

THE PALA CIVIL TIMES

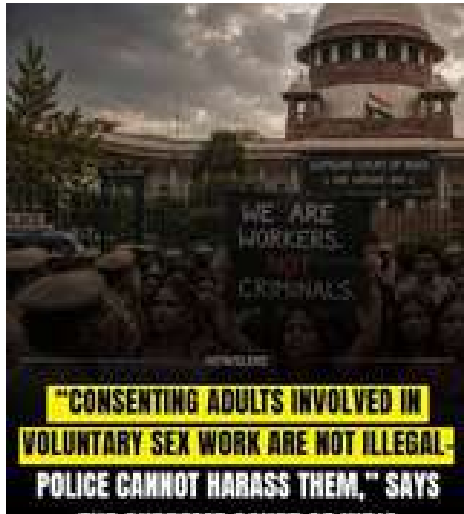
Civil Service Institute | Pala | Thiruvananthapuram | South India' Premier Civil Service Coaching Institute | www.civilservicepala.org

P2. NATIONAL



PM launches drive to curb drug abuse among youth - Drug addiction is a chronic brain disorder involving long-term neurobiological changes, making prevention among adolescents essential for improving public health and national development.

P3. NATIONAL



Analysing the SC's judgment on sex work - The Supreme Court's 2026 judgment transforms India's anti-trafficking framework by recognising rehabilitation as a constitutional right while distinguishing trafficking from voluntary adult sex work through a survivor-centred approach.

P4. WORLD



U.K. PM Burnham signals support for written Constitution - The UK Constitution is an uncodified constitutional system that derives authority from statutes, conventions, judicial institutions and constitutional developments.

Editor's Note

As India navigates a period of significant political, economic and social transformation, this edition of the Pala Civil Times brings some of the most important developments to your study table. Beginning with the national front, the Union Government's Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan reflects a renewed emphasis on building a drug-free society by harnessing the potential of India's youth. We also examine the landmark Supreme Court judgment on human trafficking and voluntary adult sex work, which places consent, dignity and rehabilitation at the centre of India's anti-trafficking framework. On the economic front, we explore the changing trends in Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) and analyse how renewed foreign investor confidence can influence macroeconomic stability. Our decoded editorials further examine two pressing issues: the need for a cooperative and sustainable resolution of the Cauvery water dispute while upholding the principles of federalism, and the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, highlighting its implications for employment, consumption and inclusive growth. In the international section, we discuss the evolving debate in the United Kingdom on adopting a codified constitution. Together, these topics provide a comprehensive understanding of contemporary developments. We hope this edition enables you to study today's events without losing sight of the larger constitutional, economic and governance perspectives that shape them. Happy Reading!

Editorials Decoded

P7. ECONOMICS



FPIs reverse four-month selling trend with ₹20,200 crore inflow in July - Foreign Portfolio Investment is a highly liquid source of foreign capital that strengthens India's capital markets but remains sensitive to global financial conditions and domestic macroeconomic stability.

The Indian EXPRESS

Between growth haves, have-nots, mind the lag



India's recent growth pattern highlights the challenge of balancing rapid wealth creation with inclusive employment and income growth to ensure broad-based economic development.

THE HINDU

Distress and dispute



The Cauvery dispute demonstrates how institutional river-basin governance seeks to balance legal water allocations with changing hydrological conditions and competing interstate interests.

PM launches drive to curb drug abuse among youth

Drug addiction is characterised by compulsive drug-seeking and consumption despite harmful consequences. Recognising its adverse effects on individual health and society, India has launched the **Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan**, emphasising youth participation and community action to build a drug-free nation as part of the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Neurobiology and Development of Drug Addiction

Brain Disorder: Addiction progressively alters brain circuits governing reward, motivation, inhibitory control and self-awareness, making drug-seeking compulsive.

Three-Stage Cycle: Addiction progresses through *binge-intoxication, withdrawal-negative affect, and preoccupation (craving)*, involving the basal ganglia, extended amygdala and prefrontal cortex respectively.

