

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



Index

Sr. No.	Topic
1.	SKOCH Gold Award 2025
2.	New Commercial LPG Distribution Policy Implemented in Rajasthan
3.	Central Ground Water Board Report
4.	Expansion of EV Charging Network in Rajasthan
5.	For the First Time in Rajasthan, CD Ratio Crosses 100%
6.	10% Increase in Honorarium for Pramukhs, Pradhans, and Sarpanchs in Rajasthan
7.	'Udaan Yatri Cafe' Launched at Jaipur Airport
8.	Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)
9.	Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report
10.	Payment Vision 2028
11.	Report on the Production and Availability of Oilseeds and Pulses
12.	Impact of the Iran War on Agriculture
13.	India–Nepal Relations
14.	Group of Seven (G-7)
15.	Bab-el-Mandeb Strait
16.	Shigellosis

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SKOCH Gold Award 2025



Why in News?

- The 'Food and Nutrition Security Analysis Dashboard'—developed by the State's Directorate of Economics and Statistics—and the 'Samriddhi Apartment Scheme' of the Rajasthan Housing Board have been honored with the prestigious SKOCH Gold Award 2025.



Key Points:

- **Time and Venue:** This honor was conferred during the SKOCH Summit held on March 28, 2025, at the National Habitat Centre in New Delhi.

--2--

Other Key Highlights:

- **Food and Nutrition Security Analysis Dashboard:** This dashboard presents a district-wise assessment of the status of food and nutrition security within the state. Developed on globally established standards, this platform provides policymakers and administrative officials with accurate and detailed analysis, thereby facilitating the effective implementation of various schemes. The dashboard was launched by Chief Minister Shri Bhajanlal Sharma in the year 2024.
- **Rajasthan Housing Board:** Over the past two years, the Board has received several accolades, including the IBC Award for the Fountain Square Park and Exposition Ground; a 5-Star Rating Award from the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)—under the Ministry of Power, Government of India—for the Board's headquarters; an award from NAREDCO for the Board's 'Mahi Scheme'; and an award from the Indian Concrete Institute for 'SS Residency'.

New Commercial LPG Distribution Policy Implemented in Rajasthan

Why in News?

- The Department of Food and Civil Supplies has issued a new policy regarding the allocation of commercial LPG gas. This step has been taken to reorganize gas supplies that were disrupted due to international conflicts (specifically in West Asia).



Key Points:

- Under the new policy, LPG (Commercial) allocation will be prioritized as follows:
 - Educational Institutions and Hospitals: 100% supply.
 - Hotels, Restaurants, Dhabas, and Dairies: 60%
 - Industrial Consumers: 40%
 - Other Non-Domestic Non-Essential (NDNE) Consumers: 50%

--:4::--

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



o Religious Events, Weddings, etc.: 50%

- Migrant workers and food carts will be provided with 5-kilogram cylinders (up to a maximum of two).
- 100% supply will continue for government institutions, schools and colleges, messes of security forces, etc.
- LPG allocation will be determined based on the average consumption recorded between April 2025 and February 2026.
- Registration with an oil and gas company distributor is mandatory for all commercial consumers. LPG cylinders will not be supplied without registration.
- If a PNG pipeline is available in a consumer's area, they must first register with the City Gas Distribution (CGD) company and apply for a PNG connection. They will be permitted to use commercial LPG cylinders until they receive the PNG connection.
- This rule will not apply to any commercial consumer utilizing LPG in a process where it cannot be substituted by natural gas, or to those located in areas where a PNG pipeline is not available.
- In the event of a surplus of LPG in any district, a district-level committee—chaired by the District Collector—will decide on the allocation of the surplus, based on local requirements.
- The objective of this policy is to ensure a transparent, balanced, and priority-based system for gas distribution.

--5:--

Central Ground Water Board Report

Why in News?

- According to a report by the Central Ground Water Board, an increase in groundwater levels has been recorded in 76 percent of locations in Rajasthan compared to the previous year, while water levels have declined in 24 percent of areas; this development is expected to help address the water crisis and issues regarding water availability.



