



## **Rushing through “Ayushman Bharat”**

### **What is the issue?**

\n\n

\n

- The proposed “Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection Mission” might soon see a formal announcement.
- But little preparation seems to have gone into it thus far.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the current state of the scheme?**

\n\n

\n

- At least six states are said to be ready to roll out a pilot of the new health care scheme, but there is little clarity on the details.
- It was earlier assumed that the scheme would be an insurance-based mechanism, but there are indications to the contrary now.
- Government seems to have envisioned a greater administrative role in the proposed scheme through public-private partnership.
- If so, this is a positive as it will provide welcome flexibility in the initial stages, and allow for experimentation across different designs.
- Currently, the only thing clear about the scheme is that it would provide a health cover of up to “5 lakh per annum” to about 10 crore poor families.
- But the beneficiary lists have not been prepared yet and the overall implementation seems to be rushed through by the government.
- The realisation that a scheme with such a large scope cannot be properly

implemented without adequate preparation is needed.

\n

\n\n

## **What are the shortfalls in preparation?**

\n\n

\n

- A scheme for expanding access in tertiary health care cannot work without significantly widening the supply of hospital beds and specialist doctors.

\n

- This has not occurred thus far and there is a massive shortage in the supply of services — trained staff, hospitals and diagnostic centres.

\n

- The deficit in doctors is particularly wide, with India being at least 75% short of the number of qualified doctors it needs.

\n

- While the funds allocated to the scheme might generate a demand, it would be naive to assume that it would automatically generate its own supply.

\n

- Implementing the scheme now would cause an unplanned erratic expansion and the associated bottlenecks and inefficiencies.

\n

- Hence, the government must explain how it intends to fill the infrastructure deficit alongside the phased roll-out of Ayushman Bharat.

\n

- Further, if the government intends to have a properly working health system, it should ensure that primary healthcare apparatus is properly structured.

\n

- Notably, most Primary and community health care centres are understaffed, under-funded, under-trained and under-equipped.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Business Standard**

\n\n

\n



# IAS PARLIAMENT

*Information is Empowering*

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative