Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi spoke at the first-ever United Nations General Assembly high-level meeting on universal health coverage, on 23 September 2019.

Prime Minister in his remarks highlighted the bold steps taken by India to achieve Universal Health Coverage. He said that health does not simply mean freedom from diseases. A healthy life is every person’s right. The onus for this is on governments to ensure this.

He said that India has taken a holistic approach towards this subject and is working on four main pillars of healthcare:

– Preventive Healthcare
– Affordable Healthcare
– Improvements on the supply side
– Implementation in mission mode

Prime Minister said that special emphasis on Yoga, Ayurveda and Fitness and building more than 125,000 wellness centers have helped to promote preventive healthcare, helping in controlling life style diseases such as diabetes, blood pressure, depression etc. Banning of e-cigarettes, greater awareness through Clean India campaign and immunization campaigns have also contributed to health promotion.

“To ensure affordable healthcare, India has rolled out the world’s largest health insurance scheme- Ayushman Bharat. Under this scheme, 500
million poor have been given the facility of free treatment worth up to 500,000 rupees annually (more than USD$7000). There are more than 5000 Special Pharmacies, where more than 800 varieties of vital medicines are available at affordable prices.”. PM said. He also mentioned several historic steps taken by India to ensure quality medical education and medical infrastructure development. On mission mode interventions in health sector, Prime Minister spoke about the role of National Nutrition Mission in improving nutritional status of mother and child. He highlighted India’s commitment to eliminate Tuberculosis by 2025, five years ahead of the global goal of 2030. He also mentioned about the campaign against diseases that spread due to air pollution and through animals, are of vital importance. India’s efforts are not limited to its boundaries. India has helped to provide access to affordable health care including by way of tele-medicine to several other countries, especially African countries. The meeting was held under the theme “Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World,” which aims to accelerate progress toward universal health coverage (UHC). It aims at mobilizing the global community to secure political commitment from Heads of State and Government to accelerate progress toward achieving universal health coverage by 2030. Nearly 160 UN Member States are slated to speak at this meeting. In 2015 Heads of States and Governments made a commitment to achieve universal health coverage by 2030, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.