



Karnataka High Court on Online Gaming

For Prelims: Online Gaming, Gambling, Karnataka Police (Amendment) Act, 2021, Game of Skill, Game of Chance, Lottery, Betting,

For Mains: Judgements & Cases, Online Gaming and its Impact, Laws related to Gambling, Betting and Lottery

Why in News?

Recently, the Karnataka High Court delivered a judgement striking down major portions of the **Karnataka Police (Amendment) Act, 2021** which banned online gambling and skill-based gaming platforms.

- Currently, online gaming falls in a regulatory grey area and **there is no comprehensive legislation with respect to its legality.**

What was the High Court's Ruling?

- The Karnataka High Court struck down the amendments to the Karnataka Police Act on three major grounds:
 - **Violation of fundamental rights** of trade and commerce ([Article 19](#)), liberty and privacy ([Article 21](#)), speech and expression (Article 19).
 - Being manifestly arbitrary and irrational insofar as **it did not distinguish between two different categories of games**, i.e. games of skill and chance.
 - A **“game of skill”** is based mainly on the mental or physical level of expertise of a player, rather than a chance.
 - A **“game of chance”** however is determined mainly by a random factor of any type. In games of chance, the usage of skill is present but a higher level of chance determines success.
 - **Games based on skills are allowed in most parts of the country**, while **games of chance** are categorised under gambling and are **prohibited in most parts of the country**. As **betting and gambling is a state subject**, different states have their own legislation.
 - **Lack of legislative competence of State legislatures** to enact laws on online skill-based games.
- The court also **held that the State government provided no evidence or data on whether a sweeping ban was justified and neither constituted a committee of experts** to study the issue.
- The court also **held that playing online games could help in building the character of an individual and enjoying online gaming could also fall within the contours of freedom of expression** and right to liberty and privacy guaranteed under the constitution.
- The court also opined that **regulation of online games may be a better and proportionate solution rather than an outright ban**, and left it open for the State government to come up with a new legislation dealing with betting and gambling in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

What was the Karnataka Police (Amendment) Act, 2021?

- The law was introduced by the Karnataka government to **ban online gambling and skill-based gaming platforms**.
- The games banned were games that **involved any wagering or risking of money** on an uncertain event for example online rummy, poker and fantasy sports .

Which are the Other States Where Such Laws Were Struck Down?

- Apart from Karnataka, a similar law introduced by the **Tamil Nadu government was struck down by the Madras High Court in August 2021**.
- In September 2021, the **Kerala High Court had also quashed a notification issued by the State government** specifically banning the game of online rummy when played for stakes.

Why are States Trying to Ban Online Gaming?

- Many social activists, government officials and those in law enforcement believe that **online games like rummy and poker are addictive in nature**, and when played with monetary stakes leads to depression, mounting debts and suicides.
 - `Reportedly, there have been a few instances where **youngsters, faced with mounting debts due to losses** in online games have committed other crimes like theft and murder.
 - Earlier, the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) had announced a plan to include **“gaming disorder” as a mental health condition**.
- Online games are **susceptible to manipulation by the websites operating such games** and that there is a possibility that users are not playing such games against other players, but against automatic machines or ‘bots’, wherein **there is no fair opportunity for an ordinary user to win the game**.

What are the Negative Consequences of Banning Online Gaming?

- An outright ban may not entirely curtail the playing of such online games, with or without stakes.
 - **Telangana, which was the first State to ban online games for stakes in 2017** has seen a **spurt of illegal or underground online gambling apps**.
 - Most of which **originate from China or other foreign countries**, and accept payments from players through dummy companies or hawala channels.
 - Both the [Enforcement Directorate \(ED\)](#) and local cyber crime authorities have tried to crack down on such apps but with limited success.
- Shifting of users to grey or illegal offshore online gaming apps not only results in **loss of tax revenue for the State and job opportunities** for locals, but results in **users being unable to avail remedies for any unfair behaviour** or refusal to pay out winnings.

What are the Central Laws Related to Lottery, Gambling and Betting?

