

Meghalaya launches Health Advancement Policy to boost non-profit hospitals

The Meghalaya government launched the Meghalaya Health Advancement Policy on 6th May 2025 to strengthen healthcare infrastructure across the state. As part of the initiative, not-for-profit hospitals were awarded financial support of 2 crore each. Chief Minister Mr. Conrad K. Sangma handed over the first instalment of ₹1 crore each to Tura Christian Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital in Tura during the launch event held on Monday.

The Chief Minister stated that five charitable hospitals would receive aid to upgrade infrastructure, build additional rooms, purchase medical equipment, and more. He emphasised that the financial assistance was not only to improve infrastructure but also a gesture of gratitude towards the missionary-run and charitable hospitals for their longstanding service to the community.

He noted that the second instalment of the grant would be disbursed by the State Health Department upon submission of the utilisation certificate for the first tranche. Highlighting the often-unrecognised contributions of healthcare workers, Sangma personally thanked hospital staff for their dedication to improving lives.

Besides the hospitals in Tura, hospitals in Jowai and Shillong were also selected to receive the grant. The government reiterated its commitment to supporting institutions that have historically contributed to community health, especially in underserved areas.





CGHS gets digital makeover to enhance services for its beneficiaries

Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) launched a new Health Management Information System (HMIS) On 15th May 2025 to enhance digital services for its beneficiaries. Developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), the upgraded system replaced a two-decade-old platform.

Key features of the new HMIS included PAN-based unique identification for beneficiaries above 18 years, replacing manual processes to reduce duplication. An integrated payment system was introduced, discontinuing the earlier Bharat Kosh method. Contributions were mandated through the official CGHS portal, with auto-verification aimed at reducing errors and refund issues.

Real-time application tracking and a new mobile application, 'myCGHS', allowed users to monitor services and receive updates. To implement the upgrade, all CGHS Wellness Centres were closed to the public on April 26, 2025. The older CGHS websites were deactivated, and services were shifted to a unified portal: www.cghs.mohfw.gov.in.

Beneficiaries were required to reset passwords during their first login. Applications pending payment as of April 27, 2025, were marked as lapsed, and new applications needed to be submitted afresh. To support users during the transition, master trainers were deployed at CGHS offices, while user manuals and helpdesk support were made available online and via the app.



India backs global pandemic treaty, PM Narendra Modi stresses to support Global South

In a significant development for global public health, India joined other WHO member states on 20th May 2025 in adopting the WHO Pandemic Agreement during the 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva. The treaty aimed to improve international preparedness and response for future pandemics.

Addressing the Assembly, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's commitment to inclusive healthcare, especially for vulnerable populations in the Global South. He noted that government health spending had increased significantly in recent years, while out-of-pocket expenses had declined.

The WHO confirmed that 124 member states voted in favour of the agreement, with 11 abstentions and no objections raised. The adoption followed the successful conclusion of negotiations by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB).

The Prime Minister cited flagship initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, which covered 580 million people with free treatment, and a national network of public pharmacies offering subsidised medicines. He also mentioned India's Health and Wellness Centres that screen for diseases like cancer, diabetes, and hypertension, and digital platforms that monitor vaccinations for pregnant women and children.

The WHO Pandemic Agreement outlined tools and principles for equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics, aiming to strengthen global coordination. The United States notably did not participate in the adoption, having withdrawn its WHO funding commitments earlier this year.



Shri J P Nadda urges greater focus on state hospitals and community involvement to ease pressure on top institutions

Union Health Minister J P Nadda chaired the 'Kayakalp Manthan' in Delhi on 22nd May 2025, urging greater emphasis on strengthening state hospitals and sub-health centres to ease the burden on premier institutions in major cities. The meeting included representatives from central government hospitals, NGOs, and senior health ministry officials and aimed to boost public participation for improved health outcomes.

