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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## ORGAN TRANSPLANT IN INDIA

*This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Organ Transplant in India". The topic "Organ Transplant in India" has relevance in the Public Health section of the UPSC CSE exam.*

### **Relevance:**

#### **For Prelims:**

*What is Organ Transplant?*

#### **For Mains:**

*GS 2: Public Health*

*Issues related to Organ Transplant in India?*

*Measures to be taken to deal with issues?*

*About NOTTO?*

### **Why in the News?**

The National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) has issued a warning after it found private websites and social media posts promoting and offering organs for trade.

### **What is Organ Transplant?**

Organ transplantation is a medical procedure in which a healthy organ or tissue is surgically removed from a donor and placed into a recipient whose organ have failed or are no longer functioning properly. The donated organ can come from a living donor or a deceased donor.

The most common types of organ transplants include kidney, liver, heart, lung, and pancreas transplants. Additionally, tissues such as corneas, skin, bone, and heart valves can also be transplanted.

- The Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994, governs organ transplantation in India.
- Recent changes include removing domicile criteria for recipients and allowing registration for patients aged 65 and older.
- India has seen a significant increase in organ transplants over the past decade. However, the organ donation rate in India remains very low, with only about 0.01 percent of Indians donating their organs after death.
- The National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) is responsible for organ procurement, distribution, and maintaining a national registry in India.

### **Issues related to Organ Transplant in India?**

- **Low Organ Donation Rate:** Despite performing a significant number of transplants, India has a low organ donation rate. Only around 0.01 percent of Indians donate their organs after death,

according to the World Health Organization. This shortage of organs hampers the availability of life-saving transplants for patients in need.

- **Lack of Awareness:** Limited awareness about organ donation and transplantation contributes to the low organ donation rate. Many people are not familiar with the process, benefits, and the impact their donation can make on someone's life.
- **Organ Trafficking:** Organ trafficking, which involves illegal trade and transplantation of organs, is a global issue, the presence of illegal networks and the demand for organs create challenges in eradicating this unethical practice.
- **Organ Transplant Infrastructure:** Lack of adequate infrastructure, including transplant centers, trained medical professionals, and facilities for organ preservation and transportation, Ethical Considerations: Organ transplantation raises ethical questions regarding organ allocation, fairness, and equity in access to transplantation.

### **Measures to be taken to deal with issues?**

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Conduct widespread awareness campaigns to educate the public about organ donation, transplantation, and the importance of ethical practices. These campaigns can be carried out through various mediums, including mass media, social media, educational institutions, and community outreach programs.
- **Strengthening Legal Framework:** Continuously review and strengthen the legal framework governing organ transplantation to address emerging challenges and ensure strict enforcement. This includes effective monitoring and crackdown on illegal organ trading activities and imposing severe penalties on offenders.
- **Improved Organ Procurement Systems:** Establish efficient organ procurement systems to facilitate the timely retrieval and allocation of organs. This can involve setting up organ retrieval centers, enhancing coordination between hospitals and transplant centers, and implementing protocols for the identification and evaluation of potential donors.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Foster partnerships between the government, healthcare institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities to enhance organ donation and transplantation efforts. Collaboration can help streamline processes, share resources, and leverage expertise to improve organ procurement, transplantation services, and public outreach.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Invest in training programs and capacity building initiatives for healthcare professionals involved in organ transplantation. This includes training transplant surgeons, nurses, coordinators, and other healthcare providers to ensure standardized practices, maintain quality standards, and enhance the overall transplantation process.
- **Ethical Guidelines and Oversight:** Develop comprehensive ethical guidelines for organ allocation and transplant procedures, ensuring fairness, transparency, and equitable distribution. Establish oversight committees or regulatory bodies to monitor adherence to ethical guidelines and address any potential ethical concerns that may arise.
- **International Collaboration:** Foster collaboration and information-sharing with international organizations and countries with successful organ transplantation programs. Learning from best practices, sharing knowledge, and collaborating on research and technological advancements can further enhance organ transplantation practices in India.
- **Donor Registry and Exchange Networks:** Develop a robust national donor registry and explore the establishment of exchange networks to optimize organ allocation. These networks

can facilitate organ sharing among different regions, prioritize patients based on medical urgency, and reduce waiting times for organ transplantation.

- **Research and Innovation:** Encourage research and innovation in the field of organ transplantation, including advancements in organ preservation techniques, immunosuppressive therapies, and organ engineering. Promote collaborations between scientists, clinicians, and industry stakeholders to drive advancements and improve outcomes in the field.
- **Support for Organ Donors and Recipients:** Provide adequate support, counseling, and healthcare services to organ donors and recipients throughout the transplantation process. This includes post-transplant care, lifelong follow-up, and mental health support to ensure the well-being of both donors and recipients.

#### **About NOTTO?**

- The NOTTO is a national-level organization housed in the Institute of Pathology (ICMR).
- Its mandate is to establish a network for organ procurement and distribution and maintain a national registry for surveillance of organ donation and transplantation in India.
- NOTTO operates under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

**Source:**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/organ-transplant-body-writes-to-states-calls-for-strict-action-to-prevent-trafficking/article67019490.ece>

#### **Q.1 Which organization is responsible for maintaining a national registry for organ donation and transplantation in India?**

- (a) NOTTO
- (b) WHO
- (c) ICMR
- (d) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

**Answer: (a)**

#### **Q.2 What is the primary legislation governing organ transplantation in India?**

- (a) Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994
- (b) Organ Transplantation Regulatory Act, 2001
- (c) National Organ Transplantation Policy, 2010
- (d) Human Organ Donation and Transplantation Act, 2015

**Answer: (a)**

#### **Q.3 Discuss the challenges and potential solutions for improving the organ transplantation system in India. What steps can the government take to promote ethical practices and curb illegal organ trading?**

**Rishabh**