Addressing Healthcare Issues

What is the issue?

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- India has a young and growing workforce, which lacks universal access of health care and financial assistance.
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- Government need to take measures to address such health care concerns of the citizens.
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What are the concerns in Indian health care?

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- India ranks 131stin the Human Development Index (HDI) and at 141strank in global gender gap out of 144 countries in its health and survival index.
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- Almost one-third of the Indians do not have access to primary healthcare facilities and about 63 million fall back into poverty due to spending on illnesses.
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- Health insurance currently covers only about one-sixth of the population, there is also lack of focus on prevention of diseases.
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What are measures taken by the government?

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- The National Health Policy was introduced in 2017, to raise the level of public expenditure in the sector from the current 1.5% to 2.5% over three years.
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- The policy also aims to provide free primary care and all public hospitals

would ensure free drugs, diagnostics and emergency care services.
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- Union government is working to set a target of reaching 50 in the HDI in a specified period.
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- NITI Aayog is working on an innovative strategy of public-private partnerships in three non-communicable diseases of cardiology, pulmonology and oncology.
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- State governments are being encouraged to set up joint ventures with private sector institutions to provide services at certain district hospitals.
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What are the further measures needs to be taken?

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- Non-communicable diseases, malnutrition and lack of timely and affordable healthcare are the key issues need to be addressed.
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- For better healthcare infrastructure land should be identified for specialty hospitals in small towns under the Smart Cities and AMRUT schemes.
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- Schemes by public sector insurance companies should be offered to low-income households at varying subsidies to provide assistance for illnesses.
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- To address the healthcare workforce gap more teaching hospitals needs to be set up with seats for specialisation at the post-graduation level.
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- The government must accord high priority to preventive and curative programmes and ensure universal access to medical facilities in the shortest time.
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Source: the Hindu

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Quick fact

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HDI

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- The Human Development Index (HDI) was developed by the United Nations as a metric to assess the social and economic development levels of countries.
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- Four principal areas of examination are used to rank countries:
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1. Mean years of schooling.
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2. Expected years of schooling.
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3. Life expectancy at birth.
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4. Gross national income per capita.
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- This index makes it possible to follow changes in development levels over time and to compare the development levels of different countries.
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