 countries, representing nearly half of the world’s population. And in some countries, such as Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Singapore, South Korea and Spain, average fertility levels are now closer to one child per woman than the replacement level of about two children</p> <p>http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/10/opinion-women-on-reproductive-strike/</p>
<p>In India, Lower Castes and Tribals Being Left Behind in Maternal Health</p> <p>Maternal mortality causes 56,000 deaths every year in India, accounting for 20 percent of maternal deaths around the world. Women who are born into the lower castes or are tribals – India’s indigenous groups – are especially likely to lack access to quality health care. Over 40 percent of these women also belong to the lowest wealth quintile.</p> <p>http://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2015/10/india-castes-tribals-lag-furthest-maternal-health/</p>	<p>Women, children are vulnerable</p> <p>WOMEN and children are 14 times likely to die during a disaster than any other social group, UN Women representative to the Pacific Aleta Miller told Technical Experts and Ministerial Consultations on Strengthening Climate Change Resilience through Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health meeting at the Sofitel Resort and Spa.</p> <p>http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=327735</p>
<p>Bihar has highest rate of child marriage in India, says report</p> <p>Child marriage, considered a human rights violation, is a prevalent phenomenon in India that many activists have been fighting against. Now, a report by the International Center for Research on Women states that the prevalence of this is 60% in the state of Bihar.</p> <p>The report titled ‘More Power To Her’ says that the prevalence of child marriage in India is 47%. In Bihar, this shoots up to 60%.</p> <p>http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-bihar-has-highest-rate-of-child-marriage-in-india-says-report-2139798</p>	<p>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights are Key Part of New Global Development Goals</p> <p>The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will define the global development agenda for the next 15 years, were formally adopted at a United Nations summit in September 2015. The SDGs will, to a significant degree, drive the allocation of global resources and determine policy priorities between now and 2030 on a range of important issues—including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)</p>

	http://enewspf.com/latest-news/health-and-fitness/65135-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-are-key-part-of-new-global-development-goals.html
<p>British medical journal Lancet to take Modi to task for ignoring health sector</p> <p>The world's most revered medical journal - "The Lancet" has lambasted prime minister Narendra Modi for ignoring India's health sector and has warned that India is on the verge of a collapse under the weight of its own ill health.</p> <p>The journal will take Modi to task for failing to make health his priority, side lining his poll promise of rolling out universal health coverage and not investing in public health with a paper which will be published on December 11, written by some of the world's foremost experts.</p> <p>http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Brtish-medical-journal-Lancet-to-take-Modi-to-task-for-ignoring-health-sector/articleshow/49484703.cms</p>	<p>Countdown To 2015: A Future Of Hope For Afghanistan</p> <p>A milestone in tracking and accountability of women's and children's health, the Countdown to 2015 initiative celebrates its successes and launches its final report this October at the Global Maternal and Newborn Health Conference in Mexico City. Since its first report launched in 2008, Countdown to 2015 has worked to track interventions coverage, equity gaps, health systems, policies, and financials in 75 of the most high burden countries globally in an effort to reduce preventable maternal, newborn and child mortality. Accountability reports and in-depth country profiles have been used to call on governments to be accountable, to identify knowledge gaps and propose new actions to reach MDG 4 and MDG 5</p> <p>http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sickkids-centre-for-global-child-health/countdown-to-2015-a-futur_b_8325412.html?ir=India&adsSiteOverride=in</p>
<p>Nutrition bureau axed, anti-poverty schemes starved</p> <p>Forty years after being established with a mandate to generate data on the nutritional status of socially vulnerable groups, the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB) has been shut down by the Union Health Ministry.</p> <p>http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/natio-nal-nutrition-monitoring-bureau-axed-antipoverty-schemes-starved/article7815511.ece</p>	<p>Transforming Mandera County's Deadly Reputation For Maternal Health</p> <p>For many women in Mandera County a hard to reach, insecure and arid part of North Eastern Kenya, the story of life from childhood to adulthood is one about sheer pain and struggle for survival. As little girls, they undergo female genital mutilation (FGM), a painful carving out of the external genitalia that leaves them with lifelong physical and psychological scars.</p> <p>http://www.huffingtonpost.com/siddharth-chatterjee/transforming-mandera-coun_b_8324154.html?ir=India&adsSiteOverride=in</p>

Nobel laureate pulls up India for its 'dreadful state of nutrition'

Nobel laureate Angus Deaton has pulled up India for its failure to significantly reduce what has long been regarded as a national shame - stunting of its children.