Key Points:

Groundwater levels rose in 67.2 percent of locations-

1. **Lowest increase (0.01 meters)** – Recorded in Arjana (Jaisalmer) and Binjawari (Bikaner).
2. **Highest increase (37.66 meters)** – Recorded in Saypur Pakhar (Dausa).
3. **Increase of less than 2 meters recorded in 41.6 percent of locations** (primarily in the eastern region of the state).
4. **Increase of more than 4 meters recorded in 12.9 percent of locations** – Spanning the eastern, south-western, north-eastern, and central parts of the state.

--6:--

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



Decline:

1. **A decline was recorded in 32.8 percent of locations** (primarily in the western, northern, and north-eastern regions).
 2. **Minimum decline (0.02 meters)** – Recorded in Ramsinghpura (Sri Ganganagar).
 3. **Maximum decline (31.73 meters)** – Recorded in Dhod (Sikar).
 4. **A decline of less than 2 meters** was recorded in 22.9 percent of locations – Primarily in the western districts.
- **Highest groundwater level** – Koshithal (Bhilwara) – Located just 0.01 meters below the surface.
 - **Lowest groundwater level** – Abhaysinghpura (Bikaner) – Located at a depth of 162 meters below the surface.

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--7--

Expansion of EV Charging Network in Rajasthan

Why in News?

- Amidst the global oil crisis and the potential rise in petrol and diesel prices, Rajasthan is actively promoting Electric Vehicles (EVs). To address the shortage of charging infrastructure, a charging network is being established on a large scale, comprising 5,000 new charging stations, with charging facilities available every 300–500 meters.



Key Points:

- Number of EVs in Rajasthan:** Approximately 2.5–3 lakh
- New Registrations in January 2026:** 6,252 electric two-wheelers
- Current Public Charging Stations:** 1,531 (as of July 2025)
- New Initiative:** Target to install 5,000 new charging stations across the state
- To make Charging facilities available every 300–500 meters within cities.
- Stations to be located along highways, in parking areas, commercial complexes, and public spaces.
- Initial Rollout in Major Cities:** Jaipur, Alwar, Kota, Bhilwara, Bharatpur
- National EV Market:** 2024: \$2.36 billion; 2033: Projected to exceed \$164 billion; Sales in 2025: 19.7 lakh EVs (16.9% growth)

--8:--

For the First Time in Rajasthan, CD Ratio Crosses 100%

Why in News?

- For the first time in Rajasthan's 83-year banking history, the total credit extended by banks has exceeded their total deposits. Consequently, the Credit-Deposit (CD) Ratio has reached 100.7%. This development reflects an increased demand for funds across trade, agriculture, and infrastructure sectors, while also highlighting the need for effective risk management.



Key Points:

- **In the Year 2024:**
 - **Total Deposits:** ₹7.26 Lakh Crore
 - **Total Credit:** ₹7.16 Lakh Crore
 - **CD Ratio:** 98.60%
- **In the Year 2025:**
 - **Deposits:** ₹8.05 Lakh Crore (10.8% Growth)
 - **Credit:** ₹8.10 Lakh Crore (13.16% Growth)
 - **CD Ratio:** 100.7%
- **Significance of the CD Ratio:**
 - **Ideal CD Ratio:** 70–75% (As per RBI guidelines)
 - A CD Ratio exceeding 100% indicates a heightened demand for funds across trade, agriculture, and infrastructure sectors.
 - **Risk:** Potential liquidity shortages within banks and an increase in the cost of borrowing.

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



■ Per Capita Figures (September 2025):

- Per Capita Deposits: ₹86,383
- Per Capita Credit: ₹78,023
- Income: ₹1,85,053

■ Sectoral Distribution:

- **Public Sector Banks:** Higher credit disbursement in urban areas; lower in rural areas.
- **Private Sector Banks:** Credit exceeds deposits (1.8x) in rural and semi-urban areas.
- **Cooperative Banks:** Credit exceeds deposits (1.25x).
- **Small Finance Banks:** Credit stands at 112.88% relative to deposits.

Highest CD Ratios (in percentage)	Low CD Ratio (in percentage)
Barmer – 339.77	Salumbar – 71.21
Hanumangarh – 186.19	Bharatpur – 71.09
Bhilwara – 154.30	Rajsamand – 71.01
Jaisalmer – 145.68	Dungarpur – 62.09
Pratapgarh – 145.60	Sirohi – 55.40

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10% Increase in Honorarium for Pramukhs, Pradhans, and Sarpanchs in Rajasthan

Why in News?

- The Government of Rajasthan has increased the honorarium of Panchayat representatives to facilitate their work and ease their livelihood. Since last year, former Sarpanchs have been serving as administrators in Gram Panchayats; however, they will not receive any honorarium.



Key Points:

- **New Honorarium for Sarpanchs:** ₹7,347
- **New Honorarium for Pradhans:** ₹12,858
- **New Honorarium for District Pramukhs:** ₹18,368
- **Beneficiaries:** The heads of 12 District Councils (Zila Parishads) and the Pradhans of 78 Panchayat Samitis.
- **Former Sarpanchs:** Serving as administrators in Gram Panchayats, but will not receive any honorarium.

-:11:-

'Udaan Yatri Cafe' Launched at Jaipur Airport

Why in News?

- Jaipur International Airport has launched the state's first 'Udaan Yatri Cafe' to provide affordable and convenient food services to passengers.



Key Points:

- The cafe was e-inaugurated by the Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu.
- **Objective:** To provide affordable and economical food and beverage facilities to common passengers at the airport (starting at just ₹10).



Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)



Why in News?

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has recently granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for proposals worth ₹2.38 lakh crore, including five additional S-400 missile systems.



Key Points:

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC):

- It serves as the apex body for strategic defence acquisition planning and oversight.
 - **Chairperson:** Union Defence Minister.
 - **Functions:** To grant in-principle approval for capital acquisitions and to monitor the progress of major projects.
- ##### S-400 Air Defence System:
- A long-range surface-to-air missile system.
 - **Target Capability:** Shoots down aircraft, cruise missiles, drones, and ballistic missiles within a range of up to 400 km.
 - It can engage 36 targets simultaneously.

Economic Developments

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report

Why in News?

- The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report, 2025 (January 2025 – December 2025) has been released.

PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY



Key Points:

- The Periodic Labour Force Survey was first launched in 2017. The report for this survey is released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- Effective from the year 2025, the survey period has been changed from the Agricultural Year (July–June) to the Calendar Year (January–December).

Key Indicators:

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** The percentage of individuals in the population who are part of the labour force.

--:14:--

- **Worker-Population Ratio (WPR):** The percentage of individuals in the population who are employed.
- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** The percentage of unemployed individuals among those included in the labour force.
- **Activity Status – Usual Status:** Determined based on work or activity during a reference period of the 365 days immediately preceding the date of the survey.
- **Activity Status – CWS (Current Weekly Status):** Determined based on work or activity during a reference period of the 7 days immediately preceding the date of the survey.

Key Highlights of the Report

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** For individuals aged 15 years and above, this rate stood at 59.3% (Male participation: 79.1%; Female participation: 40%).
- Among men, 69.8% cited the desire to continue their studies as the primary reason for not being in the labour force, whereas among women, 44.4% cited personal commitments related to childcare/domestic duties as the main reason.
- **Worker-Population Ratio (WPR):** For individuals aged 15 years and above, the overall WPR is 57.4% (76.6% for men and 38.8% for women).
- **Unemployment Rate:** For individuals aged 15 years and above, the unemployment rate stood at 3.1% (Rural: 2.4%; Urban: 4.8%).
- **Share of Self-Employed Individuals:** A gradual decline was recorded from 2023 (58.2%) to 2025 (56.2%).
- **Sector-wise Employment:** The agricultural sector remains the largest employer, although its share of total employment declined from 44.8% in 2024 to 43% in 2025.

