

# UPSC Mains 2025 GS Paper 2

**Q. Discuss the ‘corrupt practices’ for the purpose of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Analyze whether the increase in the assets of the legislators and/or their associates, disproportionate to their known sources of income, would constitute ‘undue influence’ and consequently a corrupt practice.**

## **Introduction:**

The **Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA)** defines *corrupt practices* to ensure **free and fair elections**, a basic feature of democracy recognised by the **Supreme Court of India**.

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## **Corrupt Practices under RPA, 1951 (Section 123):**

- **Bribery** (S.123(1))  
Giving/receiving gratification to influence voting.  
Includes money, gifts, liquor or any material inducement.
- **Undue Influence** (S.123(2))  
Direct or indirect interference with free exercise of electoral rights.  
Includes threats, coercion, social pressure, misuse of authority.
- **Appeal on Religion, Caste, Community** (S.123(3))  
Seeking votes on religious or communal identity.  
Clarified in **Abhiram Singh v. C. D. Commachen (2017)**.
- **Promotion of Enmity** (S.123(3A))  
Speeches creating hatred between communities during elections.
- **Publication of False Statements** (S.123(4))  
False allegations regarding personal character or conduct of a candidate.
- **Use of Government Machinery** (S.123(7))  
Assistance from government servants or misuse of official position.
- **Booth** Capturing  
Included later through amendments to prevent electoral fraud.
- **Exceeding Election Expenditure Limits** (S.123(6))  
Spending beyond the limit prescribed by **Election Commission of India**.

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## **Increase in Assets of Legislators and its Legal Implications**

- **Asset Disclosure Requirement**  
Mandatory candidate affidavits as per **Union of India v. Association for Democratic Reforms (2002)**.
  - **Transparency Reinforced**  
Criminal, financial and educational disclosures mandated in **PUCL v. Union of India (2003)**.
  - **Disproportionate Asset Growth Issue**  
Studies by **Association for Democratic Reforms** show many legislators report significant asset increases between elections.
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## Does Disproportionate Asset Growth Constitute 'Undue Influence'?

- **Direct** **Position:**  
Mere increase in assets **does not automatically constitute corrupt practice** under RPA.
  - **Possible Link to Undue Influence if:**
    - Wealth used for **bribery or vote buying**.
    - Money used to create **economic dependency or inducement**.
    - Expenditure violates legal spending limits.
  - **Legal** **Interpretation:**  
Courts require **clear evidence of electoral interference** to establish corrupt practice.
  - **Governance** **Concern:**  
Disproportionate asset growth may indicate **corruption, illicit enrichment or misuse of office**, addressed through laws like **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**, though not automatically under RPA.
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### Conclusion:

Thus, while unexplained asset growth raises serious **ethical and corruption concerns**, it amounts to a *corrupt practice under the RPA* only when linked to **bribery, undue influence or illegal electoral expenditure affecting voter choice**.

**Q. Comment on the need of administrative tribunals as compared to the court system.**

**Assess the impact of the recent tribunal reforms through rationalization of tribunals made in 2021.**

### Introduction:

Administrative tribunals were created to provide **specialised, speedy and less formal justice in administrative disputes**, supplementing the traditional court system under **Constitution of India (Articles 323A & 323B)**.

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## Need for Administrative Tribunals vis-à-vis Courts

### Specialised adjudication

- Handle **technical disputes** (taxation, service matters, environment, corporate law).
- Example: **National Green Tribunal, Central Administrative Tribunal**.

### Speedy justice

- Reduced procedural complexity compared to regular courts.
- Intended to address **huge pendency in courts**.

### Expert participation

- Inclusion of **technical members + judicial members** improves quality of decisions.

### Cost-effective and accessible

- Informal procedures → reduced litigation cost for citizens.

### Administrative efficiency

- Frees higher judiciary to focus on **constitutional and complex legal issues**.

### Committee/Expert support

- **Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)** recommended tribunals for specialised dispute resolution.

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## Concerns in Tribunal System

- **Vacancies and delays** affecting efficiency.
- **Executive control in appointments and administration** raises concerns about independence.
- Overlapping jurisdiction with courts.

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## Tribunal Reforms and Rationalisation (2021)

Key changes under **Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021**:

- **Abolition / merger of several appellate tribunals** and transfer of functions to High Courts or other bodies.
- Uniform designation and service conditions for tribunal members.
- **Search-cum-Selection Committee** for appointments.
- Tenure fixed at **4 years**, with age limits for members and chairpersons.

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## Impact of the 2021 Tribunal Reforms

### Positive aspects

- **Rationalisation and reduction of overlapping tribunals.**
- Potential **cost efficiency and administrative simplification.**
- Integration of appellate functions with constitutional courts.

