

Edition 53 | March 30, 2026



The Lancet Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India Newsletter

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to present to you the March edition of the monthly newsletter by [The Lancet Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India](#). This month's newsletter highlights emerging shifts in India's health landscape spanning innovation, access, and equity. It brings together perspectives on the transformative potential of AI-biological convergence and evolving models of care delivery, alongside evidence of progress in child survival and persistent gaps in elderly care, insurance coverage, and drug-resistant tuberculosis. The issue also features new research examining barriers to healthcare access among women and evaluating community-based interventions for child development within routine care systems. Complementing these insights, a conversation on India's health system and highlights from the Ahmedabad convening on the Lancet report underscore the urgency of strengthening inclusive, accountable, and future-ready health systems. If you haven't yet explored the report, we invite you to read it below.

Visit our Website

News & Opinions



[AI-Biological Intelligence Convergence Can Transform Healthcare: Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw](#)

Biocon Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said the convergence of biological intelligence and artificial intelligence (AI) can drive a paradigm shift in medicine, enabling breakthroughs in predictive healthcare, regenerative science and lifespan management. "Biology on its own was limited in generating deeper insights, but AI tools are opening immeasurable opportunities to understand living systems," Mazumdar-Shaw said while speaking at the AI Impact Summit. She noted that biological systems function like distributed data centres, processing information with minimal energy compared to gigawatt-powered AI systems.



[India Accelerates Child Survival Gains; Sustained Efforts Driving Sharp Decline in Child Mortality](#)

India has emerged as a key contributor to global progress in reducing child mortality, according to the latest United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNIGME) Report 2025. The report highlights India's sustained and large-scale efforts in improving child survival outcomes, particularly across neonatal and under-five mortality indicators. Over the past two decades, India has played a pivotal role in reducing child mortality in the Southern Asia region, which has witnessed a 76% decline in under-five deaths since 1990 and 68% decline since 2000. This sharp reduction is largely driven by countries like India through targeted public health interventions, improved institutional delivery systems, and expanded immunization coverage, *writes Nitendra Singh*.



[India to decouple healthcare from wealth in 5-7 years: Dr Devi Shetty](#)

[..] Dr Shetty emphasised that the quality of medical treatment in India will soon be independent of a citizen's financial status. He noted that the country has already increased the number of doctors and hospital beds significantly. "India will become the first country in the world to dissociate healthcare from wealth. India will prove to the world that the wealth of the nation or wealth of the family has nothing to do with the quality of healthcare its citizens will enjoy. And India is going to do it within the next five to seven years. because we have now virtually triple the number of doctors who are getting trained. We have an adequate number of beds.



[Why India Needs To Improve Elderly Care Access](#)

India is ageing fast. The population aged 60 and above in the country is projected to more than double from 100 million in 2011 to 230 million in 2036. By last year, the elderly made up 11% of the country's population; with improvements in life expectancy and falling fertility, there will be more elderly than children in India by 2050. Is India prepared to cater to the needs of her growing elderly population? Not quite, experts say. In this first of a two-part series, we examine how fast India is ageing and whether the country is prepared. We look at gaps in infrastructure—from old age homes to home-care services—and the lack of regulation and accountability in an unorganised but rapidly growing sector. A 2024 NITI Aayog report said that the senior care system faces many challenges "due to the lack of a comprehensive, integrated policy for care



[Only 20 Per Cent Of Women In India Have Adequate Health Insurance: Survey](#)

Even as conversations around women's health and empowerment gain prominence, financial protection against medical risks remains worryingly low for many women in India. A recent survey by TATA AIG General Insurance Company indicates that only around 20 per cent of women in the country have health insurance coverage that can be considered adequate. The findings highlight a gap between women's growing interaction with the healthcare system and the financial preparedness required to deal with serious illnesses. Interestingly, women make up nearly 47 per cent of India's insured population, *writes Meghna Maiti.*



[India's first repository of major psychiatric disorders, CALM-Brain, launched in Bengaluru](#)

Researchers at the Rohini Nilekani Centre for Brain and Mind (CBM), a partnership between the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) and the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) - TIFR, have developed CALM-Brain, a first-of-its-kind digital repository of data in India on brain structure and function from a range of psychiatric disorders. According to the researchers, the database, built on Indian patient data, will be made open source, thereby opening it up for clinicians and researchers aiming to study neuropsychiatric disorders.

and support," *writes Azera Parveen Rahman.*



[Drug-resistant TB poses a health emergency in India](#)

