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Title: Need to launch a national programme to prevent youngsters falling prey to hypertension.

DR. RATNA DE (HOOGHLY): Of late, a disturbing trend is being seen in the country. Youngsters are falling prey to hypertension. With the world growing at a rapid pace, diseases are afflicting youngsters with faster pace. One of the major diseases which is plaguing youngsters of our country is hypertension. If we go through the latest World Health Organisation Report, it would be astonishing to find out that hypertension is affecting 36 percent of males and 34 percent of females. What is more disturbing is that hypertension is affecting those youngsters who are in the age group of 25 years.

Young people due to a lot of pressure opt to work in stressful environment. Added to this, they are easily attracted to junk food with high salt content. Though WHO report on hypertension is concerning the youngsters of the world but we should not lose sight of the fact that India has a huge young population. I would like to urge Central Government and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to address the issue. A holistic step should be taken by the Ministry by initiating a national programme which should address various facets of hypertension. A proper monitoring and awareness should be started to unshackle the youngsters of the country from the grips of hypertension, otherwise, India, as a developing nation could be paying a hefty price in the years ahead.