Role of Dopamine: Drugs trigger dopamine surges far greater than natural rewards, reinforcing repeated use and strengthening reward-seeking behaviour.

Neuroadaptation: Chronic exposure produces lasting changes across neurotransmitter systems, including dopamine, glutamate, opioids, serotonin and cannabinoids.

Persistent Effects: Brain changes remain long after drug use stops, increasing the likelihood of relapse.

Adolescent Vulnerability and Recent National Initiative

Early Drug Exposure: Drug use during adolescence produces greater long-term neurobiological changes than exposure during adulthood, increasing vulnerability to addiction.

Relapse Mechanism: Environmental cues previously associated with drug use can independently trigger dopamine release and craving, even after prolonged abstinence.

National Campaign: The Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan seeks to promote a drug-free youth population through collective participation and sustained awareness activities.

Community Participation: The initiative involves educational institutions, spiritual organisations, public bodies and youth through regular activities focused on sports, culture, meditation, spirituality and community service.

Societal Significance and Challenges

Human Capital: Preventing drug abuse protects the physical and mental health of youth, strengthening their contribution to national development.

Behavioural Complexity: Addiction is driven by biological changes in the brain rather than simply reflecting poor moral choices or lack of willpower.

Cycle of Dependence: Positive and negative reinforcement perpetuate compulsive drug use by linking consumption with reward and withdrawal relief.

Relapse Risk: Persistent neuroadaptations and conditioned environmental cues make recovery difficult despite prolonged abstinence.

Collective Response: Sustained public awareness, community engagement and preventive interventions among adolescents are essential for reducing drug abuse and supporting long-term social well-being.



Way Forward

Drug addiction represents a complex neurobiological disorder with significant health and societal consequences, particularly when substance use begins during adolescence. Scientific understanding of addiction highlights the importance of prevention, early intervention and community-based awareness rather than stigma alone. Building a drug-free youth population through sustained public participation can strengthen human capital and contribute meaningfully to the long-term vision of a developed India.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Identify the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are related to health. Discuss the success of the actions taken by the Government for achieving the same. (GS II – 2013)

RELEVANCE GS II : Issues Relating to Health

Analysing the SC's judgment on sex work

In May 2026, the Supreme Court delivered a comprehensive judgment addressing trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) and the protection of survivors. The Court recognised rehabilitation as a constitutional right and introduced a nationwide Victim Protection Plan. The judgment also distinguished trafficking from voluntary adult sex work, placing consent, dignity and individual autonomy at the centre of anti-trafficking interventions while seeking to address long-standing implementation gaps in India's rehabilitation framework.

Constitutional and Institutional Framework

Constitutional Basis: Reading Articles 21 and 23 together, the Court held that protection against trafficking includes the *right to rehabilitation with dignity*.

Legal Framework: The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and POCSO Act, 2012.

Victim Protection Plan: Exercising powers under Articles 32 and 142, the Court framed an interim nationwide protection framework.

Multidisciplinary Approach: The Court recognised trafficking as a complex phenomenon driven by structural vulnerabilities, migration patterns and emerging cyber-enabled exploitation, requiring coordinated response.

Administrative Directions: States and Union Territories were directed to appoint nodal officers, notify recognised welfare institutions and establish district-level support mechanisms for implementation.

Key Features of the 2026 Judgment

Consent-Centred Approach: Adult sex workers participating voluntarily cannot be subjected to forced rescue, detention or institutionalisation without examining *informed consent*.

Right to Rehabilitation: Rehabilitation include medical care, counselling, education, vocational training, compensation, livelihood support and access to welfare schemes.

Survivor-Centred Justice: Protection measures must respect dignity, privacy, informed consent, non-discrimination and legal assistance.

Reform of Anti-Trafficking Measures: The Court recommended reconsidering provisions that expose trafficking victims to prosecution, criticised detention-oriented rehabilitation models and sought stronger safeguards against abuse of authority.

