

MP Chadha Advocates for Annual Health Checkups as a Universal Right



In a notable intervention during Parliament's Monsoon Session on Monday, July 21, 2025, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP) Raghav Chadha made a compelling case for making annual health checkups a legal right for every Indian citizen. Chadha emphasized that while routine health screenings are currently a "luxury" accessible primarily to the affluent, they should be a fundamental aspect of public health policy to save lives and alleviate the burden on India's healthcare system.

During a Special Mention in the Upper House, Chadha articulated his concern, stating, "Annual health checkups have become a luxury in our country, something only the affluent can afford." He illustrated this point with poignant examples of individuals discovering serious conditions like cancer or diabetes only after debilitating symptoms emerged, underscoring the critical importance of early diagnosis. Chadha further highlighted the post-COVID-19 scenario and recent incidents of young people experiencing sudden cardiac arrests as urgent reasons for a proactive approach to public health.

The MP underscored the alarming statistic from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), which revealed that only two percent of Indian women have undergone cancer screening. He termed this figure "deeply alarming" and called upon the government to establish systems across both urban and rural India to ensure affordable, accessible, and routine health screenings for all. Chadha drew parallels with several developed nations where governments actively invite citizens for regular checkups, leading to early detection and more effective management of illnesses.

Speaking to NDTV after his parliamentary address, Chadha reiterated his conviction that such a policy, while seemingly a significant undertaking, would prove financially beneficial in the long run. "If the government allows this, I don't think it will be a huge financial burden," he stated. "In fact, it will actually bring healthcare expenditure down in the long run. When illnesses are detected early, we avoid the need for prolonged and costly treatments in government hospitals."

Citing a study published in *The Lancet*, which indicated that approximately 55% of heart attack fatalities in India are attributable to delays in timely diagnosis, Chadha concluded his address with a powerful message: "Jaan hai, toh janch hai. But janch hogi, tabhi toh jaan bachegi" (If there is life, then there is a diagnosis. But lives can only be saved if there is a diagnosis). His push for state-sponsored preventive healthcare underscores a growing call for a more robust and accessible public health framework in India, focusing on early intervention to improve national health outcomes and reduce long-term medical costs.