



The Lakshmi Mittal and Family
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Dear Friends,

We are delighted to present to you the August edition of the monthly newsletter by the [Lancet Citizens' Commission on Reimagining India's Health System](#). This month's newsletter spotlights India's shifting health priorities. Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw calls for bold reforms to accelerate lab-to-market transitions, while debates continue on whether new medical colleges should prioritise generalists or specialists. While India continues to export health workers even as domestic shortages persist, menstrual health progress remains uneven, particularly in rural India, and over nine lakh zero-dose children highlight persistent immunisation gaps. Mizoram's Lunglei district offers a model of success with its maternal and child health initiative gaining national recognition. Emerging concerns demand urgent focus: rising temperatures are disproportionately affecting women's health, while India faces a dual suicide crisis among its youth and elderly. Meanwhile, centenarians provide new insights into ageing well, and sanitation trends across 543 constituencies reveal mixed progress. And, in case you missed it, [watch here the recording](#) of the webinar titled "*Reflections on Workplace Mental Health: A Formal and Informal Workforce Perspective*."

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This Month's Highlight

[Reflections on Workplace Mental Health: A Formal and Informal Workforce Perspective](#)

The webinar on "Reflections on Workplace Mental Health: A Formal and Informal Workforce Perspective," was hosted on August 25, to explore how work environments affect mental health in both formal and informal sectors, highlight practical ways to support wellbeing, and encourage dialogue between research, practice, and lived experience, for inclusive mental health approaches for all workers.



[Watch Webinar Here](#)

Views & Opinions



[Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw urges bold reforms to speed up lab-to-market journey](#)

On India's 79th Independence Day, Biocon and Biocon Biologics Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on atmanirbharta (self-reliance), innovation, and reform, but stressed that the pharma sector needs urgent regulatory changes to truly realise this vision, *writes Ashmit Kumar*.



[Should new medical colleges focus on undergraduate or specialists training?](#)

According to the Medical Council of India, India has 780 medical colleges with 1,18,137 MBBS seats in 2024-25; the number of MBBS seats doubled from around 51,000 in 2014. A shortage of medical seats, owing to fewer medical colleges, has been cited as a common argument for the shortfall. Opening new medical colleges, therefore, remains a common response. [...] The problem is not of production but of distribution, *write Sandra Albert and Mayur Trivedi*.



[India is exporting doctors and nurses. The country needs them too](#)

The demand and supply of health workforce across countries continues to be a daunting problem, with most countries lacking adequate numbers of doctors and nurses and a projected global shortfall of 18 million health workers by 2030. Health workers migrate across countries, with the flow typically being from countries in the Global South to those in the North. The countries from which health professionals migrate are also those that face internal supply constraints, *write Sandhya Venkateswaran and Nadine Monteiro*.

[Why rural India is missing out on menstrual health progress](#)

In Bihar, Lalita*, a 40-year-old woman, spent decades managing her periods with torn scraps of cloth, unaware of safer alternatives. Her story is



neither rare nor new: millions of women in rural India still navigate menstruation without access to hygienic products. From reproductive tract infections to untreated gynaecological issues linked to poor menstrual care, there continue to remain glaring health inequities between urban and rural India, *write Rishika Priyadarsi and Aditya Ansh.*



[Mizoram: Lunglei's maternal, child health initiative earns national recognition](#)

Mizoram's Lunglei district administration has earned national recognition for its flagship maternal and child health initiative, Project Bloom [...] Launched on June 17 this year, the scheme addresses maternal and child health challenges in the Lungsan aspirational block in Lunglei. The programme aims to close these gaps through a community-driven, convergence-based approach that integrates health, nutrition, transport and behaviour change.



[Over nine lakh zero-dose children in India in 2024: UN report](#)

India has over nine lakh children who did not receive a single shot of any routine vaccination in 2024, according to new national immunisation coverage data released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF. [...] There is, however, some good news. India saw a significant decline in the number of zero-dose children - from 15,92,000 in 2023 to 9,09,000 in 2024, *writes Kavita Bajeli-Datt*



[There Is a Suicide Crisis Amongst India's Youth And Elderly](#)

Suicides in India have quietly become a public health emergency, especially in the last few years. In 2022, India's suicide rate rose to 12.4 per 100,000 population, up from 12.0 in 2021, marking a 4.2 per cent increase in the number of suicides —from 164,033 to 170,924. This is the highest suicide rate since records began more than 60 years ago, *write Soumitra Pathare, Lakshmi Vijaykumar, and Shubhda Sharma.*



[What rising temperatures are doing to women's health in India](#)

While public health discussions have rightly focused on impacts such as heatstroke and dehydration, a critical yet underexplored dimension is the effect of heat on women's health, specifically reproductive health. India has approximately 353 million women of reproductive age (15-49 years), comprising nearly a quarter of the population. While the country has made real progress in improving maternal health, the growing risks that climate change poses to women's health are still a missing piece, *writes Sharon Sarah Thawaney.*

Resources

[Centenarians and near-centenarians in India: empirical insights on health and well-being characteristics](#)

We examined the socioeconomic and health characteristics of centenarians (100 years or above) and near-centenarians (90–99 years) in India. Utilizing data from the Wave-1 of the Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI), we compared the distribution of centenarians and near-centenarians with those aged 60–89 years across socioeconomic, health, and subjective well-being indicators, write Rajpal, S., Joe, W., Ronanki, S., Kim, R., & Subramanian SV



[Analyzing changes in types of household sanitation among 543 Parliamentary Constituencies between 2016 and 2021 in India](#)

In India, the share of households with access to an improved private toilet has increased considerably over the past few decades. However, there are other types of toilets that households often rely on, such as unimproved toilets or shared toilets. And in many cases, households in India still do not have a toilet. This paper provides sub-national prevalence estimates for each of these toilet types across India's 543 Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs) in 2016 and 2021 and highlights the PCs where the prevalence either increased or decreased, write Jain, A., Kim, R., and Subramanian, SV.



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