Preventive Framework: The judgment strengthened victim-sensitive rescue operations.

RELEVANCE

GS II : Social Justice

Significance and Challenges

Rights-Based Shift: The judgment marks a transition from rescue-centred interventions towards recognising survivors and voluntary adult sex workers as rights-bearing individuals with agency.

Protection of Voluntary Sex Workers: Anti-trafficking measures should not automatically restrict the liberty or dignity of consenting adults doing voluntary sex work.

Implementation Challenges: Effective enforcement depends upon unbiased policing, rights-based rehabilitation, institutional accountability and meaningful access to legal aid and welfare services.

Need for Accountability: Successful implementation requires transparent functioning of rehabilitation institutions, improved oversight and careful scrutiny.

Inclusive Governance: Long-term effectiveness depends on ensuring rehabilitation remains survivor-centred, consent-based and responsive to the structural vulnerabilities.



Way Forward

The Supreme Court's 2026 judgment places dignity, consent and autonomy at the centre of victim protection. Its success, however, will depend on translating judicial principles into institutional practice through rights-based implementation, effective rehabilitation and continued protection of vulnerable individuals.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. "Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (GS II – 2023)

WORLD

U.K. PM Burnham signals support for written Constitution

The United Kingdom does not possess a single codified constitution. Instead, its constitutional framework has evolved over centuries through Acts of Parliament, constitutional conventions, judicial developments and authoritative writings. This flexible system has enabled constitutional continuity since the Middle Ages but has also renewed debates over whether a codified constitution is necessary to clearly define parliamentary sovereignty, fundamental rights and the balance of power among institutions.

Nature and Evolution of the UK Constitution

Uncodified Character: The constitution exists across multiple legal and non-legal sources rather than one authoritative document.

Legal Sources: Constitutional statutes, including the *Bill of Rights (1689)*, *Human Rights Act (1998)* and *Constitutional Reform Act (2005)*, form its legal backbone.

Constitutional Conventions: Unwritten practices guide constitutional functioning despite lacking legal enforceability.

Authoritative Writings: Accepted constitutional scholarship also serves as a recognised constitutional source.

Comparative Position: Unlike most countries, the UK has not codified its constitution; New Zealand and Israel also lack a single codified constitutional document.

Constitutional Framework and Institutional Development

Magna Carta (1215): Established the principle that the monarch and government are subject to the law, limiting royal authority.

Bill of Rights (1689): Strengthened Parliament through regular Parliaments, free elections, parliamentary privilege, limits on taxation without parliamentary consent and the right to petition.

Human Rights Act (1998): Enabled individuals to invoke rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights before domestic courts.

Constitutional Reform Act (2005): Formally separated the judiciary from Parliament and the executive, reformed the office of Lord Chancellor, established the Judicial Appointments Commission and created the framework for an independent Supreme Court.

Supreme Court (2009): Became the final court of appeal for most matters across the UK's separate legal jurisdictions, reinforcing judicial independence and transparency.

RELEVANCE

GS II : Comparison of Constitutional Systems

Contemporary Debate and Constitutional Significance

Proposal for Codification: Support for a written constitution seeks to establish a clearer constitutional framework and guiding principles.

Institutional Implications: Codification could reshape parliamentary sovereignty, fundamental rights and the balance between the legislature, executive and judiciary.

Flexible Constitutional Model: The existing uncodified system has evolved gradually through legislation and constitutional practice without a single foundational document.

Multi-Jurisdictional Structure: The UK operates separate legal systems for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, with the Supreme Court serving as the final appellate authority in most cases.

Continuing Evolution: Constitutional development remains an ongoing process shaped by legislation, judicial reforms and political consensus.



