



Rise in Organ Donation

For Prelims: Organ Donation, Covid-19 pandemic, Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994.

For mains: Rise in Organ Donation and Need for increasing Deceased Donations.

Why in News?

After a fall during the first year of the [Covid-19 pandemic](#), organ donation numbers increased back in 2021.

- In India, [Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994](#) provides various regulations for the removal of human organs and its storage. It also regulates the transplantation of human organs for therapeutic **purposes and for the prevention of commercial dealings in human organs**.

What is the Status of Organ Donation in India?

- India has an **organ donation rate of about 0.52 per million population**. In comparison, the organ donation rate in Spain, **the highest in the world, is 49.6 per million population**.
 - Unlike India where a person has to register to be an organ donor — and the family has to consent to it after death — **Spain has an opt-out system where a person is presumed to be a donor unless otherwise specified**.
- Although organ donation has increased, however, **the number of deceased donations has remained lower** than the number of donations from living persons.
 - Deceased Donation is the **organs donated by the kin of those who suffered brain death or cardiac death**.
- Only 14.07% of the total organs harvested in 2021 were from deceased donors, much less than the 16.77% of 2019.
- Of the 12,387 organs **harvested in 2021**, only 1,743 — a little more than 14% — were from deceased donors. The numbers harvested in 2021 were close to the highest in the last five years (12,746, in 2019).
- There is also a **geographical skew in deceased donations**. All but two deceased organ donations in 2021 were in 15 states, with **the top five — Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Karnataka — accounting for more than 85% of the total**. Two organs were harvested from a deceased donor in Goa.
 - One reason for the geographical skew could be that most organ transplant and harvesting centres are concentrated in these geographies.

What is the Need for Increasing Deceased Donations?

- **Gap in the Number of Organs Needed:**
 - The first reason is the gap in the number of organs **needed and the number of transplants that happen in the country**.
 - In absolute numbers, India conducts the third highest number of transplants in the world.
 - Yet, of the estimated 1.5-2 lakh persons who need a kidney transplant every year, only

around 8,000 get one.

- Of the 80,000 persons who require a liver transplant, **only 1,800 get one.** And of the 10,000 who need a heart transplant, only 200 get it.

▪ **Prevalence of Lifestyle Diseases:**

- Demand is on the rise **because of the increasing prevalence of lifestyle diseases.**
- Besides, organs like heart and lungs can be retrieved only from deceased donors.

▪ **Only Harvested from Brain Dead Persons:**

- The second reason is that without deceased donations, **a precious resource is wasted.**
- Nearly 1.5 lakh persons die in road traffic accidents every year in India, many of whom **can ideally donate organs.**
- Although donations are possible after the heart stops working, **almost all organs are currently harvested from brain dead persons.**

Way Forward

- For increasing accessibility of donated organs to weaker sections, **the public hospitals need to increase the infrastructural capacity** to carry out transplantation and provide affordable proper treatment to the poor.
- It is suggested that **cross-subsidization will increase accessibility to the weaker section.** For every 3 or 4 transplants, the private hospitals should carry out free of cost transplantation to the section of the population that donates a majority of organs.
- The Transplantation of **Human Organs Act, 1994, need to be amended to substitute the rigid bureaucratic procedure of hospitals** by self-declaration and mandatory verification involving civil society.

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