



COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)
Central Committee

General Secretary : Sitaram Yechury

August 31, 2020

Dear Pradhan Mantri ji,

I am writing to you regarding the announcement by your government seeking comments on the Health Data Management Policy (HDMP) by September 3, 2020. This needs to be postponed and no policy may be finalised before a structured discussion on the serious implications contained in this draft are considered.

Such a discussion becomes imperative given the fact that the HDMP is part of the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) that was announced by you on Independence Day 2020. Strangely, the government has sought comments on the HDMP in isolation and not the NDHM as a whole.

The NDHM proposes to collect sensitive personal data of all citizens which will then be made available to private insurance corporates and the pharmaceutical companies. This is a serious breach of protection of personal data.

After considerable discussion in the country and in the parliament, the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 (PDP Bill) was introduced, which is currently pending before parliament. The proposed HDMP makes no reference to this Bill that is pending for consideration of the parliament. In fact the proposed HDMP has many provisions that amount to a serious dilution of the essence of the Bill before parliament i.e. regarding governance of data protection.

Under these circumstances, I urge the central government to postpone the finalisation of both the HDMP and the NDMH before parliament concludes its consideration on the PDP Bill.

Both the houses of parliament have been convened to meet on the 14th of September. Parliament should discuss and consider the NDHM and the HDMP while it discusses the PDP Bill, 2019.



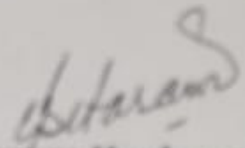
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No implementation of any Mission can be made unless parliament and its structures like the Standing Committee consider these proposals in depth.

Hence, we urge you to defer the date of September 3, 2020 as the final date for comments.

regards,

Yours sincerely


(Sitaram Yechury)
General Secretary

Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister
Government of India