Way Forward

The United Kingdom represents a distinctive constitutional model built on accumulated legal principles, statutes and constitutional conventions rather than a single written text. While this evolutionary framework has ensured institutional continuity and flexibility, current discussions on codification reflect a broader debate on constitutional clarity, institutional accountability and the future distribution of powers within the British political system.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. The judicial systems in India and the UK seem to be converging as well as diverging in recent times. Highlight the key points of convergence and divergence between the two nations in terms of their judicial practices. (GS II - 2020)

Distress and dispute (The Hindu : 03-08-2026)

The Cauvery river water sharing is regulated through the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT)** award and the Supreme Court's 2018 judgment, implemented by the **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)**. During years of deficient rainfall, competing demands for drinking water, irrigation and ecological needs intensify disputes between the upper and lower riparian States, making institutional coordination and distress-sharing crucial for agricultural sustainability.

Evolution of the Cauvery Water Sharing Framework

CWMA Foundation: The CWMA was constituted in 2018 to implement the Supreme Court's 2018 judgment and the final award of the CWDT (2007). It comprises a full-time Chairman, whole-time and part-time members, and representatives of all four basin constituents. The CWRC assists the Authority by monitoring rainfall, reservoir storage and river flows.

Water Allocation: In a normal year with 740 tmc ft availability, allocations are **Tamil Nadu – 404.25 tmc ft; Karnataka – 284.75 tmc ft; Kerala – 30 tmc ft; Puducherry – 7 tmc ft**, besides 10 tmc ft for environmental protection and 4 tmc ft for inevitable sea escapages.

Karnataka's Commitment: Karnataka must ensure 177.25 tmc ft reaches Biligundulu annually according to a monthly schedule, including 123.14 tmc ft during June–September.

Recent Developments

Delayed Water Transfer: Heavy rainfall prompted Karnataka to release water from the Kabini Dam, but the dry Cauvery riverbed delayed its movement to Mettur Dam by absorbing a substantial portion of the released water.

Monsoon Deficit: The first half of the southwest monsoon witnessed significant rainfall deficits, reducing inflows into reservoirs.

Reservoir Stress: Karnataka adopted a cautious approach towards irrigation releases due to concerns over future drinking water availability. Hence, Tamil Nadu received reduced share of scheduled water, affecting the Kuruva cultivation season.

Institutional Response: The CWMA approved the CWRC's recommendation directing Karnataka to release 3,500 cusecs daily to Biligundulu for fifteen days from July 29.

Political Dimension: Water scarcity renewed political mobilisation in both States.

RELEVANCE

GS II : Centre–State Relations; Inter-State River Water Disputes

Distress Sharing: Challenges and Way Forward

Absence of a Scientific Formula: Although the CWMA is empowered to identify distress conditions and proportionately reduce allocations, no universally accepted scientific distress-sharing formula has been evolved.

Monitoring-Based Decisions: Reservoir storage, rainfall and monsoon performance should be periodically assessed, enabling the Authority to revise release schedules throughout the water year.

Need for Institutional Compliance: Effective implementation requires all basin States to adhere to decisions of the CWMA and CWRC, which function within the framework laid down by the Tribunal and the Supreme Court.

Greater Transparency: Publishing meeting proceedings and technical assessments would improve public understanding of water-sharing decisions.

Inclusive Water Governance: Broader participation of experts and farmer representatives, along with sustained dialogue between basin States, can contribute to more informed and cooperative management during distress periods.

Way Forward

The recurring Cauvery dispute demonstrates that legal allocations alone cannot resolve interstate river conflicts when rainfall is uncertain. The effectiveness of the CWMA depends on timely compliance, transparent decision-making and continuous hydrological assessment. A mutually accepted distress-sharing framework, supported by cooperative engagement among basin States, remains essential for balancing irrigation, drinking water requirements and ecological considerations while strengthening cooperative federalism.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Constitutional mechanisms to resolve the inter-state water disputes have failed to address and solve the problems. Is the failure due to structural or process inadequacy or both? Discuss. (GS II – 2013)

Between growth haves, have-nots, mind the lag (Indian Express : 03-08-2026)

India's recent economic growth has been accompanied by widening disparities in income and wealth. While the number of high-income individuals has increased significantly, a large section of the workforce continues to experience modest wage growth and limited access to quality employment. This divergence has implications for domestic consumption, economic mobility and the country's ability to fully utilise its demographic dividend, making inclusive employment generation an important developmental priority.

