

171 hospitals de-listed from PM’s health scheme after fraud

Private institutions found conducting procedures reserved for govt. units

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

The Centre’s ambitious healthcare insurance scheme – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) – under the National Health Authority (NHA) has noted that as per details provided by the States, more than 390 hospitals of the over 19,000 empanelled across nine States have been either served show cause notices, suspended, or de-empanelled, for alleged fraud.

Of these, 171 hospitals have been de-empanelled

and FIRs have been lodged against six hospitals in Uttarakhand and Jharkhand. The quantum of penalties levied on the listed hospitals is more than ₹4.6 crore.

Fake beneficiaries
“Close watch is also maintained on wrongful enrolment of beneficiaries; 3,785 Village Level Entrepreneurs (positioned at Common Service Centres) / Pradhan Mantri Arogya Mitras (positioned at PM-JAY empanelled hospitals) have been deactivated so far,” a senior NHA official

Case sheets

A look at some States where frauds were detected at various stages of implementation of the PM-JAY

Gujarat: Cases were detected in Aug. 2019 and shared with Gujarat State Health agency, which has disabled the cards. An FIR was lodged by State on Nov. 8, 2019

Madhya Pradesh: The cases were detected in August 2019 and shared with State, which has disabled the cards. The concerned hospital has been issued show-cause notice and penalty levied

Chhattisgarh: The initial cases were detected in May 2019 and shared with State, which has disabled the cards



Punjab: The cases were detected in Oct. 2019 and shared with State, which has disabled the cards

said on Saturday. The official confirmed that the National Anti-Fraud Unit (NAFU) at the NHA has de-

tected that the frauds, committed using e-cards on the basis of algorithms, developed internally.

The cover provided under the PM-JAY health insurance scheme is ₹5 lakh per family.

Abuse-prone packages
“There are certain packages which are reserved for government hospitals by the State authorities, and these are especially abuse prone. It was detected that private hospitals were performing these government-reserved procedures and blocking/submitting the same under a different package name or as a unspecified package. There is no package under the PM-JAY scheme which is free for government hospitals,” added the official.

However, the NHA main-

tained that responsibility for the closure action lies with the State health agencies.

Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab were among the States where frauds were detected at different stages of implementation of the PM-JAY.

“We have issued comprehensive set of anti-fraud guidelines from the time of launch of the scheme and as a safeguard, pre-authorisation is required for most packages ... All claims require mandatory supporting documents before approval and payment ... Almost all States have dedicated anti-fraud units now” the NHA official said.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over west Rajasthan. Dense fog likely at some parts over Uttar Pradesh, north Madhya Pradesh, east Rajasthan, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura during night/morning hours.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	10.4	26.0	15.0	Kozhikode	35.0	25.0	
Ahmedabad	25.0	12.0		Kurnool	32.0	22.0	
Aizawl				Lucknow	21.0	9.0	
Allahabad	19.0	14.0		Madurai	34.0	23.0	
Bengaluru	31.0	19.0		Mangaluru	32.0	21.0	
Bhopal				Mumbai			
Bhubaneswar	21.0	16.0		Mysuru	32.0	20.0	
Chandigarh	24.0	7.0		New Delhi	21.0	8.0	
Chennai	32.0	24.0		Patna	18.0	12.0	
Coimbatore	32.0	23.0		Port Blair	31.0	26.0	
Dehradun	19.0	5.0		Puducherry	32.0	22.0	
Gangtok	33.6	8.0	4.0	Pune	26.0	11.0	
Goa		31.0	19.0	Raipur	0.5	22.0	13.0
Guwahati				Ranchi	22.0	11.0	
Hubballi	29.0	17.0		Shillong			
Hyderabad				Shimla	10.0	1.0	
Imphal				Srinagar	7.0	3.0	
Jaipur	22.0	10.0		Thiruvananthapuram	34.0	25.0	
Kochi	32.0	25.0		Tiruchir	34.0	24.0	
Kohima	20.1	20.0	15.0	Vijayawada	15.0	30.0	23.0
Kolkata				Visakhapatnam	1.5	28.0	21.0

Pollutants in the air you are breathing						Yesterday
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	42	28	38	127	125	
Bengaluru	10	41	16	60	74	
Chennai	7	16	25	60		
Delhi	7	39	45	416	353	
Hyderabad	15	51	29	135	130	
Kochi	6	44	150	65	80	
Kolkata	12	250	25	273		
Lucknow	8	69	48	274	186	
Mumbai	76	30	82	161	117	
Pune	11	28	52	54	63	
Visakhapatnam						

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Research in India inadequate: C.N.R. Rao

Nobel winner calls for pathogen-specific drugs

‘Will help combat spread of resistance’

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

Concerns surrounding antibiotic use, including environmental hazards and the appearance of multi-drug resistant bacteria, can be minimised by designing antibiotics that are specific to each species of pathogen, instead of using the broad-range antibiotics that are currently favoured, Ada E. Yonath, winner of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2009, said here on Saturday. She was delivering a talk on eco-friendly antibiotics at the 107th Indian Science Congress.