India speaks often about ending tuberculosis. Campaigns, targets, dashboards, and declarations dominate the national narrative. Yet within this broad TB discourse, drug-resistant TB (DR-TB), one of the deadliest forms of the disease, remains a neglected public health emergency. The Global Tuberculosis Report, 2025 of the World Health Organization shows progress: a 21% decrease in TB incidence in India, and an improvement from 53% to 92% in treatment coverage. But even within these gains are signs of crisis. Nearly 1,00,000 TB cases in India still go undetected each year, continuing to spread infection silently through communities, *writes Jai Mullerpattan and Chapal Mehra.*



[A Conversation on the Health System in India](#)

[...] over the years there have been many studies and committee reports describing manifold problems of the Indian health care system and prescribing various solutions, with only glacial progress in actual policy. One of the latest and most comprehensive studies came out in January this year in the prestigious British medical journal *The Lancet*. This is a Report titled "A Citizen-Centered Health System for India", by a Lancet Commission that was appointed in 2020. Among other things, this Report spells out steps toward a system of Universal Health Care (UHC) for India, *writes Pranab Bardhan*

Resources



[Problems in accessing healthcare among women in India: a district-level change analysis, 2016–2021](#)

Access to healthcare is a basic human right and a critical determinant of health. Lack of healthcare access, especially for women of reproductive age may lead to adverse health outcomes such as high maternal mortality, untreated chronic conditions and poor reproductive and child health. However, healthcare access remains a critical challenge for many people across the globe. [...] In India alone, 12% of respondents reported not using healthcare despite a perceived need, write *Balla S, Kim R, Saunik S, and Subramanian SV*.



[The effectiveness of a community-based video-facilitated parenting intervention for child development integrated into routine maternal and child care services in India](#)

Parenting interventions integrating nutrition, stimulation, and responsive caregiving promote child development but face challenges to scale in low-resource settings. This study describes implementation and effectiveness of Aalana Palana, a facilitated video-viewing intervention on responsive parenting, embedded in routine maternal and child care services in India. Aalana Palana was delivered by Anganwadi workers (AWWs) in Telangana, India, write *Roy R, Chopra A, Lall G, Jangra D, Maganti M, et al*

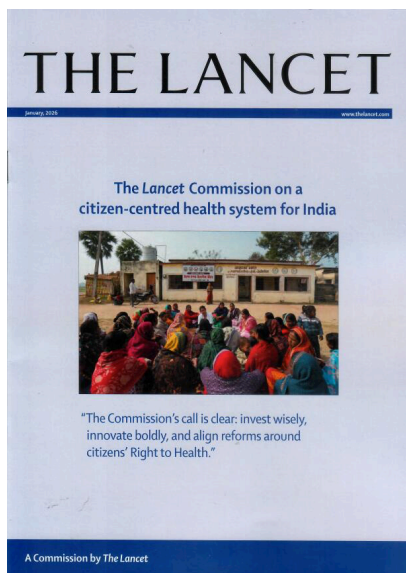
Highlights from the Ahmedabad event

Lok Swasthya Sewa Trust hosted a workshop on 25 March 2026 at the Indian Academy for Self-Employed Women (IASEW), Ahmedabad, to discuss recommendations from the Lancet Commission's report under Reimagining India's Health System towards Viksit Bharat @2047.

The workshop brought together 45 stakeholders from Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh to share perspectives on advancing a more citizen-centered health system in India.

Mirai Chatterjee, Director, SEWA Social Security and Commissioner on the Lancet Commission, highlighted the significant progress made towards Universal Health Care, while pointing out persistent challenges to India's health system which continues to face "uneven quality of care and also governance issues," alongside gaps in last-mile implementation.





After 5 years of extensive research, **The Lancet Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India report is here!**

The report proposes a transformative approach to India's health system by placing the needs of citizens front and centre. The report's authors emphasise the urgent need to strengthen India's public healthcare and identify a several health system reforms needed to advance Universal Health Coverage. The Commission advocates for a rights-based, citizen-centred model that promotes community participation, transparency, and equity—key principles of UHC—aimed at ensuring high-quality, affordable care for all.

[Read the Report](#)



Help us develop a roadmap to achieve universal health coverage in India by visiting our website: <https://www.citizenshealth.in/>

[#ReimaginingIndiasHealth](#) [#HealthcareForAll](#) [#CitizensHealthIndia](#)

We love hearing back from you! Please send your comments, suggestions, and contributions for these newsletters, including research highlights and published features to citizenhealthin@gmail.com

Subscribe to our newsletter



Copyright © 2021 The Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute, Harvard University. | B-Block, 43, First Floor, Middle Circle, Connaught Place | Delhi, DL 110001 IN

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!