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'Universal Health Coverage required'

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Tags: Sanjay Kumar | high blood pressure | gdp | Bihar

PATNA: Bihar health secretary [Sanjay Kumar](#) on Sunday stressed on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) at a seminar organized by the World Health Organization. "The time has come when people should start demanding UHC, that requires higher share of GDP spending on health programmes and there can be no better occasion to do so than the World Health Day."

Speaking about the theme of this year's day, Kumar said [high blood pressure](#) that causes cardiovascular diseases is one of the deadliest of the non-communicable diseases (NCDs). He added a special programme has been going on in the six districts of the state, including Muzaffarpur, Rohtas and Vaishali to target NCDs, though, he conceded, there was lack of manpower to implement it properly.

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On the issue of high blood pressure, regional team leader of WHO-India, Dr Hemant Shukla said every one in three persons in world suffers from high blood pressure. "In India, 24% deaths occur due to cardiovascular diseases, for which high blood pressure is the leading cause," said Dr Shukla, adding unhealthy diet, tobacco use, alcohol consumption and physical inactivity are the major causes of high blood pressure."

Experts present at the meet also demanded that all primary health centres must have at least one instrument to measure blood pressure and trained health workers to operate it.

Noted cardiologist Dr U C Samal stressed on data collection about the incidence of high blood pressure in the state at the micro level. "A day should be nominated for this exercise when all health practitioners should do this in their respective areas for better understanding of the diseases and proper implementation of programmes directed towards their treatment," he said.

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