India crosses 1 crore HPV vaccine doses in under nine months

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News

The Union Health Ministry said on 21 November 2026 that more than 1 crore HPV vaccine doses have been given to 14-year-old girls in under nine months (PIB, PTI). That is about 87% of the annual target cohort of about 1.2 crore girls (RGI 2021 estimates). Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the national campaign on 28 February 2026 (News On AIR, Gavi). The vaccine is given free, voluntarily, as a single dose and with parental consent at government health facilities; the quadrivalent vaccine Gardasil is used (News On AIR, Gavi). Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar have reached 100% coverage; Tamil Nadu is at 76.12%. The U-WIN platform provides real-time monitoring, beneficiary tracking and digital certificates. Assam (95.63%) and Uttarakhand (90.17%) are close behind, while Uttar Pradesh leads in numbers with 29.33 lakh girls (PIB). The 80-lakh-dose milestone was crossed earlier, in September 2026 (News On AIR).

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Milestone	Over 1 crore doses (under 9 months)
Announced by	Union Health Ministry, 21 Nov 2026
Beneficiaries	Girls aged 14
Annual target	About 1.2 crore; ~87% reached

Point	Details
Launch	28 February 2026, PM Modi
Vaccine	Gardasil – quadrivalent, single dose, free
100% States	Gujarat, UP, AP, Mizoram, MP, Bihar
Tamil Nadu	76.12%
Monitoring	U-WIN platform

Background

- Science: HPV (human papillomavirus) is the most common sexually transmitted viral infection. Most infections clear on their own, but persistent infection with high-risk types causes cervical cancer. Types 16 and 18 cause about 70% of cervical cancers (WHO); types 6 and 11 cause genital warts. A quadrivalent vaccine protects against all four.
- Health burden: India accounts for over one-fifth of the world's cervical cancer deaths, with over 1.2 lakh new cases and about 80,000 deaths a year (GLOBOCAN 2022, Gavi). Vaccination works best before exposure, at a young age – hence the choice of 14-year-old girls.
- Global goal: in August 2020 the World Health Assembly adopted the global strategy to eliminate cervical cancer. The '90-70-90' targets for 2030: 90% of girls fully vaccinated by age 15; 70% of women screened with a high-performance test by 35 and again by 45; 90% of women with pre-cancer treated. Elimination means an incidence below 4 per 1,00,000 women a year (WHO).
- Economy and governance: public health is in the State List, but in this national campaign the Centre supplies the vaccine and States deliver it through schools and health facilities. The U-WIN platform, built on the CoWIN experience, keeps digital records.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's 2025–26 Budget (March 2025) announced HPV vaccination for 14-year-old girls to prevent cervical cancer (TN Budget Speech 2025-26). PIB (21 Nov 2026) names Tamil Nadu, with Bihar and Sikkim, as a State whose own initiative was integrated with the national campaign. Tamil Nadu has reached 76.12% of its target – below the national 87% – against Keralam's 77.02%, Karnataka's 93.16% and Telangana's 95.28% (PIB, PTI).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Milestone: Over 1 crore doses (under 9 months); Announced by: Union Health Ministry, 21 Nov 2026; Beneficiaries: Girls aged 14; Annual target: About 1.2 crore; ~87% reached.

What is the background to this news?

Science: HPV (human papillomavirus) is the most common sexually transmitted viral infection. Most infections clear on their own, but persistent infection with high-risk types causes cervical cancer.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. In 'HPV', the virus linked to cervical cancer, what does the letter 'P' stand for?

A) Polio

B) Papilloma

C) Parvo

D) Pox

Answer: B – Explanation: Human papillomavirus – it causes warts; persistent infection with high-risk types can lead to cancer.

2. From which city did the PM launch the national HPV vaccination drive for 14-year-old girls on 28 Feb 2026?

A) Varanasi

B) Jaipur

C) Bhopal

D) Ajmer

Answer: D – Explanation: Ajmer (Rajasthan). At launch about 1.15 crore girls a year were targeted (News On AIR, 27 Feb 2026); the Ministry now uses about 1.2 crore (RGI 2021). Free at government centres.

3. Which two HPV types cause most cases of cervical cancer?

A) 6 and 11

B) 31 and 33

C) 16 and 18

D) 45 and 52

Answer: C – Explanation: Types 16 and 18 cause about 70% of cervical cancers (WHO). Types 6 and 11 cause genital warts.

4. Which digital platform provides real-time monitoring, beneficiary tracking and digital certificates in the national HPV vaccination campaign?

A) CoWIN

B) eVIN

C) U-WIN

D) eSanjeevani

Answer: C – Explanation: U-WIN – built on the CoWIN experience, it keeps digital records of immunisation. eVIN tracks vaccine stocks and the cold chain; eSanjeevani is a telemedicine service.

5. In WHO's '90-70-90' targets for 2030, what does the first '90' refer to?

A) Girls vaccinated by 15

B) Women screened by 35

C) Pre-cancer treated

D) Awareness of HPV

Answer: A – Explanation: 90% of girls fully vaccinated by 15. 70% – screening; the last 90% – treatment. Goal: <4 per 1 lakh women.

Sources: PIB – Health Ministry, 21 Nov 2026 – pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2339423; PMIndia, 28 Feb 2026 (Ajmer launch); PTI/ThePrint; News On AIR; Gavi; WHO; TN Budget Speech 2025-26 – tnbudget.tn.gov.in. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.