Deaton who was awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences this month for his work on India pointed "to the improving, but still dreadful, state of nutrition in India" and recalled to the TOI how former prime minister Manmohan Singh called stunting among Indian children a "national shame."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Nobel-laureate-pulls-up-India-for-its-dreadful-state-of-nutrition/articleshow/49452165.cms>

South Sudan: UN launches mass nutrition screening as hunger threatens lives of thousands of children

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have stepped up their activities in South Sudan after the recently released Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) today revealed that nearly 237,000 children in the country are estimated to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF and WFP jointly launched a mass mobilization campaign today, where 240 trained volunteers will go door-to-door to assess and screen more than a quarter of a million children in Warrap, South Sudan till the end of the year, and refer those with malnutrition to health facilities and other nutrition treatment centres.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52418#.VjMsX2sc9r8>

**Family Planning
International & India News****Family Planning, Sex Education in Rural Madhya Pradesh Yields**

When Duna Bai got married she was just 14 while her husband, Naktiya, was 15 years old. Within the year this teenage tribal girl from Sidri village in Madhya Pradesh's Barwani district became the mother of a baby girl, who didn't survive as she was born extremely underweight. Although weak and malnourished, Duna was once again pregnant only a few months later.

<http://www.thebetterindia.com/23734/family-planning-sex-education-rural-madhya-pradesh/>

China Allows all couples to have two children

It had been a long time coming. Chinese demographers had been worrying aloud for years about China's rapidly ageing population and plunging birth rate and the impact these trends would have on the country's economy. On October 29th the Communist Party finally ended the "one-child policy" that has been widely—often excessively—blamed for exacerbating these problems. Now couples will be allowed to have two. But the party still insists, unlike the government of any other nation, that it has the right to control people's fertility.

<http://www.economist.com/news/china/21677273-china-has-abandoned-its-more-35-year-old-one-child-policy-now-couples-can-have-two-china>

Our population bomb

Pakistan faces a plethora of problems and the so-called population bomb seems to be further aggravating these problems. Pakistan is one of the countries with the fastest population growth rate in the world. While growth rates are decreasing in most of the developed and some developing countries, that is not the case with Pakistan. In developed countries, people are enjoying longer, healthier lives and are content with one or two children but in the developing world this scenario has been reversed

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/28-Oct-2015/our-population-bomb>

Male Birth Control Pill Is Still 'Right Around the Corner,' Like It Has Been for Years

Seemingly every year, we learn about how research is progressing toward creating alternative forms of reversible contraception for men that include pills, shots, or other devices. Despite the flurry of excitement these news pieces generate, it seems we are still quite far from mass-marketed male birth control. This month's advance—a trial that successfully rendered mice temporarily infertile—is cut from the same cloth: It is a valid proof of concept, but likely quite a few years away from being realistically accessible on pharmacy shelves.

<http://rhrealitycheck.org/article/2015/10/20/male-birth-control-pill-still-right-around-corner-like-years/>

Abortion

National

The Biggest Anti-Abortion Beliefs You Have Don't Make Any Sense To Me

Republican Presidential nominee Ben Carson came close to declaring a war on women's health in America on Sunday. On NBC's show 'Meet The Press', Carson defended outlawing abortion even in cases of rape and incest saying: *"I will not be in favour of killing a baby because the baby came about in that way."* And just when you thought he could stoop no lower, he went so far as to compare abortion to slavery.

<http://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2015/10/anti-abortion-beliefs/>

International

SHOCK: Abortion Used as Birth Control in cuba, One Woman's Mom Had 4 and Her Aunt 10

I was vaguely aware that abortion is very common in Cuba. But until a friend forwarded me a story from the *New York Times*, I had no idea that abortion is rampant. The narrative arc is build around an unmarried couple that has (as the headline suggests) "An abundance of love" but no kids. And that's because they've already aborted two. The story, written by Azam Ahmed, strongly suggests she would abort future pregnancies—a reflection of many factors.

<http://www.lifenews.com/2015/10/29/shock-abortion-used-as-birth-control-in-cuba-one-womans-mom-had-4-and-her-aunt-10/>

The selling of abortion as a 'right'

Shortly after signing a bill allowing assisted suicide in California, Democratic Governor Jerry Brown signed another measure that forces pregnancy crisis centers to "offer information about affordable contraception, abortion and prenatal care."