### Challenges / Criticism

- Transfer of cases may **increase burden on High Courts.**
- Concerns over **short tenure and executive influence**, affecting tribunal independence.
- The **Supreme Court of India** struck down some provisions, holding that they violated **judicial independence and separation of powers.**
- Lack of specialised expertise in regular courts for transferred matters.

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## Conclusion:

Administrative tribunals remain essential for **specialised and speedy justice**, but their effectiveness depends on **institutional independence, adequate staffing and balanced reforms ensuring efficiency without undermining judicial autonomy.**

**Q. Compare and contrast the President's power to pardon in India and in the USA. Are there any limits to it in both the countries? What are 'preemptive pardons'?**

### Introduction:

The power of pardon is a constitutional device to **temper justice with mercy**, vested in the executive under **\*\*Constitution of India and Constitution of the United States.**

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## President's Power to Pardon – India vs USA

Aspect	India	USA
Constitutional provision	<b>Article 72</b> of Constitution of India	<b>Article II, Section 2</b> of United States Constitution

Aspect	India	USA
Scope	Pardon, reprieve, respite, remission, commutation	Pardon and commutation mainly
Nature of executive	President acts on <b>aid and advice of Council of Ministers</b>	President exercises <b>personal executive discretion</b>
Jurisdiction	Court-martial cases, Union law offences, <b>death sentence cases</b>	Federal offences only
State role	Governors have similar power under <b>Article 161</b>	No equivalent state role for federal offences

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## Limits on the Power

### India

- **Not absolute**; subject to **judicial review** by Supreme Court of India.
- Court can intervene if decision is:
  - **Arbitrary / mala fide**
  - Based on **irrelevant considerations**.
- Key cases:
  - **Maru Ram v. Union of India (1981)** – President bound by ministerial advice.
  - **Kehar Singh v. Union of India (1989)** – judicial review limited but permissible.
  - **Epuru Sudhakar v. Government of Andhra Pradesh (2006)** – pardon cannot be arbitrary.

### USA

- Broad and largely **unchecked executive power**.
- Limits include:
  - Applies **only to federal offences**.
  - Cannot be used in **impeachment cases**.
- Interpreted in **Ex parte Garland (1866)**, where the US Supreme Court recognised wide presidential discretion.

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## Pre-emptive Pardons

- **Definition:**  
Pardons granted **before conviction or even before formal charges**.
- Permitted in **USA** due to wide constitutional wording.
- Famous example:
  - **Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon (1974)** after the **Watergate Scandal**, before prosecution.
- **India:**  
Pre-emptive pardons are **not practised**, as the power is generally exercised **after judicial conviction** and within a structured legal framework.

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## Conclusion:

While both India and the USA recognise the pardon power as a humanitarian constitutional

safeguard, **India subjects it to judicial review and ministerial advice**, whereas the **US President enjoys broader discretionary authority including pre-emptive pardons**.

**Q. Discuss the nature of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly after the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019. Briefly describe the powers and functions of the Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.**

### **Introduction:**

The **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019** reorganised the former state into two Union Territories—**Jammu and Kashmir (with legislature)** and **Ladakh (without legislature)**, redefining the nature and powers of the J&K Legislative Assembly.

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### **Nature of the Legislative Assembly**

- **Union Territory Legislature Model**  
Similar to legislatures of **Delhi and Puducherry**.
  - **Unicameral Legislature**  
Legislative Council abolished → only **Legislative Assembly**.
  - **Strength**  
Assembly strength fixed at **114 seats** (including 24 seats reserved for Pakistan-occupied areas).
  - **Delimitation Changes**  
Delimitation carried out by **Delimitation Commission of India** increasing seats in Jammu region.
  - **Lieutenant Governor System**  
Executive authority exercised by **Lieutenant Governor appointed by the President of India**.
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### **Powers and Functions of the Assembly**

#### **Legislative Powers**

- Can legislate on **State List and Concurrent List subjects** except:
  - Public order
  - Police
  - Land
- These remain with the **Union Government / Lieutenant Governor**.

#### **Executive Control**

- Council of Ministers headed by **Chief Minister** responsible to Assembly.
- Can question government through **questions, motions and debates**.

#### **Financial Powers**

- Discuss and pass **budget and appropriation bills** for the UT.
- Money bills introduced only with **LG recommendation**.

#### **Law-making Role**

- Bills passed by Assembly require **assent of Lieutenant Governor**.

#### **Oversight Function**

- Legislative scrutiny of administration through **committees, debates and discussions**.
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## Key Institutional Constraints

- **Parliament retains overriding legislative power** for the Union Territory.
  - Lieutenant Governor may **reserve bills for the President's consideration**.
  - Greater central control compared to full-fledged states.
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### Conclusion:

Thus, the Assembly of **Jammu and Kashmir** functions as a **limited legislature within a Union Territory framework**, balancing **democratic representation with enhanced central administrative oversight** after the 2019 reorganisation.

**Q. "The Attorney General of India plays a crucial role in guiding the legal framework of the Union Government and ensuring sound governance through legal counsel." Discuss his responsibilities, rights and limitations in this regard.**

### Introduction:

The **Attorney General for India**, appointed under **Article 76 of the Constitution of India**, is the **chief legal advisor to the Government of India** and plays a key role in ensuring legality in governance.

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### Responsibilities

- **Legal Advisor to Union Government**  
Advises ministries on constitutional, legislative and international law issues.
  - **Representation in Courts**  
Represents Government before the **Supreme Court of India** and High Courts in important cases.
  - **Opinion on Constitutional Matters**  
Advises the President under **Article 143 (Presidential reference)** and government on constitutional interpretation.
  - **Legislative Guidance**  
Assists in drafting and vetting bills, ordinances and legal policies.
  - **International Legal Matters**  
Advises on treaty obligations and international disputes.
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### Rights and Privileges

- **Right to Audience**  
Can appear in **any court in India**.
  - **Participation in Parliament**  
Can **speak and participate in proceedings of Parliament and committees** but **cannot vote**.
  - **Access to Government Information**  
Entitled to necessary documents to provide legal advice.
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### Limitations

- **Not a Full-time Government Servant**  
Allowed to practice privately, subject to restrictions.

- **Restrictions on Private Practice**  
Cannot appear against the Government of India.
  - **Executive Influence**  
Appointed and removed by the **President on advice of the Union Government**, raising concerns about independence.
  - **Advisory Role Only**  
Legal advice is **not binding** on the government.
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### Importance for Governance

- Ensures **constitutional compliance of executive actions**.
  - Strengthens **rule of law and legality in policy-making**.
  - Provides legal defence in major constitutional cases before the judiciary.
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### Conclusion:

Thus, the **Attorney General for India** serves as a crucial bridge between **law and governance**, though institutional independence and clarity in role remain essential for effective legal oversight of the executive.

**Q. Women's social capital complements in advancing empowerment and gender equity. Explain.**

### Introduction:

Women's **Social Capital**—networks, trust and collective action—acts as a powerful instrument for advancing **women empowerment and gender equity** by enhancing participation, access to resources and collective bargaining power.

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### Role of Women's Social Capital in Empowerment

#### Collective economic empowerment

- Women's groups enable **credit access, savings and entrepreneurship**.
- Example: **Self Help Groups under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission** improving financial inclusion.

#### Improved access to welfare schemes

- Networks help women access **health, education and nutrition schemes**.
- Example: grassroots mobilisation through **Kudumbashree** in Kerala.

#### Political participation and leadership

- Social networks build **leadership skills and political awareness**.
- Supports representation after **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments** ensuring local body reservations for women.

#### Information and awareness diffusion

- Peer networks spread awareness on **legal rights, reproductive health and education**.

#### Strengthening bargaining power

- Collective action helps challenge **patriarchal norms, wage discrimination and violence**.
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### Contribution to Gender Equity

### **Reduction of gender inequalities**

- Social capital increases women's access to **land, credit and markets**.

### **Community development outcomes**

- Women's collectives improve **education, sanitation and nutrition indicators**.

### **Global recognition**

- Highlighted under **United Nations's Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality)**.
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### **Supporting Evidence / Examples**

- **SHG–Bank linkage programme** supported by **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development** is one of the world's largest microfinance initiatives.
  - Studies show women's collectives improve **household decision-making and financial autonomy**.
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### **Conclusion:**

Thus, women's social capital through **collective networks, trust and participation** complements economic and political initiatives, becoming a key driver for **sustainable empowerment and gender equality**.

**Q. E-governance projects have a built-in bias towards technology and back-end integration than user-centric designs. Examine**

### **Introduction**

E-governance initiatives in India often emphasize **technological infrastructure and administrative integration**, sometimes at the cost of **citizen-friendly design and service accessibility**.

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### **Reasons for Bias towards Technology and Back-End Integration**

#### **1. Technology-driven implementation**

- Projects largely conceptualized by **IT departments and technology vendors**.
- Focus on **software architecture, data integration, and interoperability** rather than usability.

#### **2. Administrative efficiency focus**

- Emphasis on **internal monitoring, workflow automation, and data management**.
- Many portals prioritize **MIS dashboards** for officials.

#### **3. Digitization of existing processes**

- Lack of **Business Process Reengineering (BPR)**.
- Leads to digitizing **bureaucratic procedures without simplification**.

#### **4. Departmental silos**

- Ministries develop **independent digital platforms**, limiting seamless citizen experience.