- **The Lotteries Regulation Act, 1998:**
 - Lottery is considered **legal in India**. Lottery should be organised by the state government and the place of Draw should be in that particular state.
- **Indian Penal Code, 1860:**
 - The code has provisions for punishing anyone who to the annoyance of others does any obscene act in a public place or sings, recites or utters any obscene song, ballad or words, in or near any public place.
 - These provisions of the IPC may be attracted if any obscene matter is used for the purpose of advertising betting and gambling activities.
- **Prize Competitions Act, 1955:**
 - It defines Prize in Competitions.
- [Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999:](#)
 - Remittance of the income generated from lottery winning, racing/riding is prohibited under this Act.
- [Information Technology Rules, 2011:](#)

- Under these rules, any internet service provider, network service provider or any search engine will not host any such content which directly or indirectly supports Gambling.
- **Income Tax Act, 1961:**
 - Current taxation policy in India covers all types of Gambling industry directly and indirectly. Thus, it can be said that all regulated and legalised Gambling is supported in the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** of India.

Way Forward

- Instead of a complete ban, **one could look at licensing and regulating the industry** with various checks and balances such as:
 - Diligent KYC and anti-money laundering processes.
 - Barring minors from accessing real money games.
 - Placing weekly or monthly limits on the money that can be staked or time that can be spent.
 - Counselling for addictive players and allowing self-exclusion of such players etc.
- A **Gaming Authority at the central level should be created**. It could be made responsible for the online gaming industry, monitoring its operations, preventing societal issues, suitably classifying games of skill or chance, overseeing consumer protection, and combatting illegality and crime.
- More and more youngsters are getting hooked to online games. In light of this, **the Online gaming industry needs to be regulated in India**. Moreover, regulation of online gaming will not only open up economic opportunities but also address its social costs.

[Source: TH](#)

Public Order

For Prelims: Public Order, Hijab, Fundamental Rights, Cases Related to Freedom of Religion.

For Mains: Fundamental Rights, Judiciary, Government Policies & Interventions, Women's Issues, Cases Related to Freedom of Religion.

Why in News?

Recently, the **Karnataka High Court** is hearing a challenge to the constitutionality of the state government's ban on students wearing a **hijab in educational institutions**.

- The case was regarding the arguments on whether the state can justify the ban on the ground that it **violates 'public order'**.

What is Public Order?

- Public order is normally **equated with public peace and safety**.
- Public order is one of the three grounds on which the **state can restrict freedom of religion**.
 - **Article 25** of the Constitution guarantees to all persons the right to freedom and conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion **subject to public order, morality and health**.

- Public order is also one of the grounds to restrict **free speech and other fundamental rights**.
- According to **State List** (List 2) of the **Seventh Schedule of the Constitution**, the power to legislate on aspects of public order rests with the states.

How has Public order been Interpreted by Courts?

- What affects public order **is contextual and is determined by the state**.
- However, the courts have broadly interpreted it to mean something that **affects the community at large and not a few individuals**.
- In **Ram Manohar Lohia vs State of Bihar (1965)**, the **Supreme Court** held that in the case of 'public order', **the community or the public at large have to be affected by a particular action**.
- The **contravention of law** (to do something that is forbidden by the law or rule) always affects order but before it can be said to affect public order, it must affect the community or the public at large.
 - One has to imagine **three concentric circles**, the **largest representing 'law and order'**, the next representing **'public order'** and the **smallest representing 'security of State'**.

How Does it relate to the Hijab Ban?

- According to the government order issued on February 5 under the **Karnataka Education Act, 1983**, **"public order"** is one of the reasons for not allowing students to wear a headscarf in educational institutions **along with "unity" and "integrity."**
 - Previously, several courts have **given orders on prescription of dress code for minorities** in public institutions.
- **Petitioners Arguments:** The petitioners have argued that public order is not every breach of law and order.
 - Public order is an aggravated form of disturbance that is much higher than a law and order issue.
 - The petitioners have asked the state to show how the mere wearing of a hijab by students could constitute a public order issue.
- **Karnataka Government' Stand: Karnataka's Advocate General** has argued that the government order makes no mention of "public order" and that the petitioner's reading of the order could be an error in translation.
 - The order, in Kannada, uses the words **"sarvajanika suvyavasthe"**.

