



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Over 6 lakh cases identified as part of TB control programme

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Context

Over 6.1 lakh tuberculosis patients have been notified across the country and of them, 4.3 lakh have been diagnosed in the 455 intervention districts that were part of the Union Health Ministry's 100-day intensified TB elimination campaign launched on December 7 last year.

The campaign was launched in 33 States and Union Territories to screen and test for TB among people belonging to the vulnerable or high-risk groups.

"The **100-day TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan** is an outcome of a **new strategy for early TB identification** involving offering **X-ray screening** to **high-risk populations, such as individuals with diabetes and people living with HIV**.

By deploying ultraportable hand-held X-ray units and conducting door-to-door screenings, both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals were tested.

Positive X-ray results were then confirmed with **NAAT – Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (an advanced diagnostic test)**, leading to the identification of multiple asymptomatic TB patients," a senior Health Ministry official said.

India faces the world's largest TB epidemic with the infection still a major public health problem.

India's goal is to **eliminate tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, five years ahead of the global target of 2030**.

What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that most often affects the **lungs** and is caused by the **bacteria Mycobacterium tuberculosis**.

It **spreads through the air** when infected people cough, sneeze or spit.

Symptoms: prolonged **cough (sometimes with blood)**, chest pain, weakness, fatigue, weight loss, fever, night sweats.

While TB usually affects the lungs, it **also affects the kidneys, brain, spine and skin**.

It is preventable and curable with **antibiotics**.

TB Vaccine: The **Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine** remains the **only licensed vaccine against TB**; it provides moderate protection against severe forms of TB (TB meningitis) in infants and young children.

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Steps taken by Govt

National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP): The Government of India has developed a National Strategic Plan (2017-25) for **Ending TB in the country by 2025**.

Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA): Launched in **2022** for community support to TB patients with the objective to provide people with TB with additional nutritional, diagnostic and vocational support.

Ni-kshay portal - An online Ni-kshay portal has been set up **to track the notified TB cases**

Ni-kshay Mitra – to encourage **private sector engagement** in eliminating TB. Under this, individuals / companies can **adopt patients and fund their complete treatment process**

Challenges Faced by India in Eliminating TB

Drug-resistant TB cases: India has a significant burden of drug-resistant TB, including multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB).

Diagnostics and Case Detection: The **accurate and timely diagnosis** of TB remains a challenge. Some areas lack access to modern diagnostic tools, leading to reliance on older methods with limitations.

Poor primary health-care and infrastructure: In many parts of India, especially in rural and remote areas, there is limited access to healthcare facilities.

Lack of Awareness: Lack of awareness about the disease may contribute to its persistence.

Private Sector Engagement: A significant portion of healthcare services in India is provided by the private sector