

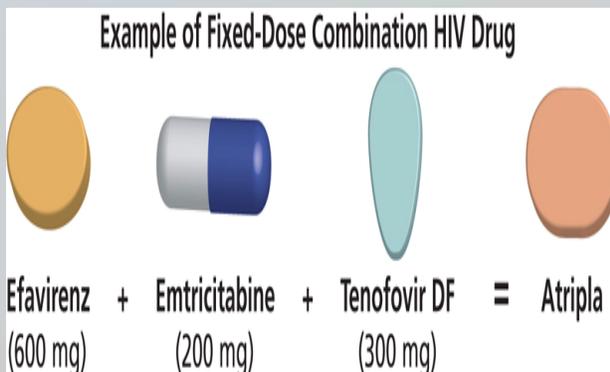
Current Affairs 9th December 2023 by Saurabh Pandey

Fixed dose combinations

- FDCs are combinations of one or more known drugs and can be useful in the treatment of some diseases since the combination can improve patient compliance.
- For instance, if a patient has to take three different medications for a particular treatment, she may forget to take one.
- But if all three medications are combined into one tablet or one syrup, the chance of her forgetting to take one or two of the drugs is reduced.



For diseases such as AIDS, it is well documented that FDCs have proven to be very useful in improving patient compliance, which at the end of day improves treatment outcomes.



Emerging issue

- Pharmaceutical companies in India use these FDCs to escape liability under multiple laws without much concern for public health.
- One such law is the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), under which the government fixes the prices of individual drugs.
- Since drug combinations were traditionally not covered under the DPCO, the pharmaceutical industry decided that making FDCs provided an easy way to escape the remit of the DPCO.
- the fact that because of the bewildering variety of FDCs being sold in the market, there were no standards set by bodies such as the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission for testing these drugs for quality of manufacture.
- The second advantage of going down the FDC route is that it gives individual companies a reason to charge higher prices for their drugs.
- In 1982, Parliament changed the law to give the central government the power to "prohibit" the manufacture of specific drugs that lack therapeutic value or justification.
- Later in that decade, in 1988, the central government amended the rules to introduce a new requirement for manufacturers of all "new drugs", including FDCs, to submit proof of safety and efficacy to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) who heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)

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- Despite the law being crystal clear on the issue, **State drug controllers have simply ignored the law** to continue issuing manufacturing licences for FDCs not approved by the DCGI with impunity.

Glacial lake outburst flooding- WMO Report

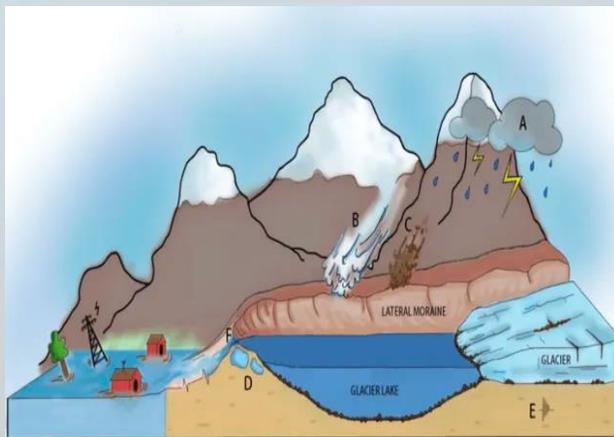


Figure-1: Illustrative graphic showing various reasons for GLOF occurrence
(A) Cloudburst (B) Snow avalanche (C) Landslide (D) Melting of ice in moraine
(E) Earthquake (F) Overflow

- The World Meteorological Organization's recent report, **"The Global Climate 2011-2020"**, gives a broad view of the planet's **response** to greenhouse gas emissions.
- In the section on the state of glacier health, it points out that, on average, **the world's**

glaciers thinned by approximately a metre a year from 2011 to 2020.

- When compared across decades, there is significant **regional variability**, but the overall pattern remains that **glaciers in all regions of the world are becoming smaller**



- In Africa, glaciers on the Rwenzori Mountains and Mount Kenya are projected to disappear by 2030, and those on Kilimanjaro by 2040.
- The report points to the **rapid growth of proglacial lakes and the likelihood of glacier lake outburst flood (GLOF)**, posing additional threats to ecosystems and livelihoods.
- The reports singled out how **"...water from glacial melt contributed to one of the decade's worst flooding disasters, the Uttarakhand floods of June 2013"**.

- The fury of a GLOF event was brought home this year by the **destruction of the Chungthang dam in Sikkim after the South Lhonak Lake flooded from a melting glacier**, triggering catastrophe downstream.
- Earlier this year, a separate report by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development found that the

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disappearance of glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalayas was “65% faster in the 2010s than in the previous decade”.

- At the current rate of global greenhouse gas emissions, which is expected to see temperatures increase by 2.5°3°C by the end of the century, the volume of glaciers is forecast to decline anywhere from 55% to 75%.
- This means sharp reductions in freshwater supply in the immediate vicinity of 2050.
- The sensitivity of glacier systems to warming underlines the need for their careful monitoring.
- Despite awareness of the risks posed by Himalayan glaciers there is no early warning system for the likelihood of GLOF events.
- Much like warnings before cyclones, floods and earthquakes, authorities must elevate threats from contracting glaciers to the same category of risk.
- Correspondingly, there is a need to make comprehensive risk assessments, map regions of vulnerability and commission infrastructure development with the highest standards of care.
- **The Hindu**

India and Sri Lanka

- the relationship between the two countries in the area of infrastructure development should have been much deeper than what it is.

- For example, the idea of connecting the electricity networks of the two countries was floated even in 1970.
- Over 13 years have lapsed since the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on the bilateral grid, but not even one unit of electricity has been transmitted.
- In the case of Bangladesh, India has been exporting at least 7,000 million units (MU) annually for the last couple of years. About a month ago
- Energy is not the only area where progress has been tardy.
- The India Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement was signed in December 1998, yet the two countries have not yet been able to go beyond it despite holding talks for years on entering into an economic and technology cooperation agreement
- In the area of tourism, which is a major source of revenue for Sri Lanka, India remained the largest single country of tourist arrivals, with its share being 17% of the overall number of arrivals. But, the potential is much high.
- The presence of anti- Indian nationalist forces in the political class is nothing unique to this country.

The Hindu

New draft of Global stocktake

- The latest draft of the Global Stocktake, one of the key documents being negotiated at the UN's climate summit in Dubai, has linked the tripling of renewable energy

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capacity with a “phase out”, or a time - bound ending, of the use of fossil fuels.

- Though by no means final and only offered as an “option”, it expresses a strong push by the leadership at the COP28 climate talks to move towards ending the fossil fuel economy.
- “Tripling renewable energy capacity globally by 2030 ensuring that the increase in renewable energy capacity is strategically implemented to displace fossil fuel based energy, thereby significantly reducing global reliance on nonrenewable and high emission energy sources,
- India’s position is to not support such a clause.
- Tripling capacity is fine but not with such conditions which are prescriptive in nature.
- The latest draft also does away with the clause calling for a “just and orderly phase out of fossil fuel” that appeared in the first version of the text on December 6.
- This has now been replaced with four pointed options demanding that fossil fuels responsible for 80% of greenhouse gas emissions be phased out in such a way that global temperatures do not rise more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100, and energy companies become fossil fuel free by mid-century.
- Here too, there’s an option for “no text”, meaning that all references to doing away with fossil fuels can be entirely deleted. The tripling of energy capacity was a clause that first came up formally in international agreements during the G20 summit in India.