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Aarogya Setu 2.0 and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Suite

30 June 2026 · **SCIENCE & TECH** · **GS2** · **GS3**

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Aarogya Setu 2.0 and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Suite

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Source: ujjyari.com — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

🟢 Every fact web-verified against primary sources (<https://ujjyari.com/how-we-verify/>)

WHY IN NEWS

On June 29, 2026, Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda relaunched Aarogya Setu as a Personal Health Record (PHR) application under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (<https://ujjyari.com/schemes/ayushman-bharat-digital-mission/>) (ABDM), alongside a suite of new digital-health tools.

The launch, held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, repurposes the app that was originally built in 2020 for COVID-19 contact tracing into a citizen-centric platform for storing, managing and sharing digital health records.

FROM CONTACT TRACING TO HEALTH RECORDS

Aarogya Setu was first launched in 2020 as a COVID-19 contact-tracing and self-assessment application. With the pandemic emergency behind it, the government has re-engineered the app to serve as an AI-enabled Personal Health Record management platform, anchored in the ABDM ecosystem. Users can create and manage their **Ayushman Bharat Health Account** (<https://ujjyari.com/schemes/abha/>) (ABHA), view and share longitudinal health records with consent, register for OPD through Scan and Register, and pay hospitals through Scan and Pay.

THE DIGITAL HEALTH SUITE

The relaunch bundled several interoperable building blocks of India's digital health public infrastructure:

TOOL	FUNCTION
Aarogya Setu 2.0	Personal Health Record app; ABHA creation, record sharing, OPD registration
Ayushman App	Citizen access point for Ayushman Bharat services
Ayushman Sarathi	WhatsApp chatbot for health-service assistance
National Health Claims Exchange (NHCC)	Digital gateway to standardise and speed up insurance claims
Unified Health Interface (UHI)	Open network for teleconsultation and health-service discovery
e-Sushrut	Hospital Management Information System
Drug Registry	Standardised digital registry of drugs
Bharat Health Terminology Service	National health terminology and coding standards

AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION (ABDM)

ABDM, launched in 2021, aims to build the digital backbone for India’s integrated health infrastructure. Its central identifier is the **ABHA number**, a 14-digit health ID that links a citizen’s health records across providers.

- **ABHA accounts created:** more than 90 crore
- **Health records linked:** more than 100 crore
- **Core idea:** federated, consent-based **interoperability** (<https://ujijari.com/terms/interoperability/>) so that records stay with the patient and are shared only with explicit consent.

The relaunched app integrates AI tooling to convert unstructured medical documents such as PDFs, images and screenshots into structured records in the HL7 FHIR standard, improving interoperability across the ecosystem.

DATA PRIVACY AND GOVERNANCE

Because the platform handles sensitive personal health data, it operates within the framework of the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023**. Consent management, purpose limitation and data minimisation are essential safeguards. The scan-and-share model for OPD registration reduces paperwork and waiting time, but strong technical and legal guardrails are needed to prevent misuse, profiling or unauthorised access.

ANALYSIS AND WAY FORWARD

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Digital public infrastructure (DPI) in health, built on open protocols and interoperability, can dramatically improve continuity of care, reduce duplication of diagnostics and widen access in underserved areas. The challenge lies in bridging the digital divide, ensuring last-mile adoption, protecting privacy under the DPDP Act, and maintaining data security. Robust grievance redress (<https://ujjyari.com/vocab/redress/>), transparent consent architecture and interoperability with private providers will determine whether the suite delivers equitable and trusted care.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2 (Governance, Social Sector): Issues relating to development and management of the health sector; e-governance and service delivery.

GS Paper 3 (Science and Technology): Achievements of Indians in science and technology; awareness in the field of IT; digital public infrastructure.

Prelims pointers:

- ABDM launched in 2021; ABHA is a 14-digit health identifier.
- Aarogya Setu was originally a 2020 COVID-19 contact-tracing app.
- NHCX handles health insurance claims; UHI is the open interface for teleconsultation.
- Health data is governed by the DPDP Act, 2023.

Mains question: Digital public infrastructure in health can transform service delivery but raises significant data-privacy concerns. Examine in the context of Aarogya Setu 2.0 and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission. **(15 marks, 250 words)**

FACTS CORNER

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Aarogya Setu 2.0 was relaunched by Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda on June 29, 2026 as a Personal Health Record (PHR) app under ABDM.

The original Aarogya Setu launched in 2020 as a COVID-19 contact-tracing app.

ABDM was launched in 2021; it gives every citizen an Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) number (14 digits).

The ecosystem has 90+ crore ABHA accounts and 100+ crore linked health records.

The suite includes the Ayushman App, Ayushman Sarathi WhatsApp chatbot, National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX), Unified Health Interface (UHI), e-Sushrut, a Drug Registry, and the Bharat Health Terminology Service.

Health data is protected under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (<https://ujiyari.com/legislation/dpdp-act-2023/>).

Records use the HL7 FHIR interoperability standard.

*Sources: Press Information Bureau (<https://www.pib.gov.in/>), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (<https://mhfw.gov.in/>), *GKToday* (<https://www.gktoday.in/>)*

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