

More states will join Ayushman Bharat after its success: Nadda

Sanchita Sharma

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEWDELHI: The Centre is confident of getting more states to join its ambitious healthcare scheme, Ayushman Bharat, after they witness the success of the programme, Union health minister JP Nadda has said.

The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana,



which will be launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23, aims to provide healthcare cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year to 500 million poor people. "It's a ₹5-lakh cover for 55 crore people. The whole scenario will change because of the numbers that will come to get treated... Tamil Nadu signed, Karnataka is coming on board... Kerala is still dealing with the

floods. Punjab is going to come, Telangana is on board," Nadda said in an interview.

Nadda said he made repeated appeals to Delhi and Odisha to join. "They know their minds best, but I will appeal to them time again and again," he said when asked if they were resisting because of upcoming elections. Ayushman Bharat is touted as the world's largest public-funded health insurance programme.

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Nadda

Some of the states not ruled by the BJP have expressed reluctance over the scheme. Odisha said it had its own healthcare scheme and did not need to launch Ayushman Bharat. Nadda said the scheme was “a major step towards” towards universal health cover. “When universal screening begins, it becomes universal health coverage. We are on track,” he said.