



Union Health Ministry's Two-day Influenza Chintan Shivir Strengthens Inter-Ministerial Convergence for Preparedness and Response ahead of the flu season

Leads to Development of a Comprehensive, Structured Influenza Preparedness Checklist Covering Surveillance, Early Warning, Risk Assessment, Laboratory Systems, Clinical Response, and One Health Coordination

Chintan Shivir concludes with a consensus on adopting a whole-of-Government and One Health approach to address seasonal and zoonotic influenza

Ministries Reaffirm Commitment to Integrated Surveillance, Strengthened Laboratories, and Coordinated Pandemic Preparedness

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The National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) India organised a two-day Influenza Chintan Shivir from 22–23 December 2025 in New Delhi on the theme “Strengthening Inter-ministerial and Inter-sectoral Convergence for Influenza Preparedness and Response.” Stakeholders from the Disaster Management (DM) Cell of MoHFW, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), and the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) participated in this Chintan Shivir. The Shivir provided a structured platform for deliberations to strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms ahead of the upcoming influenza season.

The inaugural session was inaugurated by Union Health Minister, Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, through a video message. He emphasized the importance of aligned preparedness and response measures, including surge capacity planning, to build country's resilience against influenza. He highlighted the critical role of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) and stressed the need for coordinated efforts between the Centre and States to ensure robust and collaborative surveillance systems.



The Chintan Shivir witnessed participation from around 100 eminent representatives from multiple ministries, including Health, Animal Husbandry, Agriculture, and Environment, along with premier research institutions, State Governments, and international partners— furthering the Government’s One Health and whole-of-Government approach. Eleven States with a history of reporting Influenza Cases participated in person, while IDSP officials from State & District Surveillance Units joined virtually. This inclusion enabled cross-learning by sharing best practices. The deliberations included technical presentations, panel discussions, group work sessions, and State presentations.



Influenza still continues to pose a significant public health challenge, particularly for vulnerable populations such as young children, older adults, pregnant women, and individuals with chronic illnesses. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare continues to monitor seasonal influenza trends across States and Union Territories in real time through the IDSP network. Deliberations reiterated that influenza preparedness must be supported through effective inter-sectoral convergence, with MoHFW further strengthening surveillance, laboratory capacity, and clinical preparedness for early detection and timely response to seasonal and zoonotic influenza outbreaks.



A key outcome of the Chintan Shivar was the development of a structured influenza preparedness checklist after detailed deliberations during these two days. The checklist is intended to guide the Centre, States and Districts in preparedness planning across four key domains:

- Surveillance, Early Warning, and Risk Assessment
- Laboratory Systems Strengthening

- Hospital Preparedness and Clinical Response
- One Health Coordination and Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE)

The Chintan Shivir concluded with a consensus on adopting a whole-of-Government and One Health approach to address seasonal and zoonotic influenza. Ministries agreed to strengthen integrated surveillance across human, animal, and wildlife sectors; enhance laboratory and genomic capacities; ensure timely data sharing; and align sectoral action plans with the national pandemic preparedness framework. The deliberations reaffirmed India's commitment to coordinated national action to prevent, detect, and respond effectively to influenza and other respiratory viral threats.

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