#### **5. Limited citizen participation in design**

- **Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)** highlighted lack of **stakeholder consultation** in e-governance planning.

## 6. Vendor-centric project models

- Implementation by private IT companies often prioritizes **technical deliverables over user experience**.
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### Evidence / Examples

#### 1. Digital platforms complexity

- Several services under **Digital India** initially required multiple authentication steps and complex documentation.

#### 2. Aadhaar-based service delivery issues

- Biometric failures led to **exclusion in welfare access** in some regions.

#### 3. Assisted service model necessity

- Expansion of **Common Service Centres** shows many citizens still require intermediaries to access digital services.

#### 4. Judicial concerns on technological governance

- The **Justice K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India** judgment emphasized safeguarding **privacy, accessibility, and citizen rights** in digital governance.
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### Consequences of Technology Bias

1. **Low usability and adoption**  
Citizens depend on **agents or intermediaries** to use government portals.

2. **Digital divide**  
Rural populations, elderly citizens, and digitally illiterate groups face **access barriers**.

3. **Service inefficiencies**  
Complex digital systems create **authentication failures and processing delays**.

4. **Reduced trust in digital governance**  
Citizens perceive e-services as **complicated and unreliable**.

### Measures for Citizen-Centric E-Governance

1. **Business Process Reengineering (BPR)** before digitization as recommended by **Second ARC**.

2. **Simple interface design** with **mobile-first platforms and regional language support**.

3. **Inclusive access mechanisms** through **Common Service Centres** and assisted digital services.

4. **Integrated digital platforms** like **UMANG** for multi-service delivery.

5. **Continuous feedback systems** including citizen ratings, grievance redressal, and usability testing.

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### Conclusion

E-governance must move beyond **technology-driven digitization** towards **citizen-centric service delivery** to ensure accessibility, inclusiveness, and effective public service outcomes.

**Q. Civil Society Organizations are often perceived as being anti-State actors than non-State actors. Do you agree? Justify.**

### **Introduction**

**Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are non-state, voluntary institutions working between state and society, but their advocacy roles often lead to the perception of being anti-state actors.**

### **Why CSOs are Perceived as Anti-State Actors**

#### **1. Rights-based activism**

- **CSOs frequently challenge government actions on human rights, environment, and governance.**
- **Example: activism against projects affecting tribal rights and environmental protection.**

#### **2. Public interest litigations (PILs)**

- **NGOs approach courts against government policies.**
- **Example: Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India strengthened the Precautionary Principle in environmental governance.**

#### **3. Criticism of policy decisions**

- **CSOs question government actions in areas like land acquisition, civil liberties, and development projects.**

#### **4. Foreign funding concerns**

- **Restrictions under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act due to fears that some NGOs may influence domestic policy through external funding.**

#### **5. Political narratives**

- **Governments sometimes view activism as obstruction to development projects.**

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### **Why CSOs are Actually Non-State Actors Supporting Governance**

#### **1. Democratic accountability**

- **CSOs act as watchdogs, strengthening transparency and rule of law.**

#### **2. Service delivery support**

- **NGOs assist in healthcare, education, and rural development where state capacity is limited.**

#### **3. Policy advocacy and reform**

- **Civil society played a major role in shaping laws like**
  - **Right to Information Act**
  - **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act**

#### **4. Social mobilization and awareness**

- **CSOs promote gender equality, environmental awareness, and community participation.**

#### **5. Disaster management and welfare delivery**

- **NGOs support government during natural disasters and pandemics through relief and community networks.**

#### **6. Constitutional values promotion**

- CSOs advance fundamental rights and participatory democracy.
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### **Institutional Recognition of CSO Role**

#### **\*\*1. Second Administrative Reforms Commission**

- Recommended greater partnership between government and civil society in governance.

#### **\*\*2. NITI Aayog**

- Launched NGO-DARPAN portal to facilitate state-civil society collaboration.
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### **Conclusion**

**While activism may create the perception of CSOs as anti-state, in reality they function as essential non-state partners that enhance democratic accountability and participatory governance.**

**Q. India-Africa digital partnership is achieving mutual respect, co-development and long-term institutional partnerships. Elaborate.**

#### **Introduction:**

India–Africa digital partnership is evolving as a *demand-driven, capacity-building model* rooted in mutual respect, co-development and long-term institutional sustainability.

