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Ministry of Finance

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The Economic Survey 2017- 18 reiterates India's commitment to achieve the targets under Sustainable Development Goals-3 (SDG-3) with some of them also aligned with the National Health Policy 2017. This was stated in the Economic Survey 2017-18 tabled in Parliament today by the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Shri Arun Jaitley. The Survey takes note of the shift in the disease burden from Communicable Diseases to Non-Communicable Diseases in the country between 1990 and 2016. The Survey mentions that Child and Maternal Malnutrition continues to be the most challenging risk factor for health loss in India in 2016. The other key risk factors include air pollution, dietary risks, high blood pressure and diabetes etc.

The Survey takes note of the National Health Policy 2017 which recommended increasing State sector health spending to more than 8 per cent of the States' Government Budget by 2020. It also takes note of the Report 'India: Health of Nation's States' 2017', which provides the first comprehensive set of findings for the distribution of diseases and risk factors across all States from 1990 to 2016. The concept of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) has been developed to provide a framework for analysing the disease burden and risk factors. The Survey advocates there is a need to understand the efficiency of public spending with respect to DALYs behaviour across the major States and to assess whether high-spending by States on health results in better health outcomes.

The Survey notes that there has been significant improvement in the health status of individuals in India as life expectancy at birth has increased by 10 years during the period 1990 to 2015. The Survey, however, notes with concern that there are wide differences in the average prices of diagnostic tests across cities which need to be addressed by standardising rates to reduce Out of Pocket Expenses (OPE) on health services.

According to the Survey, the National Health Policy 2017 will help in strengthening health delivery systems and in achieving universal health coverage.

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