

Today's Prelims Topics

'Kerala India's first fully digitally literate State'

Context

Kerala has been declared India's first fully digitally literate state after the successful completion of the Digi Kerala project.

Criteria for declaring Kerala as India's first fully digitally literate state

- **Survey Coverage** – 1.5 crore people from 83.46 lakh families were surveyed.
- **Identification of Gap** – 21.88 lakh people were found digitally illiterate.
- **Training & Evaluation** – 21.87 lakh people (99.98% of identified) successfully completed digital literacy training under **Digi Kerala Project**.
- **Inclusivity** – Training covered all local bodies (panchayats, municipalities, corporations).
- **Verification** – Independent evaluation ensured training outcomes were achieved.

Status of Digital Literacy in India (as of 2025)

- **Kerala** – First **100% digitally literate state**.
- **Other States** – Various state-level programs exist (e.g., *Digital Saksharta Abhiyan* (DISHA), *PMGDISHA* at national level), but no other state has declared full coverage.
- **National Schemes** –
 - **PMGDISHA (Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan)** aims to train **6 crore rural households** in basic digital literacy.
 - Focus on covering one person per rural household.
- **Progress** – As per official data (2023–24), over **5.5 crore candidates** have been trained under PMGDISHA, but penetration is uneven across states.
- **Challenges** –
 - Digital divide between rural & urban areas.
 - Gender gap in access to devices & internet.
 - Lack of infrastructure in remote areas.

Kerala's achievement shows how **grassroots, panchayat-level interventions** can make digital literacy universal, while India overall is still in the **expansion phase**.

Source: [TheHindu](#)

National List of Essential Medicines 2022

Context

The **163rd Report of the Committee on Petitions** tabled in Parliament highlighted that **many cancer drugs remain outside price control**.

Cancer Drugs & Price Control –(Committee on Petitions, 163rd Report, 2025)

- **Current Scenario:**
 - Many **cancer drugs** are **not covered** under the **Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO)** → no statutory price ceiling.
 - Anti-cancer drugs under price control: **40 in 2011 → 63 in 2022** (National List of Essential Medicines 2022).
- **Impact:**
 - Exclusion from DPCO has led to **high and unaffordable pricing**.
 - Limits access for a large section of patients.
- **Committee Recommendations:**
 - **Expand DPCO coverage** to include maximum possible range of cancer drugs.
 - Conduct **regular market assessments** for drug prices and availability.
 - **Monitor quality of generics** – many doctors hesitate to prescribe due to lack of **WHO GMP certification**.
 - Improve **access to new cancer drugs** by addressing regulatory delays, insufficient domestic R&D, and pricing constraints.
 - **Enhance domestic research infrastructure** and support **indigenous development** of novel oncology therapies.
 - **Streamline regulatory pathways** and prioritize **value-based approvals**.
 - Encourage **private sector and pharma companies** to invest in high-level oncology research.

Source: [TheHindu](https://www.thehindu.com)

NOTTO

Context

The National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (**NOTTO**) issued a directive prioritizing women patients and relatives of deceased donors in organ allocation to address gender disparity in organ transplants.

National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO)

- **Overview:**
 - National-level organization under the **Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi.**
 - Established as per the **Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues (Amendment) Act, 2011.**
 - Serves as the **apex centre** for coordination and networking of organ and tissue donation and transplantation in India.
- **Main Divisions:**
 - **National Human Organ and Tissue Removal and Storage Network**
 - **National Biomaterial Centre**
- **Key Functions and Activities:**
 - Facilitate **safe and timely organ transplantation** across the country.
 - Maintain a **national registry** for organ and tissue donation and transplantation.
 - Lay down **policy guidelines and protocols** for transplantation-related functions.
 - **Network** with regional and state-level organizations.
 - Compile and **publish registry data** from states and regions.
 - Promote **awareness and deceased organ donation** initiatives.
 - Coordinate **procurement, allocation, and transplantation** of organs, including inter-region transfers.
 - Disseminate **information to hospitals, organizations, and individuals** involved in transplantation.
 - **Monitor transplantation activities** across states and maintain a data bank.
 - Assist states in **data management, transplant surveillance, and donor registry.**
 - Provide **consultancy support** on legal and non-legal aspects of donation and transplantation.
 - Organize **training programs** for various cadres of healthcare and transplantation workers.

Source: [TheHindu](#)

Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025

Context

The **Prime Minister endorsed the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025**, aimed at promoting e-sports and online social games while regulating online money games to protect society.

Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025

- Introduces a **ban on real money gaming** due to social, financial, and psychological harms.
- Provides a framework to **promote e-sports and online social games** safely.
- Objective: **Protect vulnerable groups, encourage responsible gaming, and boost India's digital innovation ecosystem.**

Key Provisions

- **E-Sports:**
 - Recognized as a creative, recreational industry with strong growth potential.
 - Supported as a **mainstream sector** under the Bill.
- **Online Social Games:**
 - Encouraged as safe, non-monetary entertainment.
 - Free from addictive gambling or financial risk.
- **Online Money Games:**
 - Fully **prohibited**. Includes fantasy sports, poker, rummy, and similar platforms.
 - **Penalties for violations:**
 - First-time: up to **3 years imprisonment + Rs. 1 crore fine.**
 - Repeat offenders: **3–5 years imprisonment + Rs. 2 crore fine.**

Establishment of Online Gaming Authority

- A statutory body to **coordinate, regulate, and supervise** the gaming sector.
- Responsibilities include:
 - Support legitimate e-sports and social gaming enterprises.
 - Curb harmful practices (money laundering, addictive algorithms, fraud).
 - Provide **uniform legal oversight** for safe and sustainable sector growth.

Rationale for the Bill

- Address urgent issues arising from online money gaming:
 - **32 suicides** linked to addiction in 31 months.
 - Rising **financial distress** among families.
 - Use of real money games for **money laundering and terror financing.**
 - Psychological disorders and predatory gaming practices.
- Lawmakers emphasized the Bill as **national interest legislation**, protecting families and public welfare.

Industry Response and Challenges

- Real money gaming industry faces major impact; may consider **constitutional challenges** citing trade restrictions.
- Legal experts believe the Bill is **constitutionally sound**, grounded in public interest and national security.

Significance for India's Digital Future

- **Youth:** Protects against addiction and financial harm.
- **Industry:** Clarifies legitimacy and opportunities for e-sports and social gaming start-ups.
- **Society:** Reduces fraud, money laundering, and mental health risks.
- **Governance:** Establishes a **uniform, national regulatory framework** for online gaming.
- Encourages India's growth as a **global player in digital entertainment**, aligning with future sporting events like the proposed **2036 Olympics.**

Source: [PIB](#)

Areca Nut

Context

Union Agriculture Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan chaired a meeting on **areca nut cultivation**, discussing health risks, viral disease losses, illegal imports, farmer compensation, and planned scientific studies, with a visit to Karnataka announced.

Areca Nut (Supari)

- **Botanical Name:** *Areca catechu*.
- **Plant Type:** Palm tree, mainly grown in tropical regions.
- **Uses:**
 - Chewed raw, dried, or processed (commonly with betel leaves).
 - Used in traditional medicine and cultural rituals in many Asian countries.
- **Geographical Cultivation:**
 - Major producers: India (Kerala, Karnataka, Assam, Tamil Nadu), Bangladesh, Indonesia, and other Southeast Asian countries.
- **Economic Importance:**
 - Provides livelihood to millions of small and marginal farmers.
 - Significant for regional trade and local economy.
- **Health Concerns:**
 - Classified as a **Group 1 carcinogen** by WHO (linked to oral cancer).
 - May cause oral submucous fibrosis, gum disease, and other health issues.
- **Agricultural Challenges:**
 - Vulnerable to viral and fungal diseases.
 - Subject to illegal imports affecting domestic farmers.
- **Government Measures:**
 - Monitoring cultivation practices.
 - Considering compensation and scientific studies on health impacts.

Source: [PIB](#)

SLINEX-2025

Context

Indian Naval Ships INS Rana and INS Jyoti took part in the **12th edition of the Sri Lanka–India Naval Exercise (SLINEX-25)**.

Exercise SLINEX

- **Overview:**
 - Bilateral naval exercise between **India and Sri Lanka**, conceptualized in **2005**.
 - Strengthens **maritime cooperation** and bilateral naval ties over two decades.
- **Objectives:**
 - Enhance **interoperability** between the navies.
 - Promote **maritime cooperation** and exchange of **best practices**.
 - Conduct **multi-faceted maritime operations** jointly.
- **Previous Edition:**
 - Held at **Visakhapatnam, India** in **2024**.
- **Phases of Exercise:**
 - **Harbour Phase:**
 - Professional interactions and **Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE)**.
 - Sharing of best practices, cultural & social exchanges.
 - Activities include **yoga sessions and sporting events**.
 - **Sea Phase:**
 - Naval drills including **gunnery firing, communication protocols, navigation, seamanship evolutions**.
 - **Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS)** exercises.
 - **Refueling at sea** operations.
- **Significance:**
 - Demonstrates **deep maritime engagement** between India and Sri Lanka.
 - Strengthens cooperation aligned with India's **MAHASAGAR policy** (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions).

Source: [PIB](#)