Global Burden of Disease report

Why in news?

\n\n

Global Burden of Disease report was recently published by The Lancet Planetary Health journal.

\n\n

What does the report say?

\n\n

\n
- India, which accounts for 18% of the global population, recorded <u>26% of the global premature deaths</u> and disease burden due to air pollution.
  \n
- One in every eight deaths in India (2017) could be attributed to air pollution, which now contributes to more disease burden than smoking.
  \n
- The states which recorded the highest exposure to particulate matter PM 2.5 were Delhi, Haryana and Punjab.
  \n
- The disease burden associated with air pollution in India includes ischaemic heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and lung cancer.
  \n
- The average life expectancy in India would have been <u>1.7 years higher</u> if the air pollution levels were less than the minimal level causing health loss.
  \n
- Also, no state in India had an average exposure norm of less than 10 micrograms per cubic metre for PM 2.5 as recommended by WHO.
  \n
- The recommended limit set by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards of India is <u>higher than WHO limit</u> at 40 micrograms per cubic metre.
  \n
- Even then, 77% of India's population was exposed to mean PM 2.5 more than the recommended limit.
  \n

What are the measures needed?

- <u>Stubble-burning</u> and the <u>use of solid fuels</u> in households serve as the two major sources of pollution.
- **Agricultural field** - The Centre should work with Punjab and Haryana to ensure that the machinery already distributed to farmers and cooperatives to handle agricultural waste is in place and working.
- A mechanism for rapid collection of farm residues and new approaches to recovering value from biomass has to be instituted.
- **Pollution – rural** - The potential of domestic biogas units, solar cookers and improved biomass cook stoves has to be explored, since they impose no additional expenditure on rural and less affluent households.
- **Pollution – urban** - Fuels may be relatively cleaner today and vehicles better engineered to cut emissions, but traffic densities in cities have led to a rise in pollution.
- Thus, real-time measurement of pollution using ground-level monitoring stations for PM2.5 should be explored.
- **Global experience** - According to the WHO database of air pollution, 14 of the 15 cities with the worst air pollution in the world are in India.
- India should learn from the experience in controlling high pollution levels in the cities of Mexico City and Beijing.
- **Focus** - High pollution levels do not necessarily translate into a high disease burden.
- For example, Delhi has high ambient air pollution level but the number of deaths are comparatively lower.
- Hence, the country need to pay greater attention to the people living in the worst-affected States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Jharkhand.
- These are the regions with low social development, which still relies on solid fuels for cooking and engaging in stubble-burning and hence need more

attention.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu, The Indian Express

\n