	<p>The information is to be displayed in the form of a sign tacked to the crisis center’s door and must include a phone number to the nearest county services office where family free or low-cost family planning services can be obtained.</p> <p>http://www.theindependent.com/opinion/another_opinion/the-selling-of-abortion-as-a-right/article_d79c2b8a-7e84-11e5-a726-e7d6556066f2.html</p>
<p>Cops raid house of quack's parents in Panchkula</p> <p>Ten days after a woman quack conducted the abortion of a 21-year-old, leading to her death, a team of Kalka police raided the house of her parents in Ropar, but failed to arrest the accused.</p> <p>Preeti Soni, owner of a private clinic in Karanpur village of Pinjore, had conducted the abortion of the four- month pregnant woman, a resident of Shimla, on October 11. Since then, Soni, along with her family, has been on the run.</p> <p>http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/Cops-raid-house-of-quacks-parents-in-Panchkula/articleshow/49501093.cms</p>	<p>Abortion debate and philosophy</p> <p>Sir, – With regard to an opinion piece on abortion by Dr Robert Grant (Rite & Reason: “Making abortion illegal doesn’t stop it happening,” October 27th), how can a philosopher write on this topic without once contemplating the nature and meaning of life?</p> <p>Not one mention of any possible natural right of an unborn child – frighteningly non-existent in many paragraphs of discussion.</p> <p>http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/a-bortion-debate-and-philosophy-1.2408967</p>
Other Health Related News	
<p>Why India cannot risk putting its health in the hands of the private sector</p> <p>For decades, India has continued to ignore the pathetic and dysfunctional state of its health system. Some of us take notice, albeit momentarily, when a foreign expert points this out. The recent interview to the Indian press by Richard Horton, the mercurial editor of the prestigious British medical journal, the <i>Lancet</i>, will in all probability become another forgotten piece of unsolicited advice in the days to come.</p> <p>http://scroll.in/article/764684/why-india-cannot-risk-putting-its-health-in-the-hands-of-the-private-sector</p>	<p>India Pledges \$25 Mn Investment For 5-yr To Nurture Healthcare Innovation</p> <p>World leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals or the Global Goals in September 2015 that aim to address problems like poverty, illiteracy, disease and overall lack of quality health care for all, among other key issues. In order to achieve these targets, it is crucial to intensify efforts to foster frugal innovation and research around the world. The Annual Grand Challenges meeting was held from 18-21 October in Beijing, China, served as a platform to discuss potential solutions centered on the power of research and development of innovative solutions to achieve the Global Goals.</p> <p>http://www.businessworld.in/healthcare-</p>

	healthcare/india-pledges-25-mn-investment-5-yr-nurture-healthcare-innovation#sthash.LgNzbeIE.dpbs
<p>India can be cradle of world's healthcare needs: Mark Britnell, KPMG</p> <p>Dr Mark Britnell, head of global health practice at consulting major KPMG, says India has developed capabilities like talent pool, innovative ideas and information technology that can benefit the world. He, however, expresses disappointment over the lack of positive push to healthcare policies and public investments needed to lift India's rudimentary healthcare system. Britnell, who recently authored the book 'In search of the perfect health system', noted in an interview with ET that India should take cues from some other countries to fast track its ambitious universal healthcare programme.</p> <p>http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/interviews/india-can-be-cradle-of-worlds-healthcare-needs-mark-britnell-kpmg/articleshow/49524010.cms</p>	<p>NHRC receives 115 healthcare-related complaints from Gujarat</p> <p>At a time when Gujarat is being touted as a medical tourism hub, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has received 115 complaints related to healthcare services from Gujarat in the past 18 months.</p> <p>"From April 2014 to September 2015, we've received 115 healthcare complaints from Gujarat, of which 107 have been addressed," said Anil Kumar Parashar, joint registrar (law) and focal point, Human Rights Defenders, NHRC.</p> <p>http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/NHRC-receives115-healthcare-related-complaints-from-Gujarat/articleshow/49504335.cms</p>