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#### **1. Mutual Respect (Demand-driven, Non-prescriptive)**

- **South–South Cooperation ethos** → no conditionalities (contrast with Western aid models)
- Based on **African priorities** such as Agenda 2063
- **India–Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)** framework → equal partnership
- Focus on **sovereignty of data & tech choices**

#### **Example:**

- Pan-African e-Network → designed as per African Union needs (tele-education + telemedicine)
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#### **2. Co-development (Shared growth, local capacity)**

- Shift from “aid” → **co-creation & co-innovation**
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** export:
  - Aadhaar-like ID systems
  - UPI-like payment models
- **Skill transfer > product export**

#### **Examples:**

- **UPI collaboration** with Mauritius
- **e-VidyaBharti & e-ArogyaBharti (e-VBAB)** → capacity building in education & healthcare
- Start-up linkages → India Stack replication

#### **Data point:**

- 50,000+ African students trained under Indian digital/IT programs (MEA estimates)

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### 3. Long-term Institutional Partnerships

- Focus on **institution building**, not short-term projects
- **IT Centres of Excellence** across Africa
- Partnerships between:
  - Universities
  - Tech institutes
  - Governments

#### Examples:

- India–Africa Institute of Information Technology
  - National Knowledge Network (NKN) integration
  - Collaboration with African Union digital transformation strategy
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### 4. Key Pillars of Digital Engagement

- **Connectivity:** Pan-African e-Network, BharatNet expertise
  - **Capacity Building:** ITEC training programs
  - **FinTech:** Digital payments, financial inclusion
  - **E-Governance:** India Stack export (Aadhaar, DigiLocker model)
  - **Health & Education:** Telemedicine, online learning platforms
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### 5. Strategic Significance

- Helps bridge **digital divide in Africa**
  - Provides alternative to **China's Digital Silk Road** through open and trusted systems
  - Strengthens **Global South cooperation**
  - Enhances India's role in **digital governance leadership**
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### 6. Challenges

- Infrastructure gaps and low internet penetration in several regions
  - Funding and project scalability issues
  - Political instability in some countries
  - Weak cybersecurity and data protection frameworks
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### 7. Way Forward

- Scale up **modular and low-cost DPI solutions**
  - Promote **PPP model** involving Indian startups
  - Strengthen **cybersecurity and legal frameworks**
  - Expand **local capacity building and skill ecosystems**
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#### Conclusion:

India–Africa digital partnership reflects an inclusive, sustainable and trust-based model of digital cooperation that advances shared growth and long-term institutional resilience.

**Q. E-governance projects have a built-in bias towards technology and back-end integration than user-centric designs. Examine.**

## Introduction:

E-governance in India has largely been driven by **technology-led, backend integration approaches**, often at the cost of **user-centric service delivery and accessibility**.

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### 1. Meaning of the Statement

- Focus on:
    - **Digitization of processes** (automation, databases)
    - **Inter-departmental integration**
  - Neglect of:
    - **User experience (UX)**
    - Accessibility, inclusiveness
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### 2. Evidence of Technology Bias

#### (a) Backend-heavy Architecture

- Emphasis on **data integration, portals, dashboards**
- Success measured by **number of services digitized**, not outcomes

#### Example:

- Early e-Seva portals → complex navigation, low usability
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#### (b) One-size-fits-all Design

- Ignoring **regional, linguistic, literacy differences**
  - Limited localization
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#### (c) Digital Divide

- Rural/elderly/poor face barriers:
  - Internet access
  - Digital literacy

#### Data:

- Internet penetration **~50–55% in India** (varies regionally)
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#### (d) Process-centric, not citizen-centric

- Replication of **bureaucratic procedures online**
  - No simplification of rules
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### 3. Causes of Bias

- Tech-driven policy approach (IT-centric ministries)
  - Vendor-driven implementation
  - Lack of **user research & feedback loops**
  - Capacity gaps in administration
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### 4. Implications

- **Exclusion of vulnerable groups**
- Low adoption rates of services

- Persistence of **middlemen / offline dependency**
  - Reduced trust in digital governance
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## 5. Improvements & Positive Trends

### (a) Shift towards User-centric Governance

- **NITI Aayog** → emphasis on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)
  - Mobile-first governance
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### (b) Successful Models

- Aadhaar-enabled DBT → ease of access
  - UPI → simple, interoperable payments
  - UMANG app → single interface for services
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### (c) Policy Initiatives

- Digital India Programme
  - Open APIs, India Stack → modular approach
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## 6. Critical Evaluation

- Initial phase → **technology-centric**
  - Emerging phase → gradual shift to **citizen-centric design**
  - Yet, **gap persists in last-mile delivery**
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## 7. Way Forward

- Adopt “**citizen-first design thinking**”
  - Conduct **user testing, feedback loops**
  - Ensure **multilingual, inclusive interfaces**
  - Strengthen **digital literacy & assisted access (CSC centres)**
  - Simplify **business processes before digitization**
  - Ensure **data privacy & trust**
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### **Conclusion:**

Bridging the gap between technological capability and citizen needs through inclusive, user-centric design is essential for realizing the true potential of e-governance in India.

