

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1277
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06TH FEBRUARY, 2026**

REVIEW OF GUIDELINES FOR REFERRAL OF PATIENTS

1277. SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Member of Parliament, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, has requested the Government (Prime Minister, Home Minister and Health Minister) to review and amend the existing guidelines for referral of patients to mainland-empanelled hospitals under the Ayushman Bharat–Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), suggesting that patients and their attendants be referred by air travel instead of ship for both onward and return journeys, along with other measures to safeguard patients' welfare; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to consider these suggestions and the timeframe proposed for implementing the proposed measures?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) and (b): In the Union Territory (UT) of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, there are 7 public empanelled hospitals under Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). In order to facilitate free treatment to beneficiaries under AB-PMJAY, the scheme offers portability feature, wherein eligible beneficiaries can avail treatment in any empanelled hospital across the country, irrespective of the State/UT to which the beneficiary belongs. Under the scheme, States/UTs have the flexibility to customize the package rates and relax the empanelment criteria for hospitals as per the local context.
