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Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

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Why in News

Recently, the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** was launched by the Prime Minister through a video conference.

- The nationwide rollout of the project coincides with the **National Health Authority (NHA)** celebrating the third anniversary of <u>**Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)**</u>.
- **Ayushman Bharat** is a flagship scheme of India which was launched as recommended by the **National Health Policy 2017**, to achieve the vision of <u>**Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**</u>.

Key Points

- **About:**
  - It aims to provide **digital health IDs** for all Indian citizens to help hospitals, insurance firms, and citizens access health records electronically when required.
  - The **pilot project of the Mission** had been announced by the Prime Minister from the ramparts of the **Red Fort on 15th August 2020.**
    - The project is being **implemented in the pilot phase in six States & Union Territories.**

- **Features of the Mission:**
  - **Health ID:**
    - It will be issued **for every citizen** that will also work as their health account. This **health account** will contain details of every test, every disease, the doctors visited, the medicines taken and the diagnosis.
    - Health ID is **free of cost, voluntary**. It will help in doing analysis of health data and lead to better planning, budgeting and implementation for health programs.
  - **Healthcare Facilities & Professionals' Registry:**
    - The other major component of the programme is creating a **Healthcare Professionals' Registry (HPR)** and **Healthcare Facilities Registry (HFR)**, allowing easy electronic access to medical professionals and health infrastructure.
    - The HPR will be a comprehensive repository of all healthcare professionals involved in delivering healthcare services across both modern and traditional systems of medicine.
    - The HFR database will have records of all the country's health facilities.
  - **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission Sandbox:**
    - The Sandbox, created as a part of the mission, **will act as a framework for technology and product testing** that will help organisations, including private players intending to be a part of the **national digital health ecosystem** become a **Health Information Provider or Health Information User** or efficiently link with building blocks of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.
- **Implementing Agency:**
  - **National Health Authority (NHA)** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
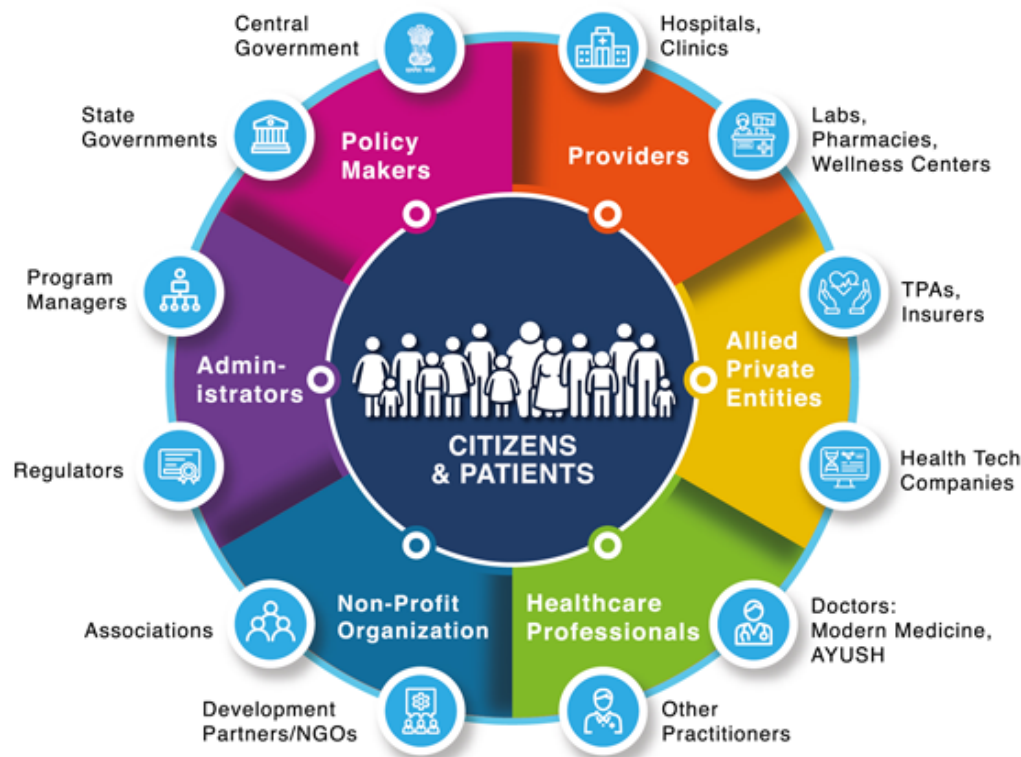- **Expected Benefits:**
  - **Ensure <u>ease of doing business</u>** for doctors and hospitals and healthcare service providers.
  - **Enable access and exchange of longitudinal health records** of citizens with their consent.
  - **Create integration within the digital health ecosystem**, similar to the role played by the **<u>Unified Payments Interface (UPI)</u>** in revolutionising payments.
- **Concerns:**
  - The **lack of a data protection bill** could lead to the misuse of data by private firms and bad actors.
  - **Exclusion of citizens and denied healthcare due to faults** in the system are also a cause of concern.

THE NDHM ECOSYSTEM

Way Forward

- The NDHM still does not recognize **Health as a justiciable right**. There should be a push draft at making health a right, as prescribed in the draft **National Health Policy, 2015.**
- In addition, the failure of a similar **National Health Service (NHS)** in the United Kingdom must be learnt from and the technical and implementation-related deficiencies must **be proactively addressed** prior to launching the mission on a pan India scale.
- The standardisation of NDHM architecture across the country will need to find ways to accommodate **state-specific rules**. It also needs to be in **sync with government schemes** like Ayushman Bharat Yojana and other IT-enabled schemes like **Reproductive Child Health Care** and **NIKSHAY** etc.

Source: TH