



# Infant Mortality Surged in Madhya Pradesh

## Why in News

According to the Office of the Registrar General India, the [Infant Mortality Rate \(IMR\)](#) in Madhya Pradesh has surged by a single point over the previous year to 48 in 2018.

- IMR is the **number of deaths of children** under one year of age **per 1000 live births**.
- The Office of the Registrar General is under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**. It issues the **Sample Registration System bulletin**, which provides estimates of birth rate, death rate and infant mortality rate for states.

## Key Points

### ▪ Data Analysis:

- The country's average [IMR](#) stands at **32 per 1,000 live births** which includes an average 36 deaths for rural and 23 for urban areas.
- In Madhya Pradesh it is 52 children in rural areas and 36 in urban areas. Madhya Pradesh has the highest IMR (48) in the country.
  - The IMR for boys in the State stood at 51, while for girls it was 46 in 2018.
  - As many as 26 infants of 1,000 live births in Madhya Pradesh died within the first seven days constituting more than half the infant deaths.
- **Uttar Pradesh** has the **next highest rate of 43** and Kerala has 7, the lowest among the bigger States.

- **Causes:** Increasing premature deliveries, infections, birth asphyxiation (lack of oxygen in blood) and delay in securing treatment which lead to complicated deliveries.

### ▪ Concerns:

- **Birth Spacing:** In most cases two children were born within one-one and a half years as against the advocated gap of around three years.
  - This may result in premature deliveries of low birth weight babies.
- **High Malnutrition:** High malnutrition levels in pregnant as well as lactating mothers often result in the death of infants.
- **Maternal Health:** It also has a bearing on the IMR. In 2015-2017, Madhya Pradesh registered a maternal mortality ratio of 188 per 1 lakh live births, against the country's average of 122.
- **Antenatal Care:** According to the [National Family Health Survey -4](#) (2015-16), only 11.4% mothers received full antenatal care. So, when pregnancy is not monitored properly it leads to complicated deliveries despite a high claimed [institutional deliveries](#).

### ▪ Solutions:

- **Response of States:** [Health](#) being a state subject, puts the onus of patient's effective care on State government. Hence, there is a need for strong commitment from the states in relation to availability of the human and financial resources.
- **Antenatal and Postnatal Care:** It is an important aspect in bringing down infant

mortalities. There is a need for sufficient health checkups, institutional deliveries and medication in Antenatal and Postnatal Care.

- **Revamping of Primary Health Care:** The primary health system needs to be ramped up in terms of facilities, trained medical professionals and medical equipment.
- **Paediatric Intensive Care Units:** To bring down the IMR, ICUs should be set up to take care of inborn children.
- **Enhancement of Manpower:** Enhancement of manpower e.g. Doctors, skilled [ASHA workers](#) and nurses at the primary health especially in [rural areas](#) would aid to institutional deliveries.
- **Digitisation:** The **National Health Portal** has been used as a single point access for institutional deliveries through Janani Suraksha Yojana.

## Government Initiatives

- **National Health Mission:** The National Health Mission (NHM) encompasses two Sub-Missions, the **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)** launched in 2005 and the **National Urban Health Mission (NUHM)** launched in 2013.
  - It envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable & quality health care services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.
- **India Newborn Action Plan:** It was launched in 2014 to make concerted efforts towards attainment of the goal of “Single Digit Neonatal Mortality Rate” and “Single Digit Still-birth Rate”.
- **Other Schemes:** Schemes like Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), [Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram \(JSSK\)](#), [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana \(PMMVY\)](#) etc. were started to promote institutional deliveries so as to reduce the prevalence of IMR.

## Way Forward

- Efforts are being made to bring down the infant mortality rate to the levels of [Sustainable Development Goals](#) i.e. **23 per 1,000 live births by 2025**.
- However, there is a need of preventive rather than only curative care.
- The **availability of funds** (from Centre) as well as its judicious use by the States is vital in effective implementation of the framed policies and overhauling of the required health infrastructure.
- Concerned ministries can **collaborate with each other** to ensure better coordination, convergence and holistic integration of different schemes, as done in [POSHAN Abhiyan](#).

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/infant-mortality-surged-in-madhya-pradesh>