Payment Vision 2028

Why in News?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced 'Payment Vision 2028'. This vision outlines a roadmap to strengthen and expand India's digital payment ecosystem.



Key Points:

Key Focus Areas of Payment Vision 2028

- **Enhancing Cross-Border Digital Payments:** The vision proposes exploring the feasibility of a 'Single-Window Authorization' process under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) to facilitate international payments via digital channels.
- **Interoperability of Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS):** Integration across various payment platforms will be promoted to enhance efficiency in providing financing to MSMEs.

--:16:--

- **Proposed Initiatives:** Measures such as a "Switch On/Off" facility, a Payments Switching Service (PaSS), and a Uniform Domestic Legal Entity Identifier (DLEI) will be implemented.

India's Digital Payment Ecosystem

- **Global Leader:** Approximately 50% of the world's real-time digital payments are processed in India.

Key Initiatives:

- **Expansion of Digital Infrastructure:** The Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system was introduced in 2004. Subsequently, the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT), Electronic Clearing Services (ECS), and the Cheque Truncation System (CTS) were also introduced.
- **Provision of Institutional Framework:** The Department of Payment and Settlement Systems (DPSS) was constituted under the RBI in 2005. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) was established in 2008.
- **Regulatory Framework:** The Payment and Settlement Systems (PSS) Act, 2007, was enacted. This Act granted the RBI the statutory authority to regulate payment systems.
- **Introduction of Transformative Digital Payment Platforms:** Systems such as the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), and Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS) were introduced.
- **Expansion of the Digital Payments Market:** Licenses for Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) were granted and expanded. The Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) was introduced to enable MSMEs to receive payments expeditiously. Master Directions regarding Payment Aggregators were issued.

Report on the Production and Availability of Oilseeds and Pulses

Why in News?

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee has released a report on the "Production and Availability of Oilseeds and Pulses in the Country."



Key Points:

Oilseeds

Significance:

- **Economic Basis:** After food grains, oilseeds constitute the second-largest produce in the agricultural sector. They are cultivated on 14.3% of India's total cropped area.
- **Nutritional Security Basis:** These crops provide 12–13% of dietary energy and supply essential fats.

--:18:--

- Per capita consumption of edible oil in India has risen from 9.85 kg during 1996–2006 to 20.3 kg in 2022–23.
- **In Addressing Hidden Hunger:** Being rich in fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K), oilseeds help in combating micronutrient deficiencies and malnutrition.
- **Farmers' Livelihood Basis:** These are significant cash crops, primarily grown in rain-fed regions.
- **Production:** India is the fourth-largest producer of oilseeds globally. It ranks first in the production of castor, sesame, safflower, and niger; second in groundnut; and third in mustard-rapeseed.

Challenges:

- Low productivity.
- Limited adoption of High-Yielding Varieties (HYVs).
- Inadequate Seed Replacement Rate (SRR).
- The Seed Replacement Rate (SRR) refers to the percentage of the total cropped area where certified/quality seeds are sown, rather than seeds saved from the previous harvest.
- India imports 56% of its edible oil requirements, leaving it vulnerable to the impact of global price volatility and supply disruptions.

Committee Recommendations for Boosting Oilseed Production

- **The PM-AASHA scheme** should be revamped, and procurement under it at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) should be expanded from the current 25% to cover 100% of the national oilseed production.
- **The implementation of the “National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm”** should be accelerated. Additionally, adequate Viability Gap Payment should be provided for Fresh Fruit Bunches, and a subsidy of up to 80% should be offered on the cost of planting material.

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



- "Price-gap" refers to a situation where the market price of a crop falls below the Minimum Support Price.
- Substantial investment should be directed toward biotechnology—including CRISPR-Cas9, Marker-Assisted Selection, etc.—to facilitate the development of climate-resilient, high-yielding, and pest-resistant crop varieties.
- By the year 2030, at least one seed center should be established in every district of the country, and the SATHI portal should be expanded to cover all 36 States/Union Territories by 2027.

