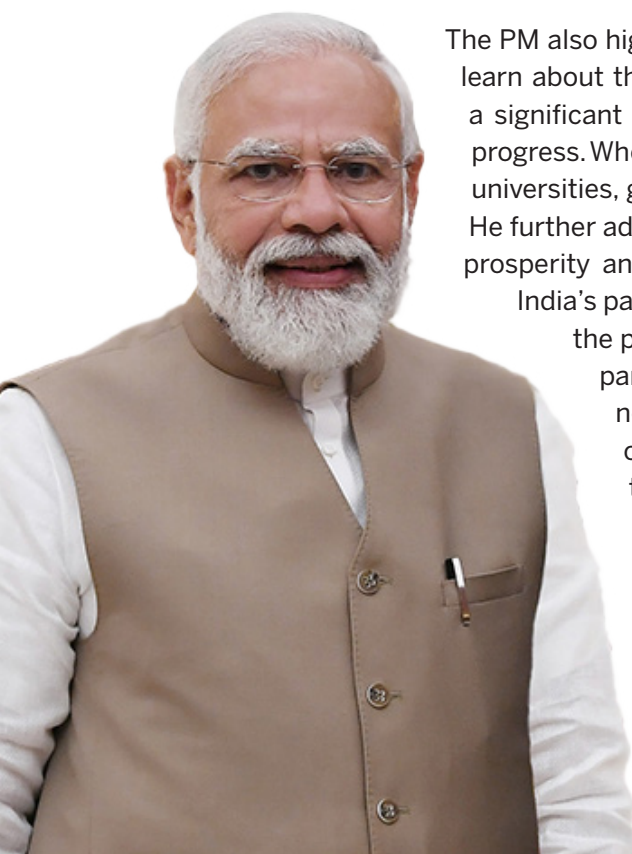


## PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI OUTLINES INDIA'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND SETS BIG TARGETS IN HIS 77<sup>TH</sup> INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH

On the 77<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation and shared various initiatives the central government has taken and will take in the upcoming years for the betterment of the nation.

In one of his longest speeches, PM Modi spoke on a range of issues. He expressed solidarity with Manipur and stressed the importance of peace, highlighting joint efforts by the central and state governments. He discussed India's progress, emphasizing the role of diversity and democracy in achieving national aspirations, as well as the impact of technology and the significant contributions of youth. He particularly emphasized the role of youth in propelling India to a notable position in the world's first three startup economy systems. The PM underscored the need for a strong government, welfare commitments, and efforts to combat rising prices. He recognized the empowerment of women in STEM fields and set a goal to create women entrepreneurs. Additionally, he extended support to those affected by extreme weather conditions, unveiled the Vishwakarma Yojana for traditional skills, and highlighted anti-corruption measures while criticizing nepotism in politics.



The PM also highlighted how the world is showing immense curiosity and is eager to learn about the nuances and the success of Digital India. Professionals today play a significant role in moving my nation forward, in taking India to new heights of progress. Whether they are scientists, engineers, doctors, nurses, teachers, scholars, universities, gurukuls, everyone is contributing their utmost to brighten the future. He further added that today India is becoming the voice of the Global South. India's prosperity and heritage are turning into opportunities for the world today. With India's participation in the global economy and the global supply chain, and with the place that India has earned for itself by playing a stellar role during the pandemic, guarantee of stability in the world. There are no 'ifs' or 'buts' now in our minds. The PM summed up his speech with a report card on the various developmental activities of the Government, support to farmers, youth, steps taken to build a stronger economy, MSME support, schemes to reduce poverty and unemployment, setting up of Jan Aushadhi Kendras for affordable medicines and establishment of new ministries for water, skill development and cooperatives. He ended his speech by saying that this period of Amrit Kaal till 1947 is a time of duty for all – where the resolution of 140 crore countrymen needs to be accomplished when the tricolor will be hoisted in 2047.

# INDIA SUCCESSFULLY HOSTED PRESTIGIOUS G20 LEADERS' SUMMIT ON 9<sup>TH</sup>–10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

The G20 Summit was successfully hosted by India on September 9 and 10 at the Bharat Mandapam International Exhibition and Convention Centre in New Delhi's Pragati Maidan, centered around the theme "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (One Earth, One Family, One Future). It addressed critical global issues, including food security, climate change, development, health, and digitalization, with prominent leaders like US President Joe Biden, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in attendance.

