



## EDITORIAL: THE HINDU

GENERAL STUDIES 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE

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TOPIC: HEALTH

### A bad omen for public trust in vaccines

#### Petitions Related to Vaccine Approval and Administration

- Multiple petitions have been filed in courts regarding vaccine approval, administration, and related concerns.
- Issues raised include transparency in clinical trials, adverse effects, and compensation for vaccine-related deaths.

#### Issues Raised in Petitions

- These concerns are not anti-vaccine conspiracy theories but valid questions.
- A petition from Kerala raised concerns about deaths linked to the anti-rabies vaccine.
- Other petitions focus on the lack of transparency in clinical trial data and disclosure of vaccine side effects.
- There are calls for better monitoring of adverse reactions and proper compensation for affected individuals.
- Many petitioners demand independent committees to review vaccine approvals, as they lack trust in the regulatory body.

#### Role of Courts and Legal Challenges

- Courts are not suited to handle complex scientific issues related to vaccines.
- Legal cases take years to resolve and often don't provide clear conclusions.
- Vaccine manufacturers have filed defamation lawsuits against critics, leading to more legal battles.
- Some courts have protected vaccine manufacturers, which could weaken public trust.

#### Lack of Transparency in Vaccine Approval

- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) is responsible for vaccine approvals but doesn't disclose decision-makers or their potential conflicts of interest.
- Making this information public could help improve trust in the approval process.

#### Need for Better Clinical Trial Data Disclosure

- CDSCO does not release clinical trial data used for vaccine approvals.



- Publicly sharing this data, while protecting patient privacy, could increase transparency.

## Informed Consent and Public Awareness

- Citizens need clear, understandable information about vaccine side effects at the time of vaccination to make informed decisions.

## Strengthening Vaccine Monitoring

- India lacks a strong legal framework for tracking adverse vaccine reactions.
- Existing guidelines are not fully enforced and need to be supported by law.

## Compensation for Vaccine-Related Deaths

- Some petitions demand compensation for the families of those who may have died due to vaccine side effects.
- A 2022 court ruling asked the government to create a compensation policy, but the final decision is still pending.

## Responsibility for Compensation

- Vaccine manufacturers should compensate affected individuals since they profit from vaccine sales.
- The government's role in compensation remains unclear due to undisclosed agreements with manufacturers.

## Conclusion

- Except for compensation, other concerns should be addressed through policies, not court cases.
- Public trust in vaccines is essential for successful immunization programs.
- The Ministry of Health should address these concerns through clear policies or new laws.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/a-bad-omen-for-public-trust-in-vaccines/article69373285.ece>

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