



Army firm on defending Doklam

NEW DELHI: The army is ready for a long haul in holding onto its position in the Doklam area near the Bhutan tri-junction, notwithstanding China's rhetoric against India demanding withdrawal of its troops.

The Indian soldiers deployed in the disputed area have pitched in tents, in an indication that they are unlikely to retreat unless there was reciprocity from China's People's Liberation Army in ending the face-off at an altitude of around 10,000 feet in the Sikkim Section. A steady line of supplies is being maintained for the soldiers at the site, official sources said.

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Govt launches 32 edu channels to help medical, engg aspirants

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Thousands of engineering and medical aspirants may now prepare for their entrance examinations from home with the Centre launching four satellite television channels on Sunday.

The channels will offer tutorials by subject experts in physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology.

President Pranab Mukherjee also launched 28 other direct-to-home (DTH) satellite channels for school and higher education along with a national academic depository (NAD) for safe storage, retrieval and digital verification of the degrees,

diplomas, and other academic records of the country's students.

He also operationalised India's own massive open online courses (Moocs) platform — 'Swayam' — to cater to the educational needs of the masses.

While all the 32 educational channels will be aired 24x7 on Dish TV under the brand name of 'Swayam Prabha', channels dedicated to help students prepare for entrance test for engineering and medical colleges will be aired under the IIT-Pal. All channels will air four hours of fresh content which will be repeated five times in a day.

The IIT-Pal channels will be

managed by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and subject teachers from various IITs and other reputed institutions of higher education will conduct the live and interactive classes. Students can view the programmes on their television or on their mobile phones and even ask questions, if they have any.

The Swayam will hold virtual classes for 29 subjects taught at secondary and senior secondary level, 210 undergraduate courses and 192 post-graduate courses in various streams, including engineering and management.

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Centre launches 32 educational channels

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It will also offer 14 certificate courses and three diploma programmes online in a classroom environment. Anyone can undertake the online courses from any where in India free of cost.

However, those willing to get certificates, diploma or a degree through Swayam will have to get registered on its portal and pay "a little fee" for pursuing the courses.

At the end of each course, there will be an assessment of the students through proctored examination and the marks/grades secured in this examination will be transferred to the academic record of the students.

In case of the students enrolled to universities and colleges, the marks and grades will be transferred to their parent institution for award of de-

gree, diploma or other certificates.

Addressing the function, the President called upon the university vice chancellors and heads of other institutions to adopt all these digital initiatives taken by the Centre for the benefit of the students.

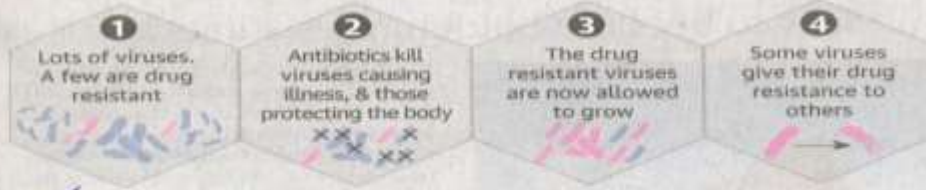
He also asked them to use both Swayam Prabha and Swayam for improving the teaching capacity of their institutions.

Vice chancellors of over 700 universities attended the event.

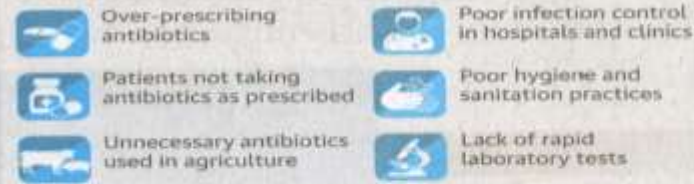
"With these technological initiatives, we will reach out to each student. The Moocs will be open to foreign students also. Indian and foreign employers as well as institutions can verify academic records of a candidate just at a click of the mouse," HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

DH News Service

How antibiotic resistance occurs



Causes of antibiotic resistance



Failure to address the problem of antibiotic resistance could result in

10 million deaths by 2050

SOURCE: CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION

Easier access to H1N1 medicines raises fears of drug resistance

Doctors feel misuse will lead to a situation of anti-viral medications turning ineffective

JYOTI SHELAR
MUMBAI

Concerns regarding a build-up of resistance to antiviral drugs used to treat swine flu are surfacing, after two such drugs - Oseltamivir and Zanamivir - were taken off the restrictive Schedule X of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules. Now under Schedule H1, the drugs can be stocked by all chemists.

Central health authorities have also advised doctors to prescribe the drugs based on strong symptoms, without opting for the swab test. Medical experts say these decisions could lead to misuse and eventually, severe drug resistance.

Oseltamivir and Zanamivir are antiviral drugs that block the actions of influenza virus types A and B in the body. While Oseltamivir is available as tablets, Zanamivir comes in powder form.

Dr. Vasant Nagvekar, a Mumbai-based infectious diseases expert, said, "We are already witnessing antibiotic resistance and related hazards. Resistance built up only because antibiotics were easily available and even sold over the counter. Now, we seem to be going the same way with antiviral drugs."

His reaction to the government's decision was mixed.

On the trail of H1N1

A look at the causes and management of H1N1

What is H1N1?
Commonly known as swine flu, H1N1 is a respiratory disease caused by Type A influenza known as H1N1 (A). It is an airborne infection.

Watch out for:
Nasal congestion, sore throat, high grade fever, cough, breathlessness, body ache, vomiting, and diarrhoea

Treatment:
Oseltamivir is the medicine that works against H1N1. It is available under various brand names like Tamiflu, Antiflu etc.

At risk

- Pregnant women
- Children below six years
- Senior citizens
- Patients with co-morbid conditions

"It is good, because when H1N1 cases are on the rise, the drug will be available to patients easily. However, it could backfire because in India, we don't use caution. The doctors will prescribe these drugs so widely that eventually it will stop working."

Restrictions in place

Drugs under Schedule X require three copies of prescription for the doctor, patient and chemist, and can

be sold by a chemist who holds a special Schedule X licence. Also, the chemist has to preserve the prescription copy for up to three years. In Schedule H1, only one copy of the prescription is required, and drugs in this category can be sold by all chemists.

Hakim Kapasi, a chemist and wholesaler from Andheri, said, "Chemists will still need a prescription to sell the drug. The only difference is, the drug will be

widely available. It all depends on doctors now. If they prescribe the drug with caution, there won't be misuse."

Till date this year, India has recorded over 11,700 H1N1 cases and 561 deaths.

Dr. Khusrav Bajan, a physician and intensivist at Hinduja Hospital, said, "Bacteria mutate much faster than viruses, so I don't think resistance should be a cause of concern when there is a spurt in H1N1 cases."

Gonorrhoea gets difficult to treat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization (WHO) has said antibiotic resistance is making gonorrhoea, a sexually-transmitted disease, "much harder and sometimes impossible" to treat, citing data from 77 countries, including India.

The global health body said every year, an estimated 35.2 million people were infected by the disease in the WHO's Western Pacific Region and 11.4 million in the southeast Asian Region, which includes India. Asked if India was a part of the 77 countries, the WHO, Geneva, replied, "India is part of the 77 countries and has been co-ordinating with the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in gonorrhoea in South East Asia Region".

"The bacteria that cause gonorrhoea are particularly smart. Every time we use a new class of antibiotics to treat the infection, the bacteria evolve to resist them," said Dr. Teodora Wi, Medical Officer, Human Reproduction, WHO.