A significant development was India's push for the inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the G-20, enhancing the effectiveness of the group. The summit reached consensus on the New Delhi G20 Leadership Declaration, marking it as the most ambitious G20 summit to date, with 73 outcomes and 39 annexed documents. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed launching a G20 satellite mission for environment and climate observation, with the goal of assisting Global South countries. India also announced the 'Global Biofuel Alliance,' inviting all nations to join the initiative, promoting sustainable and eco-friendly energy sources. India, the US, and other major economies announced the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, aimed at boosting trade and infrastructure connectivity. G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant outlined the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, highlighting priorities such as strong, sustainable, and inclusive growth, advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), green development, modernizing multilateral institutions, and revitalizing multilateralism. Major G20 partners proposed plans to enhance trade, offering an alternative to China's infrastructure investments, including data, rail, electricity, and hydrogen pipeline projects.

The Delhi declaration outlined G20 healthcare goals under strengthening Global Health and Implementing One Health Approach. Primary focus would be on building more resilient, equitable, sustainable, and inclusive health systems to achieve Universal Health Coverage, implement One Health approach, enhance pandemic preparedness, strengthen existing infectious diseases surveillance systems, prioritise tackling Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), facilitate equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other medical countermeasures, promote and improve access to mental health services and psychosocial support.

During the event, several G20 members, including Japan, emphasized the importance of upholding the United Nations Charter and achieving a just and lasting peace in response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, recognizing its adverse impact on the global economy. Regarding climate and energy, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida emphasized the urgent need to implement the Paris Agreement's goals, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050 and peaking global greenhouse gas emissions by 2025. The UK under the PM, Rishi Sunak has stated its commitment to provide \$2 billion to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to help developing countries cope with climate change, This would be the biggest single funding commitment from UK to help the world tackle climate change. Overall, the summit showcased India's cultural influence and bolstered its global standing as the world's fastest growing economy.



## G20 HEALTH MINISTERS MEETING, GANDHINAGAR, GUJARAT



The fourth meeting of the G20 Health Working Group (HWG) took place in Gandhinagar from August 17th to August 19th, 2023. The meeting centered its discussions on three primary priorities: health emergency prevention, preparedness, and response, with a particular emphasis on antimicrobial resistance and the One Health framework; enhancing cooperation within the pharmaceutical sector, focusing on ensuring access and availability to safe, effective, high-quality, and affordable medical countermeasures, including vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; and promoting digital health innovations and solutions to support universal health coverage and enhance healthcare service delivery.

In addition to the G20 Deputies Meeting held on August 17, 2023, and the G20 Health Minister's Meeting on August 18th and 19th, 2023, there were four side events: One Earth One Health Advantage Health Care – India 2023, the WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit, India MedTech Expo 2023, and the 'Sustain, Accelerate, and Innovate to End TB in South-East Asia Region' Conference.

India's overarching goal is to build upon and consolidate health priorities and key takeaways from previous presidencies while emphasizing critical areas that require strengthening. Furthermore, India intends to lead discussions across various multilateral forums engaged in health cooperation and work towards a comprehensive, integrated approach. Mr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), participated in the meeting and highlighted that Gujarat will serve as a hub for traditional medicine. The Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH) will be a pivotal step towards promoting healthcare equity by harmonizing efforts and best practices, incorporating tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and giving consideration to ethics, policy, and governance. GIDH's mission is to ensure that no one is left behind in the quest for improved global health.

# NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER (PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT) REGULATION, 2023 – NOTIFIED BUT DEFERRED LATER

On 2 August, the National Medical Commission unveiled a comprehensive 60-page set of guidelines that addressed various aspects of medical practice. These guidelines were essentially updated, as the provisions existed in a scattered form previously. The new regulations compiled everything under one set of rules and punishments and penalties were also categorized and identified. The key highlight was generic prescriptions, where the right to prescribe branded drugs was taken away and discretion of doctors was replaced with the discretion of pharmacists. Further the notification outlined that doctors possess the authority to decline treatment to both patients and their relatives in cases of disruptive behavior, violence or abuse. Details were included on the appropriate use of social media by medical professionals, emphasizing that it should primarily serve educational purposes rather than patient solicitation.

The notification was met with widespread criticism by medical practitioners across the country calling it an irrational diktat issued without stakeholder consultations. On 23rd August, the NMC placed the guidelines on hold. While NMC and the Union health ministry did not give a reason for staying its previous notification, the move, according to people familiar with the matter, was triggered by protests by the medical fraternity against the clause that directed doctors to prescribe only generic medicines. The Indian Medical Association (IMA), the Federation of Resident Doctors Association and others had approached the Centre and Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, and raised apprehensions about the efficacy and quality of generic drugs. The National Medical Commission Registered Medical Practitioner (professional conduct) Regulations “are hereby held in abeyance with immediate effect,” the NMC said through a gazette notification, citing the need for “removal of doubts.”



