



North Eastern States of India have a high burden of Cancer according to a report released by ICMR-NCDIR

Probability of developing cancer over a lifetime as high as 1 in every 4 males and 1 in every 6 females in Kamrup urban of Assam

New Delhi, India, 4 February 2021:The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) -National Centre for Disease Informatics & Research (NCDIR), Bengaluru, has released a report titled '**Profile of cancer and related health indicators in the Northeast Region of India**'. The report was launched on the occasion of World Cancer Day, 4 February 2021, by Prof Balram Bhargava, Secretary DHR & Director General, ICMR. The report projects that the number of new cancer cases in the north east region (NER) is likely to increase to 57,131 by 2025, in comparison to the estimated 50,317 in 2020. These estimates are based on cancer data compiled by eleven Population Based Cancer Registries (PBCRs) in all the eight states. The Report also includes data from seven Hospital Based Cancer Registries (HBCRs) in Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura from 2012 to 2016.

“North-East, the eight sisters, is the jewel in the crown of our nation. The NE cancer registries have done commendable work. It is pertinent that we preserve the ethnic diversity of the region. The report from ICMR-NCDIR, Bengaluru highlights the magnitude of the problem and its diversity in NER. The National Cancer Registry Program has played a vital role in NER towards mapping cancer burden over several years. The Region is a thrust area for ICMR to augment research to address cancer prevention and control activities. The scientific evidence generated from the registries has led to strengthening of health infrastructure in the region and will provide the guidance for future policy decisions”, said Prof Balram Bhargava, Secretary DHR & DG, ICMR. “We need to focus on early diagnosis and prevention of Cancer. The report has given us valuable insights into the prevailing risk factors of Cancer - all the stakeholders must now come together to fight its increasing incidence.”, explains Prof GK Rath, Head of AIIMS, BRAIRCH and NCI, Jhajar.

In all the states, the incidence of cancer was higher in males than in females except in Manipur and Sikkim. Here are the highlights of the incidence statistics:

- The commonly occurring cancers among males were cancer of the oesophagus (13.6%) and lung (10.9%), while in females, cancer of the breast was the leading site (14.5%), followed by that of cervix uteri (12.2%).
- The highest incidence rate in males (269.4 per 100,000 population) was recorded in Aizawl district in Mizoram, among females (219.8 per 100,000) in Papumpare district in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The proportion of tobacco-related cancers was 49.3% in males and 22.8 % in females.
- At the time of diagnosis of breast, cervix, head & neck, stomach and lung cancers, less than one-third were localized, while the remaining were spread either nearby or distantly in the body.
- The proportion of cancer patients seeking treatment outside the north east was highest for Sikkim (95.3%) and Nagaland (58.1%).

The report also provides insight into the prevailing cancer risk factor profile capacity for treating cancer and death statistics for each state from various sources. Many of these factors influence cancer outcomes and survival. Below are the key statistics on prevailing cancer risk factors:

- Among the 8 NE states, current tobacco use was highest in Tripura at 64.5% and lowest in Sikkim at 17.9%. Men (59%) and Women (26.3%) from Arunachal Pradesh who were over 15 years' of age, consumed higher proportions of alcohol than in other NE states.
- The prevalence of obesity among women aged 15-49 years was highest in Sikkim (34.7%) followed by Manipur (34.1%). While in men it was highest in Sikkim (36.3%) and lowest in Meghalaya (13.9%). Sikkim had the highest prevalence of hypertension in men (41.6%) and women (34.5%), followed by Manipur (men 33.2% and women 23.0%).
- In all the eight states men had a higher blood sugar level when compared to women. Less than 50% of the households in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura were using clean fuel for cooking.
- Meghalaya had the most households covered with a health insurance scheme or financing scheme (63.5%).

Notes to Editors:

ICMR set up the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) in 1982. The programme is overseen by the ICMR National Centre for Disease Informatics & Research (NCDIR), Bengaluru. A network of population and hospital-based cancer registries (PBCR, HBCR) systematically collect data related to cancer incidence, mortality and clinical aspects to estimate burden, trends, survival and management. These results then facilitate efforts to strengthen cancer prevention and control throughout the country.

This report is a contribution to the Decadal year of ICMR-NCDIR, Bengaluru and the 40th year of NCRP.

About ICMR

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. The ICMR has always attempted to address itself to the growing demands of scientific advances in biomedical research on the one hand, and to the need of finding practical solutions to the health problems of the country, on the other. The Council's research priorities coincide with the National health priorities such as control and management of communicable diseases, fertility control, maternal and child health, control of nutritional disorders, developing alternative strategies for health care delivery, containment within safety limits of environmental and occupational health problems; research on major noncommunicable diseases like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, blindness, diabetes and other metabolic and haematological disorders; mental health research and drug research (including traditional remedies). All these efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population.

About NCDIR

The overall objective of the centre is to undertake clinical, epidemiological and public health research on cancer, diabetes, CVD and stroke as part of its mandate to work on Noncommunicable Diseases. The research involves use of disease informatics approaches and electronic tools.

- The Report is available at https://ncdirindia.org/All_Reports/NorthEast2021/Default.aspx

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