# Society & Social Justice · GS - II

**Discuss the role of digital health surveillance systems in strengthening India's preparedness for cross-border infectious disease threats. Examine the associated challenges and suggest measures to improve their effectiveness.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| DAILY PRACTICE 03/11/2026 | GS - II | Society & Social Justice |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Digital health surveillance; international travel; early detection; public health preparedness; International Health Regulations; data privacy; inter-agency coordination; equitable health protection**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

International travel can facilitate the cross-border spread of infectious diseases. Digital health surveillance systems help authorities collect relevant health information, identify potential risks and initiate timely public health responses.

### Role of Digital Surveillance

**1. Early Identification:** Health declarations provide information on recent travel, exposure and symptoms, helping authorities identify travellers who may need further assessment.

**2. Faster Coordination:** Digital platforms can share relevant information with airport health officers, immigration authorities and disease-surveillance agencies.

**3. Preparedness:** Timely information supports testing, medical referral, contact tracing and targeted public health interventions.

**Challenges**

Inaccurate self-declarations, digital exclusion, privacy concerns and fragmented databases may reduce effectiveness. Excessive screening without risk-based assessment can also cause delays and unnecessary inconvenience.

**Way Forward**

India should strengthen data protection, access controls, interoperability and scientific risk assessment. Clear public communication, trained airport personnel and coordination between central and state health authorities are essential. Digital declarations should complement, rather than replace, clinical assessment, laboratory testing and epidemiological surveillance.

**Conclusion**

Digital health platforms can improve early detection and emergency coordination when supported by reliable data, privacy safeguards and evidence-based public health policies.

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