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HPV Vaccination Drive and the U-WIN Digital Platform

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HPV Vaccination Drive and the U-WIN Digital Platform

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Source: New India Samachar, Vol. 6, Issue 17 (March 1–15, 2026) | newindiasamachar.pib.gov.in

India launched a nationwide HPV vaccination campaign from Ajmer, Rajasthan (February 28, 2026) — targeting 1.15 crore adolescent girls to eliminate cervical cancer, which kills 42,000 Indian women annually.

UNIVERSAL IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME (UIP) — SCALE

METRIC	VALUE
Diseases covered	13 (including HPV from 2026)
Newborns vaccinated annually	2.6 crore
Pregnant women vaccinated annually	2.9 crore
Universal vaccination coverage	99% (against 12 diseases)

13 Diseases Covered Under UIP: Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, Tuberculosis (BCG), Rotavirus Diarrhoea, Hepatitis B, Meningitis (Hib), Pneumonia (PCV), Japanese Encephalitis, and now **Cervical Cancer (HPV)**

HPV VACCINATION CAMPAIGN 2026

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Launch	February 28, 2026, from Ajmer, Rajasthan
Target group	Adolescent girls
Eligible population	1.15 crore (11.5 million)
Campaign duration	3 months + continuation on regular vaccination days
Vaccine	HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine

CERVICAL CANCER IN INDIA — THE BURDEN

STATISTIC	VALUE
India's share of global cervical cancer deaths	25%
Rank among cancers in Indian women	2nd most common
New cases annually	~80,000
Deaths annually	~42,000
Primary cause	HPV (Human Papillomavirus) — types 16 and 18 cause ~70% of cases

Why HPV vaccination is critical:

- HPV is sexually transmitted; most infections asymptomatic
- Cervical cancer develops 10–20 years after persistent HPV infection
- **Vaccination before sexual debut (adolescent girls 9-14 years) = highest efficacy**
- HPV vaccine is one of the most cost-effective cancer prevention interventions globally

U-WIN DIGITAL PLATFORM

U-WIN (Universal Immunisation Program – Women and Infants Nationwide) is India's digital backbone for vaccination tracking:

FEATURE	DETAIL
Children enrolled	11.12 crore
Pregnant women enrolled	3.78 crore
Data as of	February 8, 2026
Function	Digital registry of all vaccinations; appointment reminders; due-list generation
AI role	Contributed significantly to achieving 99% coverage

How U-WIN Works:

- Beneficiary registered at birth/first antenatal visit
- Vaccination schedule auto-generated (BCG → OPV → DPT → Measles → etc.)
- SMS reminders to parents; ASHA workers use the app for household tracking
- Real-time data visible to district, state, and national health officials

MISSION INDRADHANUSH

Launched 2014 — intensified immunisation drive for children and pregnant women in underserved areas:

PHASE	COVERAGE
Mission Indradhanush (2014–17)	528 districts
Intensified MI (2017–18)	190 high-burden districts
Intensified MI 4.0 (2022–23)	Zero-dose children focus

Zero-dose children: Children who have not received even a single vaccine dose — focus of current drives. India had ~2.7 million zero-dose children (2023) — largest in the world before intensification.

VILLAGE HEALTH AND NUTRITION DAYS (VHNDs)

- Held monthly at Anganwadi centres
- ASHAs + ANMs administer vaccines + record in U-WIN
- Convergence platform: immunisation + nutrition + antenatal care in one visit

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS2 — Health Governance:

- Universal Health Coverage (UHC): immunisation as a cornerstone
- National Health Policy 2017: targets disease elimination
- Cervical cancer elimination target: WHO's 90-70-90 strategy (90% girls vaccinated by 15; 70% screened; 90% of cervical disease treated)

GS3 — Science & Technology:

- HPV vaccine: developed by Serum Institute (Cervavac — India's first indigenous HPV vaccine)
- Cervavac: quadrivalent HPV vaccine (types 6, 11, 16, 18); approved 2022; ₹200/dose (vs ₹3,000+ for imported)
- U-WIN: digital public infrastructure for health

GS4 — Ethics:

- Mandatory vs. voluntary vaccination debate
- Vaccine hesitancy: addressing community concerns ethically

Key Distinctions:

- U-WIN ≠ CoWIN: CoWIN was for COVID-19 vaccination only; U-WIN is for the entire UIP (permanent platform)
- UIP ≠ NHM: NHM is the broader health mission; UIP is the immunisation component
- Cervavac (SII) ≠ Gardasil (Merck, US): both HPV vaccines but different pricing and quadrivalent vs. bivalent formulations

FACTS CORNER

- HPV campaign launched: February 28, 2026, Ajmer; targets 1.15 crore adolescent girls
- India's cervical cancer: 80,000 new cases/year; 42,000 deaths/year; 25% of global deaths
- UIP coverage: 99%; 2.6 crore newborns + 2.9 crore pregnant women annually; 13 diseases
- U-WIN: 11.12 crore children + 3.78 crore pregnant women enrolled (Feb 2026)
- Cervavac: India's indigenous quadrivalent HPV vaccine (SII); approved 2022; ₹200/dose
- Mission Indradhanush: launched 2014; reached 528 districts; zero-dose children focus now
- WHO target: 90% girls vaccinated by 15 → eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem



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