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Impact of the Iran War on Agriculture

Why in News?

- War in the Middle East region and disruptions to supplies passing through the Strait of Hormuz have posed a threat to global agriculture includes.



Key Points:

Impact of the War on Agriculture:

- Disruptions in the Fertilizer Supply Chain:** The Middle East region is a critical hub for the production and export of essential agricultural chemicals, including ammonia, urea, phosphates, and sulfur. It has got disturbed
- Increase in Agricultural Input Costs:** A surge is seen in the prices of key fertilizer products.
- Global Food Price Inflation:** Rising energy and fertilizer prices directly increase production costs. This leads to higher consumer food prices and raises concerns regarding global food affordability.



INTERNATIONAL



India–Nepal Relations



Why in News?

- The Prime Minister of India congratulated Mr. Balendra Shah on assuming the office of Prime Minister of Nepal and expressed a desire to strengthen India-Nepal friendship and cooperation.



Key Points:

Nepal's Significance for India

- **Strategic and Security Importance:** It serves as a buffer state between India and China and secures India's northern frontier.

-:22:-

- Under India's "Neighborhood First" Policy: Nepal is crucial for regional stability and cooperation, and it shapes India's engagement with BIMSTEC.
- **Economic Influence in the Region:** India is Nepal's largest trading partner.
- **Water Resource Management:** Nepal's rivers are vital for ensuring water security in India (Water Management and Flood Control).
- **Military Cooperation:** The Gorkha Regiments of the Indian Army symbolize the strong military cooperation and mutual trust between the two nations.
- **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:** The historical and cultural bonds between the two countries are deep-rooted and robust (the "Roti-Beti" relationship).

Challenges in India-Nepal Bilateral Relations

- **Border Disputes:** Disputes regarding Kalapani, Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura, and Susta remain unresolved.
- **Concerns over China's Influence:** Relations between Nepal and China are strengthening. For instance, Nepal's participation in China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- **Water-Sharing Disputes:** Issues regarding the Mahakali, Kosi, and Gandak river water treaties surface periodically.
- **Delays in Implementing Hydropower Projects:** Projects such as Pancheshwar, Arun-III, Upper Karnali, etc., are facing delays in completion.
- **Issues Related to the Open Border:** This facilitates illicit trade and smuggling, thereby giving rise to security concerns for India.

Group of Seven (G-7)

Why in News?

- The G-7 has issued a communiqué regarding the conflict in the Middle East, calling for an immediate cessation of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure.

G7 members



Key Points:

G-7:

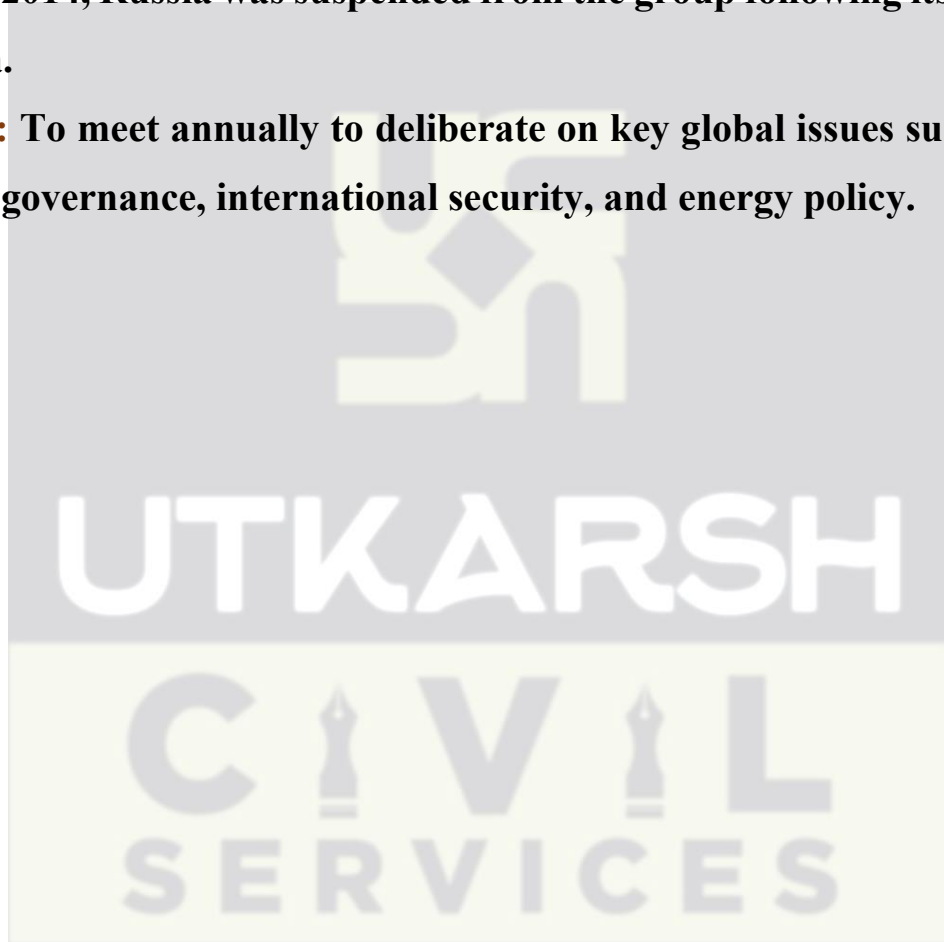
- **Establishment:** In 1975, in response to the energy crisis, to foster economic and financial cooperation.
- **Nature:** An informal group of industrialized democratic nations.

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



- **Members:** France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, the United States, and Canada.
- Russia was a member from 1998 to 2014. During that period, the forum was known as the G-8.
- In March 2014, Russia was suspended from the group following its occupation of Crimea.
- **Objective:** To meet annually to deliberate on key global issues such as global economic governance, international security, and energy policy.



-:25:-

Bab-el-Mandeb Strait

Why in News?

- Amidst the escalating crisis in West Asia, Iran has threatened to weaponize the strategic Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, alongside the Strait of Hormuz.

Key Points:

- Role of Non-State Actors:** In Yemen, the Iran-backed Houthis are geographically and militarily capable of creating disruptions in the Red Sea and the Bab-el-Mandeb, thereby effectively extending the scope of the conflict far beyond the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.



Daily Current Affairs

Date : 30 March 2026



- **Bab-el-Mandeb Strait:** This is a narrow maritime passage situated between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa.
- It connects the Red Sea—located to the northwest—with the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea/Indian Ocean, situated to the southeast.
- **Bordering Nations:** It separates Yemen from Djibouti and Eritrea.
- **Major Island:** The strait is 32 km wide and is divided into two channels by the island of Perim, which belongs to Yemen.
- The Bab-el-Mandeb Strait serves as the sole gateway for entering the Red Sea from the Indian Ocean; it connects to the Suez Canal, thereby forming a vital trade route between Asia and Europe.
- Approximately 10–12% of global trade and about 30% of global container traffic pass through this strait.
- When a threat looms over this strait, global shipping companies are compelled to divert their vessels around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. This results in an additional delay of 10 to 14 days in transit time, significantly driving up global freight rates and insurance costs, and ultimately leading to inflation.

-:27:-

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Shigellosis

Why in News?

- A case of a Shigellosis, or Shigella infection, outbreak has been reported in Kerala.



Key Points:

Shigellosis:

- **Nature:** A highly contagious disease caused by Shigella bacteria.
- **Transmission:** Via the fecal-oral route, through contaminated food or water, or through close contact with an infected person.
- **Symptoms:** Acute diarrhea (often bloody), fever, cramps.
- **High-risk groups:** Children under the age of five and individuals with compromised immune systems.
- **Concerns:** Rising antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the unavailability of any approved vaccine.
- **Prevention:** Hygiene, sanitation, safe food, and water.

--:28:--