<p>How Domestic Violence Affects India's Child Mortality Rates Too</p> <p>There were 1.3 million deaths of children under five in India in 2013 – accounting for one fifth of global child mortality. While access to health care plays a large part in these individual tragedies, other factors such as domestic violence also have a significant impact. My new research has shown that nearly one in ten child deaths under the age of one in India can be attributed to domestic violence against the mother during the marriage. To stop this, domestic violence against women must be dramatically reduced, and women treated more equally in India – both in public and at home.</p> <p>http://thewire.in/2015/10/28/how-domestic-violence-affects-indias-child-mortality-rates-too-14200/</p>	<p>Change in NHM Funding pattern? Tweak in funds may affect health</p> <p>Despite a number of schemes announced by the erstwhile UPA government coming under attack from the BJP-led NDA government, the success of 10-year-old National Health Mission is marked by the fact that the Prime Minister gave it credit for helping eradicate polio and maternal and neonatal mortality. This track record may spare the scheme for undergoing a changed funding pattern, under which the Centre would only provide 50 per cent from the earlier 75 per cent.</p> <p>http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/change-in-nhm-funding-pattern-tweak-in-funds-may-affect-health/</p>
<p>Govt. on mission to bring down MMR, IMR: Health Minister</p> <p>In order to bring down maternal mortality rate (MMR) and infant mortality rate (IMR), Community Health Centres across the State will soon have a gynaecologist, paediatrician and anaesthesiologist each, Health Minister Kamineni Srinivas has said.</p> <p>http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/govt-on-mission-to-bring-down-mmr-imr-health-minister/article7815971.ece</p>	<p>States could be sanctioned for public health failings: WHO boss</p> <p>A U.N. panel is considering ways to hold governments to account for failing to stick to global health rules, World Health Organization Director-General Margaret Chan said on Tuesday. "This goes back to governments. If they sign up to the international health regulations they need to honor their commitment.</p> <p>http://news.yahoo.com/states-could-sanctioned-public-health-failings-boss-165355490.html</p>

Latest Articles on Maternal and Reproductive Health
<p>How prepared are young, rural women in India to address their sexual and reproductive health needs? a cross-sectional assessment of youth in Jharkhand</p> <p>Young, rural Indian women lack sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and agency and are at risk of negative sexual and reproductive health outcomes. Youth-focused interventions have been shown to improve agency and self-efficacy of young women to make decisions regarding their</p>

sexual and reproductive health. The objectives of this study were to assess young women's sexual and reproductive health knowledge; describe their health-seeking behaviors; describe young women's experiences with sexual and reproductive health issues, including unwanted pregnancy and abortion; and identify sources of information, including media sources.

<http://www.reproductive-health-journal.com/content/12/1/97>

Adverse pregnancy outcomes in rural Uganda (1996–2013): trends and associated factors from serial cross sectional surveys

Community based evidence on pregnancy outcomes in rural Africa is lacking yet it is needed to guide maternal and child health interventions. We estimated and compared adverse pregnancy outcomes and associated factors in rural south-western Uganda using two survey methods.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2393/15/279>

MicroRNAs in Breastmilk and the Lactating Breast: Potential Immunoprotectors and Developmental Regulators for the Infant and the Mother

Human milk (HM) is the optimal source of nutrition, protection and developmental programming for infants. It is species-specific and consists of various bioactive components, including microRNAs, small non-coding RNAs regulating gene expression at the post-transcriptional level. microRNAs are both intra- and extra-cellular and are present in body fluids of humans and animals. Of these body fluids, HM appears to be one of the richest sources of microRNA, which are highly conserved in its different fractions, with milk cells containing more microRNAs than milk lipids, followed by skim milk. Potential effects of exogenous food-derived microRNAs on gene expression have been demonstrated, together with the stability of milk-derived microRNAs in the gastrointestinal tract. Taken together, these strongly support the notion that milk microRNAs enter the systemic circulation of the HM fed infant and exert tissue-specific immunoprotective and developmental functions. This has initiated intensive research on the origin, fate and functional significance of milk microRNAs.

<http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/12/11/13981>

"Girl Power!": The Relationship between Women's Autonomy and Children's Immunization Coverage in Ethiopia

Although immunizations are efficient and cost effective methods of reducing child mortality, worldwide, approximately 2 million children die yearly of vaccine-preventable diseases. Researchers and health organizations have detailed information on the positive relationship between women's autonomy and children's health outcomes in developing countries.

<http://www.jhpn.org/content/33/1/18>

Sexual and Reproductive Health Among Ugandan Youth: 2003-04 to 2012

Suboptimal sexual and reproductive health (SRH) increases morbidity, mortality, and gender inequity and slows development. In Uganda, youths represent 20% of the population, and the burden of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), is substantial.

[www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(15\)00260-8/fulltext](http://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(15)00260-8/fulltext)