Source: IE

Minority Educational Institutions and Right to Education

For Prelims: Minority Educational Institutions (MEI), Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009, Cultural and Educational Rights under Article 21A, Article 29 and 30 of Indian Constitution.

For Mains: Linkage between MEI and RTE, Education.

Why in News?

Recently, the Supreme Court has refused to entertain a petition questioning the exclusion of madrasas and Vedic schools (**Minority Educational Institutions (MEI)**) from the ambit of the **Right of Children**

to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009.

- The exclusion of these institutions was specifically inserted into the 2009 Act by an amendment of August 2012.
- Earlier, [a report by the NCPDR](#) showed the disproportionate number of minority institutions or dominance of non-minority category in Minority institutions.

What are Legal Provisions regarding MEI and RTE?

- **Right to Education under Article 21A:** It describes modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for **children aged between 6-14 years** in India under Article 21 (A) of the Constitution of India (86th Amendment).
 - The Act mandates **25% reservation for disadvantaged sections** of the society where disadvantaged groups include:
 - SCs and STs
 - Socially Backward Class
 - Differently abled
- **Article 29 and 30 of Indian Constitution** contain provisions securing rights of **minorities** and minority-run institutions.
 - Minority institutions have the fundamental right under Article 30 of the Constitution **to establish and administer their educational institutions according to their choice.**
- In this context, **RTE was amended to add in Sections 1(4) and 1(5) of the Act.**
 - **Section 1(5)** of the RTE Act states, “Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to madrasas, Vedic pathshalas and educational institutions primarily imparting religious instruction.
 - **Section 1(4)** of the RTE states that “Subject to the provisions of Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution, the provisions of this Act shall apply to conferment of rights on children to free and compulsory education.

What are the Arguments of Petitioners?

- **Avoiding Religious Connotation in Formative Years:** Sections 1(4) and 1(5) fail to consider that children aged between 6 and 14 years are in their formative years and such education brings about a religious connotation in the mind of children.
- **Level Playing Field:** Introduction of common syllabus and common curriculum would enable every child to be placed on a level playing field for the challenges of the future.
 - Right of a child should not be restricted only to free education, but must be extended to have equal quality education without discrimination on the ground of child's social economic and cultural background.
- **Adhering to Constitutional Values:** It would meaningfully contribute in achieving the great golden goals as set out in the preamble, particularly fraternity, unity and national integration.
- Therefore, the court may declare Sections 1(4) and 1(5) of the 2009 Act arbitrary and irrational.

Way Forward

- There is a need to review the exemption made under RTE with respect to minority institutions.
 - Article 30 of the Indian constitution ensures the right of minorities to open their own institutions for cultural, linguistic and religious protection.
 - However, it should not contravene with Article 21(A) which protects a child's fundamental right to education.

[Source: HT](#)

Improving Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana Scheme

For Prelims: Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana Scheme, States opting out of PMFBY.

For Mains: Issues in PMFBY, Direct and indirect subsidies.

Why in News?

Recently, **Maharashtra has signaled** that it may opt out of [Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana Scheme](#).

- Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Telangana, Bihar, Gujarat, Punjab and West Bengal - all predominantly agriculture states - have already opted out of the scheme.

What are the Major Provisions of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)?

- Launched in 2016 and is being administered by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
 - It replaced the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).
- **Aim:** To provide a comprehensive insurance cover against the failure of the crop thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers.
- **Scope:** All food & oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.
- **Premium:** The prescribed premium is 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all rabi crops. In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium is 5%.
 - Premium cost over and above the farmer share was equally subsidized by States and GoI.
 - However, GoI shared 90% of the premium subsidy for North Eastern States to promote the uptake in the region.
- **Implementation:** By empanelled general insurance companies. The selection of the Implementing Agency (IA) is done by the concerned State Government through bidding.
- **Revamped PMFBY:** The revamped PMFBY is often called [PMFBY 2.0](#), it has the following features:
 - **Completely Voluntary:** Enrolment 100% voluntary for all farmers from 2020 Kharif.
 - Earlier, it was compulsory for loanee farmers availing Crop Loan/Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops.
 - **Limit to Central Subsidy:** The Centre has decided to limit the PMFBY premium rates - against which it would bear 50% of the subsidy - to a maximum of 30% in un-irrigated and 25% in irrigated areas.
 - **More Flexibility to States:** The government has given the flexibility to states/UTs to implement PMFBY and given them the option to select any number of additional risk covers/features.
 - **Investing in ICE Activities:** Insurance companies have to now spend 0.5% of the total premium collected on Information, Education And Communication (IEC) activities.

What are the Issues in PMFBY?

- **Financial Constraints of States:** The financial constraints of the state governments and low claim ratio during normal seasons are the major reasons for non-implementation of the Scheme by these States.
 - States are unable to deal with a situation where insurance companies compensate farmers less than the premium they have collected from them and the Centre.
 - The State governments failed to release funds on time leading to delays in releasing insurance compensation.
 - This defeats the very purpose of the scheme which is to provide timely financial assistance to the farming community.
- **Claim Settlement Issues:** Many farmers are dissatisfied with both the level of compensation and

delays in settlement.

- The role and power of Insurance companies is significant. In many cases, it didn't investigate losses due to a localised calamity and, therefore, did not pay the claims.
- **Implementation Issues:** Insurance companies have shown no interest in bidding for clusters that are prone to crop loss.
 - Further, it is in the nature of the insurance business for entities to make money when crop failures are low and vice-versa.
- **Identification Issues:** Currently the PMFBY scheme doesn't distinguish between large and small farmers and thus raises the issue of identification. Small farmers are the most vulnerable class.

Way Forward

- **Improving PMFBY:** If the farmer is not enthused by crop insurance despite the 95-98% subsidy on premium, it means that the product per se needs improvement.
 - In this context, Insurance companies should bid for a cluster for about three years, so that they get a better chance to handle both good and bad years.
 - The bids should be closed before the onset of the kharif/rabi season.
- **Adopting Beed Model:** In Maharashtra '**Beed model** is being followed', where a company assumes liability only up to 110% of the premium collected or shares gains in a good year with the State government.
 - This model can emerge as a way out from the current mess.

[Source: DTE](#)

Goa's Liberation Struggle

For Prelims: Goa's liberation struggle, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Operation Vijay.

For Mains: Post-independence Consolidation of India, History of Goa's Freedom Movement.

Why in News

Recently, the **liberation of Goa became a controversial topic** during the political campaign in the election of Goa.

- **In 1962**, Goa was liberated from **Portuguese rule**, 15 years after India attained freedom in 1947. Goa, not becoming independent immediately after independence was because of a **variety of complex factors**.
- Goa was liberated on **19th December 1961 (Statehood Day of Goa)** by swift Indian military action that lasted less than two days.

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What is the Timeline of Integration of Goa into the Indian Union?

- Relations between **India and Portugal** began amicably in 1947 after India's independence and diplomatic relations were established in 1949.
- Bilateral relations however went into decline after 1950 over Portugal's refusal to surrender its

- enclaves of **Goa, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli on India's west coast.**
 - **Daman & Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli** were integrated into India in **1961**.
- Portugal had changed its constitution in 1951 to claim Goa **not as a colonial possession, but as an overseas province.**
 - The move was apparently aimed at making Goa a part of the newly formed **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)** military alliance.
 - It was intended to invoke the collective security clause of the treaty, in the event of an attack by India.
- By 1955, the two nations had **cut off diplomatic relations**, triggering a crisis which **precipitated the liberation of Goa by Indian military forces**, ending Portuguese rule over **Indian enclaves in 1961**.
- In 1961, after the failure of diplomatic efforts with the Portuguese, the Indian Government launched **Operation Vijay** and annexed Daman and Diu and Goa with the Indian mainland on 19th December.
- It brought an end to **451 years of Portuguese overseas provincial governance in Goa.**

What is the History of Goa's Freedom Movement?