**Q. “With the waning of globalization, post-Cold War world is becoming a site of sovereign nationalism.” Elucidate.**

### **Introduction:**

The post-Cold War era, once marked by hyper-globalization, is witnessing a shift towards **sovereign nationalism**, driven by economic disruptions, geopolitical rivalries and identity assertions.

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## 1. Waning of Globalization

- **Slowdown in global trade growth** (WTO: trade growth < global GDP growth post-2008)
- Rise of **protectionism** (tariffs, subsidies, industrial policies)
- **Deglobalization trends:**
  - Supply chain reshoring / friend-shoring
  - Decline in multilateralism (WTO crisis – Appellate Body paralysis)

### Examples:

- US–China **trade war** (tariff escalations since 2018)
  - Brexit → rejection of regional integration
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## 2. Rise of Sovereign Nationalism

- Assertion of **national sovereignty over global rules**
- Emphasis on **self-reliance, border control, cultural identity**
- Shift from **global governance** → **national interest first**

### Examples:

- **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in India
  - “America First” policy under Donald Trump
  - China’s dual circulation strategy
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## 3. Drivers of This Shift

### (a) Economic Factors

- **2008 Global Financial Crisis** → loss of faith in neoliberal globalization
- Rising **inequality** (Oxfam: top 1% owns ~45% global wealth)
- Job losses due to outsourcing, automation

### (b) Political Factors

- Rise of **populism & right-wing nationalism**
- Weakening of **multilateral institutions** (UN, WTO credibility issues)

### (c) Security Factors

- **Pandemic (COVID-19)** → vaccine nationalism
- **Russia–Ukraine conflict (2022)** → energy, food sovereignty concerns

### (d) Technological Factors

- **Data sovereignty** and digital protectionism
  - Tech decoupling (US–China semiconductor restrictions)
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## 4. Manifestations

- **Trade barriers:** tariffs, non-tariff barriers
- **Immigration restrictions**
- **Strategic autonomy in foreign policy**
- **Regional blocs over global regimes**

### Examples:

- EU strategic autonomy debates
- QUAD focusing on secure supply chains

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## 5. Implications

### Positive

- Strengthens **domestic industries**
- Enhances **policy autonomy**
- Focus on **national security & resilience**

### Negative

- Weakens **global cooperation** (climate change, pandemics)
- Risk of **fragmented world order**
- Trade wars → global economic slowdown

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## 6. India's Position

- Advocates "**multi-alignment**" + **strategic autonomy**
- Balances:
  - Globalization (G20 leadership)
  - Nationalism (Atmanirbhar Bharat)
- Promotes **reformed multilateralism**

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## 7. Way Forward

- Reform **multilateral institutions** (WTO, UN)
- Balance **national interest with global commons**
- Promote **inclusive globalization 2.0**
- Strengthen **regional + global cooperation simultaneously**

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## Conclusion:

While sovereign nationalism is reshaping the post-globalization order, a balanced approach integrating national priorities with cooperative multilateralism remains essential for global stability.

Q. "Constitutional morality is the fulcrum which acts as an essential check upon the high functionaries and citizens alike..."

In view of the above observation of the Supreme Court, explain the concept of constitutional morality and its application to ensure balance between judicial independence and judicial accountability in India.

## Introduction:

Constitutional morality denotes adherence to the *core values and spirit of the Constitution*, guiding institutions to balance **judicial independence with accountability**.

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## 1. Concept of Constitutional Morality

- Propounded by **B.R. Ambedkar**

- Implies fidelity to:
    - **Rule of Law**
    - **Separation of Powers**
    - **Checks and Balances**
    - **Justice, Liberty, Equality**
  - Ensures **institutions act within constitutional limits**, not arbitrariness
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## 2. Judicial Independence: Constitutional Basis

- **Articles 124–147** → independence of Supreme Court
- Safeguards:
  - Security of tenure
  - Fixed service conditions
  - Contempt powers
- **Basic Structure Doctrine** protects independence

### Case Law:

- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala** → Judicial independence part of Basic Structure
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## 3. Judicial Accountability: Need

- Prevents:
    - **Judicial overreach**
    - **Opacity in appointments**
    - **Misconduct / corruption**
  - Upholds **public trust & legitimacy**
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## 4. Constitutional Morality as Balancing Tool

- Avoids **absolute independence** → **judicial supremacy**
  - Avoids **excessive control** → **executive interference**
  - Promotes **institutional self-regulation + external checks**
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## 5. Application in Practice

### (a) Appointments: Collegium vs Accountability

- **Collegium system** ensures independence
- Criticism: lack of transparency

### Case Law:

- **Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v. Union of India**
    - NJAC struck down → protected independence
    - Court emphasized **constitutional morality over majoritarian will**
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### (b) Judicial Review with Restraint

- Courts ensure **checks on legislature/executive**
- But follow **self-restraint principle**

