



## Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India: A Special Edition

February 6, 2026

The **Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India**—supported by the Mittal Institute—is an ambitious, cross-sectoral initiative aimed at charting a pathway toward universal health coverage for the people of India. Launched in December 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission has since undertaken a series of in-depth research studies. The **public launch of its final report** on January 21, 2026 in New Delhi, India marked the culmination of a multi-year effort to synthesize evidence and articulate reform pathways for a health system that is equitable, forward-looking, and accountable to India’s citizens.

[Visit the Commission's Website](#)

## THE COMMISSION'S PURPOSE

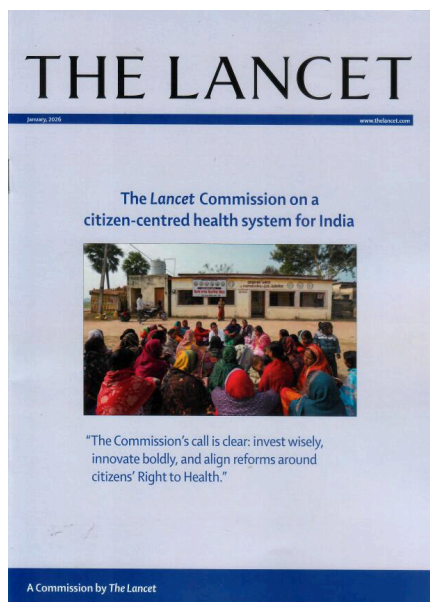
“ The Commission’s clarion call is for a publicly-financed and publicly-provided integrated citizen-centred healthcare delivery system as the primary vehicle for UHC, with a focus on comprehensive primary health care, quality of care across all the health system and equity.”



VIKRAM PATEL, Mittal Institute Steering Committee Member and Lancet Commission Co-Chair and Co-Lead Author; Paul Farmer Professor and Chair, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Professor, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Co-founder, Sangath

## THE REPORT

# Final Commission Report Launched



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

The report calls for a citizen-centred transformation of India’s health system, urging stronger public healthcare and key reforms to advance Universal Health Coverage. It advocates a rights-based approach grounded in community participation, transparency, and equity to ensure affordable, high-quality care for all.

[Read the report](#)

## KEY FINDINGS



## A Citizen-Centred Health System: 6 Key Reform Actions

1. Enable **meaningful citizen engagement** by firmly building the health system upon people's participation
2. Implement a citizen-centred health system through financing, purchasing, and service-delivery **reforms in the public sector**
3. Engage the **private sector** to align with UHC goals
4. Invest in and scale up **diverse technologies** to catalyse all the reforms needed for UHC
5. Enable **transparent and accountable governance** of the entire health system through decentralisation and strengthened regulatory capacities
6. Foster a **learning health system** by embedding reflexivity, participatory approaches, and leadership that champions continuous learning and improvement

Executive Summary: English

Executive Summary: Hindi

## OVERVIEW OF THE COMMISSION



## The Commission on a Citizen-Centred Health System for India: A Primer

Launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission was established to **identify the health system reforms needed for India to achieve universal health coverage within a decade**. The Commission brings together leading Indian and global experts to assess challenges related to quality of care, governance, financing, equity, and citizen engagement, and to propose pathways towards universal health coverage.

The Commission convenes members with diverse expertise across **five workstreams**—citizen engagement, financing, governance, human resources for health, and technology—and maintains public engagement through its website, monthly newsletter, and webinars, with the Mittal Institute's India office serving as its secretariat. To assess progress toward UHC and identify persistent gaps, the Commission has undertaken a **comprehensive research program**, including a nationally representative survey of 50,000 households, mixed-methods studies across six districts, and the development of a new district-level index using routinely collected data.

[More on the Commission's work](#)

## PRIVATE SECTOR & HEALTH NEEDS

“ [There is a] need to better align the interests of the private sector with the goals of UHC through a balanced mix of incentives and regulation. Private healthcare services should be comprehensive and well-integrated, with a strong focus on disease prevention and long-term management of chronic conditions, delivered through coordinated provider networks.”



TARUN KHANNA, Former Director of the Mittal Institute and Co-Chair of the Commission; Jorge Paulo Lemann Professor at the Harvard Business School

## RECORDING

# Watch the Launch Event

**Report Launch**

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

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

**Time:** 9:00 am - 5:00 pm IST

LANCET COMMISSION ON A CITIZEN-CENTRED HEALTH SYSTEM FOR INDIA

Scan for agenda!



Watch the event

### THE REPORT'S IMPACT

“ India stands at a pivotal moment. With rising public confidence and a national ambition for Viksit Bharat, we have a historic opportunity to transform the health system so that it truly works for every citizen. Our Commission lays out how bold ideas, wise investments, and multi-stakeholder collaborations can come together to build a health system that is inclusive, innovative, and future-ready.”



ANUSKA KALITA, Co-lead Author and Director, India Health Systems, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

### PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



## View the Curated Launch Event Photos

The January 21, 2026 launch event featured a full day of discussion ([view the agenda](#)). The program opened with welcome remarks from **Hitesh Hathi**, Executive Director of the Mittal Institute and Master of Ceremonies, followed by a Lancet address from **Pamela Das**, Senior Executive Editor of The Lancet. **Vikram Patel**, Professor at Harvard Medical School and Co-Chair and Lead Author of the Lancet Commission, delivered the inaugural address on India's recent health system achievements and the Commission's key messages.

