AI for defence land management: Om Birla calls for digitisation

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Prelims: Defence Estates Organisation, defence land, AI applications



मौलिक प्रतीकात्मक चित्र: pcsmantra.com

Why in news

Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla**, addressing the **Defence Estates Centenary Lecture 2026** in New Delhi on 20 November 2026, called on the **Defence Estates Organisation (DEO)** to adopt **Artificial Intelligence, digitisation and modern technology** for defence land management.

Key points

- **Digitisation of records**: digitising defence land records and AI-based management to improve transparency and efficiency.
- **Encroachment prevention**: encroachment is a major challenge - technology for surveys and monitoring, while ensuring surveys cause no hardship to civilians.
- **Defence Estates Organisation**: manages **over 1.7 million acres** of defence land - among the country's largest landholdings.
- **Centenary**: the lecture marked 100 years of the DEO's establishment.

For the exam

- The DEO is the principal body under the Defence Ministry for defence land and cantonment administration; cantonment boards and defence estates offices are part of it.
- Sound management of defence land balances national security, infrastructure and housing needs; AI tools help encroachment detection and record management.

Prelims practice questions

Question 1: Consider the following statements:
Statement 1: The Defence Estates Organisation manages over 1.7 million acres of defence land
Statement 2: The Defence Estates Organisation works under the Ministry of Home Affairs

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

▼ Answer and explanation

Answer: (a) The DEO works under the Ministry of Defence and manages over 1.7 million acres of defence land.

Question 2: With reference to the Defence Estates Centenary Lecture 2026, choose the correct statement:

(a) It called for strengthening defence land management through AI and digitisation

(b) It concerned only naval exercises

(c) Its subject was agricultural land

(d) It made no mention of encroachment prevention

▼ Answer and explanation

Answer: (a) The Lok Sabha Speaker, at the DEO centenary, stressed AI, digitisation and modern technology for defence land management and encroachment prevention.

FAQ

In short: at the Defence Estates Centenary Lecture 2026, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla called on the DEO to strengthen management of over 1.7 million acres of defence land through AI and digitisation.

Q: What is the DEO?

The Defence Estates Organisation - the principal body under the Defence Ministry for defence land management and cantonment administration.

Q: What is the main challenge in defence land management?

Encroachment - to counter which the emphasis is on AI/technology in surveys and monitoring.

Q: What caution was urged regarding surveys?

That surveys and monitoring must not cause hardship to ordinary civilians.

Sources

1. PIB/Lok Sabha Secretariat, 20 November 2026: https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2338993