Emerging Trends in Income and Employment

Rising High-Income Population: Individuals reporting annual incomes of ₹100 crore or more increased from 142 (2021-22) to 576 (2025-26), while India had 9.44 lakh dollar millionaires in the UBS Global Wealth Report 2026.

Moderate Wage Growth: The average annual earnings of regular employees increased from ₹2.31 lakh (2022) to ₹2.7 lakh (2025), whereas the average daily wage of casual labour stood at ₹453 in 2025.

Changing Consumption Pattern: Slower expansion in mass incomes, coupled with rapid growth at the top, has concentrated consumption among higher-income groups.

Premium Consumption: Premium consumer segments have expanded rapidly, with high-value products gaining prominence.

Uneven Economic Gains: Income growth has become increasingly concentrated, indicating that the benefits of economic expansion have not been distributed uniformly across the workforce.

Structural Challenges to Upward Mobility

Technology Transition: The IT sector, traditionally a major avenue for upward mobility, faces emerging challenges from the growing adoption of artificial intelligence.

Limited Manufacturing Absorption: Manufacturing has not generated employment at a scale sufficient to absorb the large number of new entrants into the labour force.

Growth of Low-Productivity Jobs: Employment expansion has been significant in occupations such as delivery services and security work, which generally offer limited productivity gains and income progression.

Employment Aspirations: Large-scale participation in government recruitment and protests related to examination and recruitment processes reflect widespread concerns regarding access to stable employment opportunities.

RELEVANCE

GS III : Inclusive Growth and Issues Arising from It



Economic Implications and Way Forward

Inclusive Growth: Sustained economic development requires broad-based income growth rather than concentration of gains among a small segment of the population.

Consumption-Led Growth: Stronger wage growth across wider sections of society can expand domestic demand and support balanced economic growth.

Quality Employment: Expanding productive employment opportunities remains central to improving social mobility and reducing income disparities.

Human Capital Development: Greater access to quality education and skill development is essential to prepare the workforce for changing technological and industrial requirements.

Demographic Dividend: Effective utilisation of India's young population depends upon creating sufficient opportunities for education, employment and economic advancement.

Rising incomes at the top, combined with slower employment and wage growth for large sections of the population, underline the need for policies that expand productive employment, strengthen human capital and widen access to economic opportunities.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



- Q. Under the Indian Constitution, concentration of wealth violates (2021)
- the Right to Equality
 - the Directive Principles of State Policy
 - the Right to Freedom
 - the Concept of Welfare

FPIs reverse four-month selling trend with ₹20,200 crore inflow in July

Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) refers to investments made by foreign investors in a country's financial assets, such as equities, bonds and mutual funds, without acquiring management control. Unlike Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), FPI is primarily a passive and market-driven investment. As one of the largest sources of foreign investment in India's equity and debt markets, FPI significantly influences capital availability, market liquidity and investor confidence, while remaining sensitive to domestic and global economic developments.

Nature and Institutional Framework of FPI

Meaning: FPI involves foreign investment in financial assets without ownership or operational control.

Key Features: It is characterised by passive investment, short-term return orientation and high liquidity due to easy tradability of financial assets.

Regulatory Framework: FPI in India is regulated by SEBI through the Automatic Route and the Approval Route, depending on applicable investment conditions.

Investor Categories: Registered FPIs are classified into Category I (sovereign entities), Category II (institutional investors) and Category III (other eligible investors).

Investment Scope: FPIs participate in both equity and debt markets, providing an important source of foreign capital.

Foreign Portfolio Investment, otherwise referred to as FPI, refers to investments placed by foreigners in other countries' financial assets.