# HARYANA GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES



Haryana's Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, made a significant announcement on August 12, 2023. He declared that families with annual incomes ranging from Rs 1.8 to 3 lakh are now eligible to benefit from the Ayushman Bharat Yojana. CM Khattar conveyed this news on Twitter and revealed that starting from the upcoming August 15, a portal will be accessible for card issuance under this program.

He further emphasized that while 30 lakh families in the state are already reaping the advantages of this scheme, an additional 8 lakh families will be incorporated into its coverage. Currently, the Ayushman Bharat Yojna, a scheme aimed at providing free health insurance for low-income families, is accessible to those with annual incomes below Rs 1,80,000. This initiative was originally launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.



# IIMA HEALTHCARE SUMMIT: 'CATALYZING INNOVATION - STARTUP ECOSYSTEM AND POLICY RESEARCH'

On August 5<sup>th</sup>, the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIM Ahmedabad) hosted the Healthcare Summit at its campus, focusing on the theme of 'Catalyzing Innovation - Startup Ecosystem and Policy Research'. The event was graced by the presence of Mr. Mansukh Mandaviya, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, who served as the Chief Guest. During his address, Mr. Mansukh Mandaviya underscored India's tremendous potential in the healthcare sector. He emphasized that, with the right strategic roadmap and active participation from both private and public service entities, coupled with the integration of startups and technology, India's healthcare system could experience comprehensive growth. He attributed this success to the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, highlighting the holistic approach taken by Shri Modi. The summit featured two panel discussions, one centered on a startup competition and the other dedicated to the presentation of research papers. These discussions aimed to foster collaboration among industry leaders, academics, researchers, and government officials, providing a common platform for knowledge exchange.

The event commenced with opening remarks by Mr. Bharat Bhasker, Director of IIM Ahmedabad, followed by the inaugural address delivered by Mr. Pankaj R Patel, Chairperson of IIMA Board of Governors. The valedictory speech was given by S Aparna, Union Secretary of the Pharmaceuticals Department. Among the distinguished attendees were Tarun Jain, Chairperson of the Centre for Management of Health Services (CMHS) at IIMA, and Viswanath Pingali, an Executive Member of CMHS and Associate Professor in Economics at IIMA, along with several prominent business leaders and alumni of IIMA.



# INDIA MEDTECH EXPO 2023

The India MedTech Expo 2023 took place at the Helipad Exhibition Centre in Gandhinagar from August 17th to August 19th. The theme of the event, 'Future Trends in MedTech for Geriatric and Home-Based Care,' showcased the transformative healthcare innovations driven by technology. The gathering drew a diverse audience, including representatives from government departments, foreign ambassadors, and leaders in the fields of medical technology, healthcare, and hospitals.

The session on elder care was presided over by Dr. Vinod Kumar Paul, a distinguished member of NITI Aayog, and skillfully moderated by Pavan Choudary, the head of the Medical Technology Association of India (MTAI). The event benefited from the participation of key policymakers from the National Health Authority (NHA), the Gujarat Department of Health and Family Welfare, and the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment. Notably, industry leaders from Antara Senior Living, ProTribe Senior Care Services Pvt. Ltd., Pristyn Care, Healthcare at Home, and Abbott Diabetes Care significantly enriched the discussions with their insights.

During the panel discussion, Dr. Vinod Kumar Paul, Member, NITI Aayog, highlighted the pressing concern that "the disability rate among individuals aged 60 and above has exceeded 10%," underscoring the critical need for comprehensive support mechanisms. He also emphasized the promising trajectory for the development of assistive medical devices tailored to senior living within this context. Dr. Paul further stressed the importance of the industry's efforts in addressing the specific healthcare needs of elderly women in India.



# LAUNCH OF DENGUE VACCINE BY 2026: INDIAN IMMUNOLOGICALS LIMITED (IIL)

Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL), a vaccine manufacturer company is expecting to launch a dengue fever vaccine by 2026. As per National Center for Vector Borne Diseases Control data, it was reported that there was a 33% surge in dengue cases from 2020-2021 and a 21% surge from 2021-2022. Mr. K Anand Kumar, Managing Director of IIL highlighted that the vaccine's early-stage trials were conducted on about 90 individuals, aged 18-50 years and no negative effects were found. The early-stage trials were performed to determine the safety factor and efficacy to a small extent. Serum Institute of India and Panacea Biotec - are the other two Indian companies apart from IIL that are working to develop a dengue vaccine.



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