### Example:

- Limited interference in policy matters unless **arbitrary/unconstitutional**
- 

### (c) In-house Mechanisms & Ethics

- **In-house procedure (1999)** for judicial misconduct
  - **Restatement of Judicial Values (1997)**
  - Impeachment process (Articles 124(4), 217)
- 

### (d) Transparency & Openness

- Live-streaming of proceedings
- RTI applicability (with limits)

#### Case Law:

- **C.P. Gupta v. Union of India** → openness in judiciary
  - **Subhash Chandra Agarwal v. Supreme Court of India** → CJI under RTI (with safeguards)
- 

## 6. Challenges

- **Opacity in Collegium functioning**
  - Delay in **judicial appointments**
  - Weak enforcement of **accountability mechanisms**
  - Perception of **judicial overreach vs activism**
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Institutionalize **transparent Collegium reforms** (reasons disclosure)
  - Strengthen **judicial standards & ethics code**
  - Balance **RTI with judicial independence**
  - Ensure **timely appointments + diversity in judiciary**
- 

### Conclusion:

Constitutional morality ensures a delicate equilibrium where judicial independence is preserved without compromising accountability, sustaining the credibility of India's constitutional democracy.

Q. Indian Constitution has conferred the amending power on the ordinary legislative institutions with a few procedural hurdles. In view of this statement, examine the procedural and substantive limitations on the amending power of the Parliament to change the Constitution.

### Introduction:

The Constitution empowers Parliament to amend it under **Article 368**, but this power is subject to **procedural safeguards and substantive (judicially evolved) limitations**.

---

## 1. Nature of Amending Power

- Falls between **rigidity and flexibility**
- Vested in **ordinary legislature (Parliament)**, unlike special constituent bodies

- Reflects **balance between change and continuity**
- 

## **2. Procedural Limitations (Express in Constitution)**

### **(a) Special Majority Requirement**

- Amendment Bill must be passed by:
  - **Majority of total membership** +
  - **2/3rd of members present & voting**

### **(b) Federal Ratification (Selective)**

- Required for provisions affecting:
  - **Federal structure**
  - Election of President
  - Distribution of powers
- Needs approval by **≥ 50% of State Legislatures**

### **(c) No Joint Sitting**

- Deadlock cannot be resolved by joint sitting → ensures **deliberation**

### **(d) President's Assent**

- Mandatory after passage (cannot withhold post-24th Amendment)

### **(e) Initiation Restriction**

- Amendment Bill can be introduced **only in Parliament**, not in State Legislatures
- 

## **3. Substantive Limitations (Judicial Doctrine)**

### **Basic Structure Doctrine**

- Evolved in **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala**
- Parliament **cannot alter basic structure**

### **Core Elements (illustrative):**

- Supremacy of Constitution
  - Rule of Law
  - Judicial Review
  - Federalism
  - Secularism
  - Separation of Powers
  - Free & fair elections
  - Judicial independence
- 

## **4. Evolution through Case Laws**

- **Golaknath v. State of Punjab**
  - Fundamental Rights not amendable (later modified)
- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala**
  - Parliament can amend any part **but not basic structure**
- **Indira Nehru Gandhi v. Raj Narain**
  - Free & fair elections part of basic structure
- **Minerva Mills v. Union of India**
  - Limited amending power itself is basic structure

---

## 5. Interplay: Procedure + Substance

- **Procedural limits** → ensure **federal consensus & deliberation**
  - **Substantive limits** → prevent **constitutional destruction**
  - Judiciary acts as **final interpreter**
- 

## 6. Critical Evaluation

### Strengths

- Prevents **majoritarian excesses**
- Ensures **constitutional continuity**
- Protects **core democratic values**

### Concerns

- **Judicial supremacy debate** (unelected judiciary limits Parliament)
  - Ambiguity of **basic structure elements**
  - Potential **conflict between organs**
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Maintain **institutional balance** (Parliament–Judiciary)
  - Ensure **reasoned judicial interpretation**
  - Promote **constitutional culture & restraint**
- 

### Conclusion:

While Parliament possesses wide amending powers, procedural safeguards and the Basic Structure doctrine ensure that constitutional evolution does not undermine its foundational identity.

Q. Discuss the evolution of collegium system in India. Critically examine the advantages and disadvantages of the system of appointment of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India and that of the USA.

### Introduction:

Judicial appointments in India have evolved from **executive primacy to judicial collegium**, raising debates on independence, transparency and accountability in comparison with the US model.