Present FPI Situation in India

Reversal in Flows: After four consecutive months of net outflows, FPIs invested ₹20,200 crore in Indian equities during July 2026, reversing the previous selling trend.

Drivers of Inflows: Attractive large-cap valuations, improving corporate earnings, a stable rupee and easing global headwinds renewed investor confidence.

Global Factors: Reduced volatility in India relative to some Asian markets, easing pressure from the US dollar and expectations of peaking US interest rates supported emerging-market inflows.

Debt Market Interest: Foreign investors also invested ₹29,212 crore through the general debt route and ₹3,033 crore through the fully accessible route during July.

Near-Term Outlook: Future flows are expected to depend on crude oil prices, geopolitical developments, corporate earnings and monetary policy decisions.

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy and Planning

Macroeconomic Importance & Challenges of FPI

Capital Formation: FPI supplements domestic savings by bringing additional capital into equity and debt markets, supporting financial market development.

Market Efficiency: Higher liquidity and broader investor participation contribute to market deepening and improved price discovery.

Investor Diversification: International investors diversify portfolios while increasing global integration of India's financial markets.

Volatility Risk: Short-term investment behaviour makes FPI highly sensitive to economic uncertainty, resulting in rapid capital inflows and outflows.

Policy and Currency Exposure: Regulatory changes and exchange rate fluctuations influence investment decisions, making macroeconomic stability crucial for sustaining foreign investor confidence.

Way Forward

Foreign Portfolio Investment remains an important pillar of India's financial markets by strengthening liquidity, expanding access to capital and improving market efficiency. While recent inflows indicate renewed confidence in the Indian economy, the inherently volatile nature of portfolio investments requires a stable macroeconomic environment, predictable regulatory policies and resilient financial markets to ensure sustained long-term benefits.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Which of the following is issued by registered foreign portfolio investors to overseas investors who want to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly? (2019)

- Certificate of Deposit
- Commercial Paper
- Promissory Note
- Participatory Note

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Which of the following is issued by registered foreign portfolio investors to overseas investors who want to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly? (2019)

- a) Certificate of Deposit
- b) Commercial Paper
- c) Promissory Note
- d) Participatory Note

Ans : d

P-Notes or Participatory Notes are Overseas Derivative Instruments that have Indian stocks as their underlying assets. They allow foreign investors to buy stocks listed on Indian exchanges through FIs without being registered.

Q. Under the Indian Constitution, concentration of wealth violates (2021)

- (a) the Right to Equality
- (b) the Directive Principles of State Policy
- (c) the Right to Freedom
- (d) the Concept of Welfare

Ans : b

Under the Indian Constitution, concentration of wealth violates the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs). Specifically, Article 39(b) and 39(c) of Part IV directs the State to ensure that the ownership and control of resources are distributed to subserve the common good and to prevent the concentration of wealth and means of production in a few hands.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. With reference to the Constitution of the United Kingdom, consider the following statements:

1. The UK has a single codified constitutional document similar to India.
2. Constitutional conventions form part of the UK's constitutional framework despite lacking legal force.
3. The Constitutional Reform Act, 2005 established the framework for an independent Supreme Court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 and 3 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a)

Statement 1: Incorrect. The UK does not have a single codified constitution.

Statement 2: Correct. Constitutional conventions are recognised constitutional sources despite not being legally enforceable.

Statement 3: Correct. The Constitutional Reform Act, 2005 created the framework for the independent UK Supreme Court.

Q. Which of the following developments have been identified as challenges to upward economic mobility in India?

1. Emerging impact of artificial intelligence on the IT sector.
2. Limited employment generation in manufacturing.
3. Expansion of low-productivity employment opportunities.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 3

Statement 1: Correct. Technological changes, including AI, are affecting employment prospects in the IT sector.

Statement 2: Correct. Manufacturing has not absorbed labour on the scale required.

Statement 3: Correct. Employment growth has been significant in relatively low-productivity occupations, limiting opportunities for sustained income mobility.