“I have started work on degradable antibiotics that are effective only for the target pathogen. This will reduce environmental hazards and combat the spread of resistance,” Prof. Yonath, who is with the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel.

“The increasing appearance of multi-drug resistant strains, together with the negligible number of new antibiotic drugs that are presently undergoing development, is a big problem. We may soon revert back to the pre-antibiotic era, when



Ada E. Yonath

simple pathogens could cause very severe infections. This may result in a 3.8% loss in global economy by 2050. Something has to be done,” she said.

Later, speaking to *The Hindu*, Prof. Yonath said that the danger of antibiotics is the potential damage that they cause to the microbiome. Changes to the composition of the human microbiome can cause disease, she said. Most antibiotics are made up of small, toxic, organic molecules that cannot be digested and are expelled into the environment, she said.

“They are so small that most purification facilities cannot catch them, so they penetrate irrigation systems and eventually come back to us,” she said.



Exploring ideas: Students at an exhibition at the Indian Science Congress on Saturday.

■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

of peer reviewed science and engineering publications. It is also growing at a rate of about 10% as compared to global average of 4%,” he said on Friday.

Low citation rate
“I’m not worried about the quantity [of Indian publications], but quality is important. However in India we are doing well in neither the quantity nor the quality of science in what we should be doing,” said Mr. Rao.

Several studies of publication trends have shown that India’s share in the world research output hovers around 5%. But the rate of citations – the number of times these articles are cited and used as proxy for quality – is much lower at 2-3%.

Mr. Rao stressed that science didn’t require degrees but dedication and doggedness, and its future

lay with young people.

“Indian tradition worships *Lakshmi* and *Saraswati*. Praying to *Lakshmi* yielded money and was easy ... But *Saraswati* – or the Goddess of knowledge – is hard to please and required sincere dedication,” he said.

On Friday, Mr. Modi exhorted students to “innovate, patent, produce and prosper”.
The Children’s Science Congress saw students of several thousand schools converge at the University of Agricultural Science here to hear Nobel Laureates speak and watch science projects prepared by their peers. They were also shown projects by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, several labs of the Department of Science and Technology and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.

IN BRIEF



Passengers manhandle Air India cabin crew

NEW DELHI
Passengers in Delhi allegedly manhandled cabin crew members and threatened to break open the cockpit door of Air India’s Mumbai-bound Boeing 747 aircraft, after their flight on Thursday was delayed, said an airline official. PTI

Congress ties 60,000 deaths to Delhi pollution

NEW DELHI
Delhi Congress chief Shubhash Chopra said on Saturday that over 60,000 people have died of pollution-related problems in the national capital in the last five years. “Pollution crossed every limit,” he said. PTI

J&J implants: FDA sends names for compensation

MUMBAI
Maharashtra’s Food and Drugs Administration has so far recommended the names of 50 patients, who received Johnson & Johnson’s faulty hip implant, for compensation by the U.S.-based company. The recommendations have been forwarded to the Centre.

10 candidates score 100 percentile in CAT

NEW DELHI
Ten candidates scored a 100 percentile in the Common Admission Test (CAT), results of which were announced on Saturday. All of them are from technological backgrounds, officials said. PTI



Red signal: The collapsed portion of the Bardhaman Railway Station, about 90 km from Kolkata, on Saturday. ■ ANI

Portion of Bardhaman railway station collapses

Two injured; area around building evacuated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

A portion of the Bardhaman railway station building collapsed at around 8.10 p.m. on Saturday. Senior officers of the Eastern Railway said preliminary reports did not indicate that anyone was buried under the debris.

Two persons were injured in the collapse and were taken to Bardhaman Medical College and Hospital.

“So far there are no reports of any one trapped under the debris. We

are trying to assess the situation,” said Ishaq Khan, Divisional Railway Manager, Howrah.

Mr. Khan said since the railway platform was not affected, services would not be disturbed.

The entire area around the building was evacuated as authorities fear that the remaining structure could also come down.

Bardhaman is a junction on the Howrah-Delhi main line of the Eastern Railway, about 90 km from Kolkata, and is usually very crowded.

Need to fix accountability for infant deaths, says Sachin Pilot

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot on Saturday called for fixing accountability for the deaths of over a 100 infants at the J.K. Lon Hospital at Kota in December 2019, and said it would not help to blame the previous BJP government as the Congress had been in power for the past 13 months.

Talking to reporters in Kota, he

said: “Our response was not satisfactory, to some extent. We should have been more compassionate. Since we are in power, we have to be responsible and face the consequences,” he said.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had recently said infants had died at the hospital even when the BJP was in power, and the number of deaths had come down under the Congress rule.