Panel discussions examined citizen-centred public-sector reforms, the role of technology in advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC), private-sector engagement, transparent and accountable governance, and citizen empowerment. Closing reflections were offered by **Richard Horton**, Editor of The Lancet, and **Tarun Khanna**, Professor at Harvard Business School and Co-Chair and Author of the Lancet Commission.

[View the photos](#)

### THE REPORT'S FOCUS

“ What stands out in our report is that it is citizen-centred—it starts with citizens' needs and

aspirations. We conducted a survey of 50,000 households, the largest of its kind, which has yielded fresh data and insights. This survey, conducted in 121 districts and across 29 states, provided us direction and shaped our key recommendations.”



MIRAI CHATTERJEE, Commissioner & Director, SEWA Social Security & Chairperson, SEWA Cooperative Federation

## MEDIA COVERAGE

### Report Launch: In the News



**Lancet experts call for a 'citizen-centric' healthcare delivery and use of technology**

*The Hindu*

**[Read the article](#)**



**Advancing health care: the engine of India's ambitions**

*The Lancet - Editorial*

**[Read the article](#)**



*The Indian* **EXPRESS**

**India's universal health coverage is within reach but needs accountability: Lancet report on what needs fixing**

*The Indian Express*

**[Read the article](#)**

**With public trust and political capital, India**



**must seize the moment for health reforms:**

**Richard Horton**

*Hindustan Times*

**Read the article**



**Why healthcare still fails millions— and how India can fix it: Lancet Commission's citizen-centred roadmap**

*The Times of India*

**Read the article**



**Delivering on a citizen-centred health system for India**

*The Lancet - Comment*

**Read the article**



*The Indian***EXPRESS**

**India has made great strides in healthcare, challenge now is to improve service quality**

*The Indian Express*

**Read the article**



**Lancet panel says India can be "strong global voice" for health as power shifts globally**

*India Today*

**Read the article**



**India Needs To Strengthen Public Sector Healthcare System To Achieve National Health Goal, Says Lancet Report**

*Outlook Money*

**Read the article**



**A pathway to implementing universal health care in India**

*The Lancet - Comment*

**Read the article**

## Upcoming Mittal Institute Events



### Nutrition and Food Systems for Planetary Health

**Wed, Feb 11 at 6:30 pm IST / 8:00 am ET**

Online via Zoom

**Register**

Speakers: **Shilpa Bhupathiraju**, Harvard Chan School of Public Health; **Purnima Menon**, International Food Policy Research Institute; **Walter Willett**, Harvard Chan School of Public Health. Moderator: **Hitesh Hathi**, The Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute at Harvard University.



### Whither Secularism and Pluralism? A discussion with Shashi Tharoor, Sugata Bose and Diana Eck

**Fri, Feb 13 at 12:15 pm ET**

WCC 1023 Classroom, Harvard Law School

**RSVP**

Speakers: **Shashi Tharoor**, Indian National Congress; **Sugata Bose**, Harvard University; **Diana Eck**, Mittal Institute Faculty Director and Harvard University. Moderator: **Arvind Abraham**, Harvard Law School.



### Flipping the Script: Restructuring Deliberation in Patriarchal Political Institutions - Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics

**Fri, Feb 27 at 2:00 pm ET**

CGIS South, S153

**RSVP**

Speaker: **Rachel Brulé**, Associate Professor of Global

Development Policy at Boston University's Frederick S. Pardee  
School of Global Studies.

## Other South Asia Events

**STS Circle at Harvard: "Which Goddess of Technology? Artisan Knowledge in Early Modern South Asia" with Eric Gurevitch Assistant Professor, Harvard University (History of Science)**

**Mon, Feb 9 at 12:15 pm ET**

**CGIS South, Room S354, 1730 Cambridge Street**

**2025-2026 F.O. Matthiessen Lecture in Gender and Sexuality with Prof. Kareem Khubchandani**

**Tues, Feb 10 at 5:30 pm ET**

**Thompson Room, Barker Center #110, 12 Quincy Street**

[View the full events calendar](#)

## Student Funding: Apply Now!

### **Seed for Change Grants – Apply by February 20, 2026**

Are you a Harvard student with a project that could positively impact social, economic, and environmental issues in India? Apply for the Seed for Change (SFC) Student Grant Competition! SFC provides monetary awards of up to \$30,000 for interdisciplinary student projects that have the potential for widespread impact in India. **Apply here.**

### **Student Summer Grants – Apply by February 27, 2026**

Harvard students, apply for summer 2026 funding to explore South Asia. Grants are available to support independent research, internships, and intensive language study, offering students the chance to deepen their academic interests while gaining firsthand regional experience. **Apply here.**

[Student Grants](#)

[Faculty Grants](#)

[Visiting Artist Fellowships](#)

[Climate Change](#)

[Steering Committee](#)

**STAY CONNECTED**



Harvard Mittal Institute | CGIS South Building, 4th Floor 1730 Cambridge Street |  
Cambridge, MA 02138 US

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



Try email marketing for free today!