- Goa became a **Portuguese colony in 1510**, when **Admiral Afonso de Albuquerque** defeated the forces of the **sultan of Bjiapur, Yusuf Adil Shah**.
- By the turn of the twentieth century, Goa had started to witness an upsurge of **nationalist sentiment opposed to Portugal's colonial rule**, in sync with the anti-British nationalist movement in the rest of India.
- Stalwarts such **Tristão de Bragança Cunha**, celebrated as the father of Goan nationalism, founded the **Goa National Congress at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1928**.
- In 1946, the socialist leader **Ram Manohar Lohia** led a historic rally in Goa that **gave a call for civil liberties and freedom, and eventual integration with India**, which became a watershed moment in Goa's freedom struggle.
- At the same time, there was a thinking that civil liberties could not be won by peaceful methods, and a more aggressive armed struggle was needed. This was the view of the **Azad Gomantak Dal (AGD)**.
- As India moved towards independence, however, it became clear that Goa would not be free any time soon, because of a variety of **complex factors like**:
 - **Trauma of Partition**
 - **Experience of War with Pakistan**
 - **India wanted to showcase itself as a peace-abiding nation.**
 - **Portugal being member of NATO**
- These factors kept the Government of India from opening another front in which the international community could get involved.
- Besides, it was **Mahatma Gandhi's** opinion that a lot of groundwork was still needed in Goa to raise the consciousness of the people, and the diverse political voices emerging within should be brought under a common umbrella first.
- The dichotomies within the groups fighting (**Satyagraha vs Military Action**) for freedom in Goa, also led to delay in liberation of Goa.
 - The idea of satyagraha emphasised the **power of truth and the need to search for truth**.
 - It suggested that if the cause was true, if the struggle was against injustice, then **physical force was not necessary** to fight the oppressor.

What are the Salient Features of Goa's Geography?

- **About:**
 - Goa is located on the **southwestern coast of India** within the **region known as the Konkan**, and geographically **separated from the Deccan highlands by the Western Ghats**.
- **Capital:**
 - Panji.
- **Official Language:**

- Konkani which is one of the 22 languages from the [Eight Schedule](#).
- **Borders:**
 - It is surrounded by **Maharashtra** to the north and **Karnataka** to the east and south, with the **Arabian Sea** forming its western coast.
- **Geography:**
 - The **highest point of Goa is Sonsogor**.
 - Goa's seven **major rivers** are the **Zuari**, [Mandovi](#), **Terekhol**, **Chapora**, **Galgibag**, **Kumbarjua canal**, **Talpona** and the **Sal**.
 - Most of Goa's **soil cover is made up of laterites**.
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks:**
 - Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary
 - [Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary](#)
 - [Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary](#)
 - [Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary](#)
 - [Bhagwan Mahaveer Sanctuary](#)
 - Mollem National Park

[Source: IE](#)

Initial Public Offering (IPO)

Why in News?

Recently, the government-owned **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) for its mega **Initial Public Offering (IPO)** with the [Securities and Exchange Board of India \(SEBI\)](#).

- The Government, which owns **100% of LIC**, will be offloading **5% of its stake through the IPO**. All the proceeds from the IPO, which is in the form of an **offer for sale** and is expected to total up to at least Rs. 60,000 crore, will go towards meeting the Government's [disinvestment target](#) for FY22.
- LIC is fully owned by the government. It was set up in 1956. It has the biggest share in India's insurance business.

What is an IPO?

- It is the **process by which a privately held company**, or a company owned by the government such as LIC, raises funds by offering shares to the public or to new investors.
 - Following the IPO, the company is listed on the [stock exchange](#). Stock exchange is an organized market for the sale and purchase of securities such as shares, stocks, and bonds.
 - A listed company can raise share capital for growth and expansion in the future through a **follow-on public offering or FPO**.
- While coming up with an IPO, the company has to file its offer document with the market regulator **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
 - The offer document contains all relevant information about the company, its promoters, its projects, financial details, the object of raising the money, terms of the issue, etc.
 - **SEBI** is a statutory body established in 1992 in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992.

What is an Offer for Sale?

- Under the offer for sale method, **securities are not issued directly to the public** but are offered for sale through intermediaries like issuing houses or stock brokers.
- In this case, a company sells securities enbloc at an agreed price to brokers who, in turn, resell them to the investing public.

What is DRHP?

- A Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) is a legal preliminary document. It serves as an important communication link between the IPO-bound company and its investors and stakeholders.

Who is allowed to invest in an IPO?