Mr. Nadda reflected on the progress of the Kayakalp Scheme, launched in 2015 to enhance cleanliness and infection control in public healthcare facilities. Initially covering 10 central government hospitals, the scheme had expanded to 25 such institutions and extended its reach through the National Health Mission in state facilities.

He acknowledged notable improvements over the past decade but stressed the need for further progress, particularly in creating a patient-centric system. Emphasising the role of environment and ambience, Nadda noted that improved communication and management could help enhance patient satisfaction.

The minister urged stakeholders to address issues like infrastructure, staff behaviour, and cleanliness, which affect the public perception of government hospitals. He highlighted the importance of local community engagement, technology integration, and sustainable practices as part of the scheme's future strategy, calling Kayakalp a transformative initiative in healthcare delivery.

India - WHO join hands to boost global reach of Ayush therapies

In a landmark move to elevate India's traditional medicine systems globally, the Ministry of Ayush signed an MoU with the World Health Organization (WHO) on 24th May 2025 to initiate work on a dedicated Traditional Medicine module under the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI). The agreement was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 122nd episode of Mann Ki Baat, where he highlighted its potential to bring Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, and Unani therapies into globally standardized medical frameworks.

The ICHI, which complements WHO's ICD-11 for disease classification, will now include interventions such as Panchakarma, Yoga therapy, Unani regimens, and Siddha procedures. The Ayush Ministry stated that this would lead to transparent billing, fair pricing, broader insurance coverage, improved hospital management, and enhanced health research.

Most significantly, the move aimed to make Ayush services more accessible worldwide in a scientifically recognized manner. WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus welcomed the agreement and acknowledged India's \$3 million contribution toward WHO's work on traditional medicine and ICHI. The development aligned with India's vision to mainstream its traditional health systems globally, ensuring they are integrated into evidence-based, internationally accepted healthcare standards.



Chandigarh to launch online system for tracking Schedule H Medicines for drug abuse prevention

In a bid to curb drug trafficking and improve public health safety, the Chandigarh administration on 27th May 2025 decided to develop a portal for real-time monitoring of Schedule H drugs. This directive was issued during a meeting of the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) chaired by Deputy Commissioner Mr. Nishant Kumar Yadav. Chemists were instructed to upload records of such drugs to the portal, enhancing transparency and enforcement.

Mr. Yadav directed sub-divisional magistrates (SDMs) to inspect at least three chemist shops monthly in coordination with drug inspectors to ensure compliance. Chemist shops were mandated to install functional CCTV systems with a minimum 30-day backup to deter illegal activities and enhance accountability.

Non-compliance identified during inspections would invite strict punitive measures under relevant laws. The health department was directed to initiate a drug de-addiction centre at GMSH, Sector 16, while the education department was tasked with surveying and removing tobacco vendors operating within 100 yards of educational institutions.

Both departments were also assigned to develop and implement awareness campaigns on drug abuse. The meeting acknowledged the nationwide rollout of the Tele MANAS initiative, offering 24x7 mental health support via helpline 14416, aimed at addressing emotional distress and promoting mental wellbeing.



India backs new WHO traditional medicine strategy at World Health Assembly

At The 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva, held on 28th May 2025, India reaffirmed its commitment to integrating traditional medicine with modern healthcare. Mr. Arindam Bagchi, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, welcomed the adoption of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 and highlighted India's leadership in promoting evidence-based traditional systems, according to a statement from the Ministry of Ayush.

India's integrated approach, combining modern medicine with systems like Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, and Siddha, was presented as a replicable model for other countries. Mr. Bagchi highlighted India's active role in implementing the previous WHO strategy (2014–2023) and reiterated its support for the new framework.

India's contribution to global traditional medicine was further demonstrated by the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC) established in Jamnagar, Gujarat in 2022, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus.

A key milestone this year was the May 24 signing of a donor agreement between the Ayush Ministry and WHO to develop a traditional medicine module under the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI). WHO said the new strategy encouraged regulation, service integration, and support for indigenous knowledge. India reaffirmed its commitment to helping member states advance safe, inclusive, and evidence-based traditional medicine systems.



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