

# 'Survey raises many red flags'

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**Mumbai:** Praja Foundation, an NGO, conducted a survey of 15,000 households in the city to determine the state of the citizens' health. In its white paper, Praja said that if private healthcare services were taken into account, an estimated 3.9 lakh people were affected by malaria in 2011-12, or in other words there were 148 cases per 1,000 households. The official figure is only 29,828 cases of malaria but there were 64 deaths reported in 2011 alone.

Dr Hemant Thacker, who consults at Jaslok and Breach Candy Hospitals, said the reason why dengue cases have been going up was due to the virus that spreads the disease. "Dengue is caused by

## DETERIORATING HEALTH

People affected by sensitive diseases and ailments in the city

Disease	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Malaria	23,317	39,898	78,448	39,828
Diarrhoea	81,321	116,295	125,999	99,839
Hypertension	28,337	32,469	38,388	25,518
Tuberculosis	31,510	29,692	32,383	29,878
Diabetes	23,777	23,838	22,493	21,264
Typhoid	8,288	4,220	6,557	7,561
Hepatitis B	990	444	547	931
Dengue	682	866	1,403	1,879
Cholera	96	124	236	178

(Number of cases reported from BMC and government-run hospitals)

a virus, while malaria is caused by a parasite called plasmodium. Though the lifespan of a virus is only 5-15 days, due to sudden weather changes, the virus remains active causing dengue," he

said, adding that the BMC has been able to control malaria cases in the city.

"Our report on the state of health of Mumbai raises several red flags. The survey revealed that more than 30%

of households spend 11% or more of their annual income on hospitals and medical costs. The survey also shows that almost 80% Mumbaikars did not have a medical insurance. Also, 75% of Mumbaikars use private sources, hence, there is a need for a strong mechanism to collect data from them," said Nitai Mehta, founder trustee of Praja Foundation.

BMC health officer Dr Arun Bamne said malaria and diarrhoea come under non-notifiable diseases, meaning the private hospitals do not notify the BMC when they get patients suffering from these ailments. "We have not received the Praja Foundation report yet, so it will not be right to comment on the report," he said.