- **Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs)** is a category of investors that includes **Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)**, **mutual funds**, commercial banks, insurance companies, pension funds, etc.
 - QIBs are those **institutional investors** who are generally perceived to possess expertise and the financial capacities to evaluate and invest in the capital markets.
- All individuals who **invest up to Rs 2 lakh** in an issue are classified as retail investors.
- Retail investors investing above Rs 2 lakh are classified as high net worth individuals.

Which companies can come out with an IPO?

- In order to protect investors, **SEBI has laid down rules** that require companies to meet certain criteria before they can go to the public to raise funds.
- Among other conditions, the company must have net tangible assets of at least Rs 3 crore, and net worth of Rs 1 crore in each of the preceding three full years, and it must have a minimum average pre-tax profit of Rs 15 crore in at least three of the immediately preceding five years.

[Source: IE](#)

River Devika Project: Jammu and Kashmir

Why in News?

River Devika project, built at the cost of over Rs 190 crore, will be complete by June, 2022.

What is the River Devika project?

- The work on the project was started in March 2019 under the **National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)**.
- Under the project, **bathing “ghats” (places) on the banks of the Devika River will be developed**, encroachments will be removed, natural water bodies will be restored and catchment areas will be developed along with cremation ground.
- The project also includes the **construction of three sewage treatment plants**, sewerage network of 129.27 km, development of two cremation ghats, protection fencing and landscaping, small hydropower plants and three solar power plants.
- On completion of the project, the **rivers will see reduction in pollution and improvement in water quality**.

What is the importance of the Devika River?

- Devika river **originates from the hilly Suddha Mahadev temple** in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir and flows down towards western Punjab (now in Pakistan) where it merges with the [Ravi river](#).
- The river **holds religious significance** as it is revered by **Hindus as the sister of river Ganga**.
- In June 2020, **Devika Bridge** was inaugurated in Udhampur. Apart from taking care of traffic congestion, the Devika Bridge was also meant to **help smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles**.

What is the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)?

- NRCP is a [centrally funded scheme](#) launched in 1995 aimed at preventing the pollution of rivers.
- Programs for river conservation are being implemented under **National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)** and [NGRBA \(National Ganga River Basin Authority\)](#).
 - The National Ganga Council, also known as the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga, has replaced the NGRBA.

Which Activities are covered under NRCP?

- Interception and Diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains and divert them for treatment.
- Sewage Treatment Plants for treating the diverted sewage.
- Low Cost Sanitation works to prevent open defecation on riverbanks.
- Electric Crematoria and Improved Wood Crematoria to conserve the use of wood and help in ensuring proper cremation of bodies brought to the burning ghats.
- River Front Development works such as improvement of bathing ghats.
- Public awareness and public participation.
- Human Resource Development (HRD), capacity building, training and research in the area of River Conservation.
- Other miscellaneous works depend upon location specific conditions including the interface with human population.

[Source: PIB](#)

International Epilepsy Day

Why in News?

Every year the **second Monday of February is observed as International Epilepsy Day (IED)**, and this year it was celebrated on 14th February (2022).

- The day **spreads awareness and educates people about the true facts of epilepsy** and the urgent need for improved treatment, better care, and greater investment in research.
- The day is a **joint initiative** of the **International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE)** and the **International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE)**. It started in 2015.

What are the Key Points about Epilepsy?

- Epilepsy is a **central nervous system (neurological) disorder** in which brain activity becomes abnormal, causing seizures or periods of unusual behavior, sensations, and sometimes loss of awareness.
 - Epilepsy is defined as having **two or more unprovoked seizures**.
- Epilepsy is **one of the world's oldest recognized conditions**, with written records dating back to 4000 BCE.
- Around 50 million people worldwide have epilepsy, making it **one of the most common neurological diseases globally**.
 - In **India, nearly 60 lakh** people have epilepsy.
- Anyone can develop epilepsy, but **it's more common in young children and older adults**.
- There's **no cure for epilepsy**, but the disorder can be managed with medications and other strategies.
- In 2019, a report [Epilepsy, a public health imperative](#) was released by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#).
 - It is the **first global report on epilepsy summarizing the available evidence on the burden of epilepsy** and the public health response required at global, regional and national levels.
- The **WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP)** aims at scaling up services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders for countries especially with low- and middle-income.

[Source: IE](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/16-02-2022/print>