

## News in Brief

### Health and the Union Budget 2006

News from round the country is upbeat, whether it is the sky rocketing sensex, medals in the commonwealth games or salaries of fresh IIM graduates. PC Chidambaram's Union Budget for 2006 has strong emphasis on the health and education of the nation's children. In his budgetary speech he says "India is not a poor country, yet a significant proportion of our people are poor. Poverty is not only income poverty. Other indicators of poverty are illiteracy, disease, infant mortality, malnutrition, absence of skills and unemployment. The whole purpose of democratic government is to eliminate poverty and give to every citizen the opportunity to be educated, to learn a skill and to be gainfully employed. The Government holds that it is its sacred duty to empower the poor and eliminate the scourge of poverty."

He aims to launch The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in the next fiscal year. Its focus will be strengthening primary health care through grass root level public health interventions based on community ownership. The total allocation for the Department of Health and the Department of Family Welfare will increase from Rs. 8,420 crore in the current year to Rs. 10,280 crore in the next year. The increase will finance the NRHM and its components like training of health volunteers, providing more medicines and strengthening the primary and community health centre system.

It is also planned that work on the six

AIIMS-like institutions will start next year to augment medical education in deficient States.

The universalization of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme which was long overdue will begin. In every settlement, there will be a functional anganwadi that provides full coverage for all children. As on date there are 6,49,000 anganwadi centres. He proposes to create 1,88,168 additional centres that are required as per the existing population norms. For the forty seven per cent of children in the age group 0-3 who are reportedly underweight the supplementary nutrition norms will be doubled. One-half of the States' costs for this purpose will be shared by the Centre. The allocation for ICDS will increase from Rs. 1,623 crore in BE 2004-05 to Rs. 3,142 crore in BE 2005-06.

The Mid-day Meal Scheme for children which covers 11 crore children today will get an increase in allocation from Rs. 1,675 crore to Rs. 3,010 crore.

The Rs. 150 crore research and development corpus fund for the pharmaceutical industry will be further increased this year. All effort will be made to tap India's potential to become an attractive destination for outsourcing in drug discovery and clinical research, and for co-development of drugs and manufacturing. The finance minister has recognized that our human resource base gives us an exceptional advantage in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. The Government promises to provide a stable policy environment and necessary incentives to help the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries become world leaders (<http://indiabudget.nic.in/>).

GLOBAL UPDATE

With such powerful messages of planning and commitment there is much to cheer for the health care sector.

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## Pedscapes

Who Named It - [www.whonamedit.com](http://www.whonamedit.com)

This is an online dictionary of medical eponyms. Over 7000 eponyms are listed in this website. The eponyms are listed by category and country. An interesting category is a collection of eponyms attributed to females.

NeoPix - [www.pedialink.org/pedialink/neo-pix/index2.cfm](http://www.pedialink.org/pedialink/neo-pix/index2.cfm)

This is an online atlas of neonatal images

from the Children's Hospital at Albany, USA.

The website contains over 500 images on neonatology with brief descriptions. Neopix accepts online submission of images to its collection.

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