Q. Which of the following principles form part of the Supreme Court's Victim Protection Plan?

1. Respect for dignity and human rights.
2. Informed consent and non-discrimination.
3. Rehabilitation based solely on institutional shelter.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Statement 1: Correct. Respect for dignity and human rights is a foundational principle of the Plan.

Statement 2: Correct. Informed consent and non-discrimination guide all stages of intervention.

Statement 3: Incorrect. The Court clarified that rehabilitation extends beyond shelter to include healthcare, counselling, education, livelihood support and other survivor-centred measures.

Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis has once again come into focus after a surge in cases and deaths in Kerala during the 2026 southwest monsoon. The disease claimed around 50 lives in July 2026 alone, reinforcing concerns over its high mortality and the need for early diagnosis and prevention.

What is Leptospirosis?

- Leptospirosis is a zoonotic bacterial disease caused by pathogenic bacteria of the genus *Leptospira*.
- It affects both humans and animals and is one of the most widespread zoonotic diseases in tropical and subtropical regions.
- The disease ranges from a mild febrile illness to severe systemic infection involving multiple organs, making early diagnosis extremely important.

Transmission

- The bacteria are primarily shed through the urine of infected animals, especially rodents, cattle, pigs and dogs.
- Humans become infected through direct contact with infected animal urine or through water, soil or mud contaminated with urine.
- The bacteria enter the body through cuts, abrasions, broken skin or the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Person-to-person transmission is extremely rare.
- The risk of infection increases significantly after heavy rainfall, floods and hurricanes, when contaminated water becomes widespread.

Why is Kerala a Hotspot?

- Kerala's heavy monsoon rainfall, frequent flooding, high humidity and year-round moisture create ideal environmental conditions for the survival of *Leptospira* bacteria.
- Large rodent populations and other animal reservoir hosts live in close proximity to human settlements and agricultural fields, increasing the chances of environmental contamination.
- Agricultural activities such as paddy cultivation, pineapple farming, canal cleaning and other manual labour expose workers to contaminated water and soil.

BRAIN BOOSTERS
 Did You Know?

#300
 03-08-2026

Leptospirosis

Why in News? Leptospirosis has once again come into focus after a surge in cases and deaths in Kerala during the 2026 southwest monsoon.

- Leptospirosis is a zoonotic bacterial disease widespread in tropical and subtropical regions.
- It is caused by pathogenic bacteria of the genus *Leptospira*.
- The disease ranges from a mild febrile illness to severe systemic infection involving multiple organs, making early diagnosis extremely important.
- The bacteria are primarily shed through the urine of infected animals, especially **rodents, cattle, pigs and dogs**.
- **Humans become infected** through direct contact with **infected animal urine** or through water, soil or mud contaminated with urine.
- The bacteria enter the body through **cuts, abrasions, broken skin or the mucous membranes** of the eyes, nose and mouth.
- **Person-to-person transmission is extremely rare**.
- The risk of infection increases significantly after **heavy rainfall**, floods and hurricanes, when contaminated water becomes widespread.

Major Components of the Scheme

- Traditionally, leptospirosis has been regarded as an occupational disease affecting:
- Farmers and agricultural labourers
- Dairy workers
- Sanitation and cleaning workers
- Canal and drainage workers
- Construction workers
- Home gardening without protective equipment has also emerged as an important source of infection in urban areas.
- According to Kerala Health Department data, manual labourers account for the largest proportion of leptospirosis deaths, followed by agricultural workers and homemakers engaged in gardening.

Treatment and Strategy

- Early administration of antibiotics, particularly Doxycycline, remains the cornerstone of both prevention and treatment.
- Kerala recommends chemoprophylaxis with Doxycycline (200 mg twice weekly) for individuals belonging to high-risk occupational groups.
- When started early, Doxycycline can prevent bacterial multiplication and significantly reduce disease severity.
- The State emphasises early clinical suspicion among primary healthcare providers, particularly in patients presenting with fever, muscle pain and a history of exposure to contaminated environments.