---

## 1. Evolution of Collegium System in India

### (a) Constitutional Framework

- **Articles 124 & 217** → President appoints judges after “consultation”
  - Initially → **Executive primacy**
- 

### (b) Judicial Evolution through Cases

- **S.P. Gupta v. Union of India**
  - Executive primacy upheld

- **Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v. Union of India**
    - Introduced **Collegium system** → CJI + 2 senior judges
    - Shift to **judicial primacy**
  - **Re Presidential Reference**
    - Expanded collegium → **CJI + 4 senior-most judges**
  - **Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v. Union of India**
    - NJAC struck down → collegium retained (basic structure: judicial independence)
- 

## 2. Collegium System (India): Features

- Judges appoint judges (no formal constitutional backing)
  - Executive role → **limited to background checks & delays**
  - Decisions based on **consensus within judiciary**
- 

## 3. Advantages (India Collegium)

- Ensures **judicial independence** (insulation from political pressure)
  - Upholds **basic structure doctrine**
  - Promotes **continuity & institutional integrity**
  - Limits **executive interference**
- 

## 4. Disadvantages (India Collegium)

- **Opacity / lack of transparency** (no clear criteria)
  - Allegations of **nepotism, favouritism**
  - No formal **accountability mechanism**
  - Delays & **executive–judiciary tussles**
  - Not explicitly mentioned in Constitution → **legitimacy debate**
- 

## 5. USA System of Judicial Appointments

### Process:

- President nominates judges
- Senate confirms (simple majority)

### Constitutional Basis:

- Article II of US Constitution
- 

## 6. Advantages (USA Model)

- **Transparency** (public hearings in Senate)
  - Democratic **accountability** (elected representatives involved)
  - Clear **checks and balances**
  - Defined **procedure & scrutiny**
- 

## 7. Disadvantages (USA Model)

- **Politicization of judiciary**
- Ideological bias in appointments (liberal vs conservative)

- Delays due to **partisan conflicts**
- Threat to **judicial independence**

**Example:**

- Contentious confirmations reflecting party lines

**8. Comparative Analysis**

Aspect	India (Collegium)	USA
Primacy	Judiciary	Executive + Legislature
Transparency	Low	High
Independence	High	Relatively lower
Accountability	Weak	Strong
Politicization	Low	High

**9. Way Forward (India)**

- Reform collegium → **transparency + criteria disclosure**
- Establish **independent secretariat**
- Balance **independence with accountability**
- Avoid extreme politicization (lesson from USA)

**Conclusion:**

While India’s collegium prioritizes independence and the US model ensures accountability, an optimal system lies in balancing both to preserve judicial credibility and constitutional governance.

**Q. Examine the evolving pattern of Centre-State financial relations in the context of planned development in India. How far have the recent reforms impacted the fiscal federalism in India?**

**Introduction:**

Centre–State financial relations in India have evolved from **centralized planning-led transfers** to a more **decentralized, rule-based fiscal federal framework**, especially after recent reforms.

**1. Constitutional Basis of Fiscal Federalism**

- **Articles 268–293** → distribution of taxation powers
- **Finance Commission (Art 280)** → vertical & horizontal devolution
- **Seventh Schedule** → Union, State, Concurrent lists
- **GST Council (Art 279A)** → cooperative fiscal federalism

**2. Pattern during Planned Development Era (1950–2014)**

**(a) Centralized Fiscal Architecture**

- Dominance of **Planning Commission**
- **Discretionary grants** (Plan vs Non-Plan distinction)
- States dependent on Centre → **vertical imbalance**

### (b) Transfer Mechanisms

- **Finance Commission** → statutory transfers
- **Planning Commission** → plan grants, CSS

### (c) Issues

- **Overlap & inefficiency** (dual channels)
  - **Conditional transfers** limiting State autonomy
  - Politicization of grants
- 

## 3. Post-Reform Phase (Post-2014): Key Changes

### (a) End of Planning Commission

- Replaced by **NITI Aayog**
  - Shift from **top-down planning** → **cooperative federalism**
- 

### (b) Finance Commission Empowerment

- **14th Finance Commission:**
  - Tax devolution ↑ from **32%** → **42%**
- **15th Finance Commission:**
  - Maintained ~41% (post J&K reorganization)

→ Strengthened **formula-based, predictable transfers**

---

### (c) GST Regime

- Introduced via **101st Constitutional Amendment (2016)**
- Subsumed multiple taxes → **harmonized indirect taxation**

#### Features:

- **GST Council** → joint decision-making body
  - Compensation to states for revenue loss (5 years)
- 

### (d) Rationalization of CSS

- Reduced number of **Centrally Sponsored Schemes**
  - Increased **flexibility to States**
- 

## 4. Impact on Fiscal Federalism

### Positive Outcomes

- ↑ **State fiscal autonomy** (higher tax devolution)
  - Strengthened **cooperative federalism** (GST Council)
  - Reduced **discretionary transfers**
  - Improved **fiscal transparency & predictability**
- 

### Concerns / Limitations

- **GST constraints:**
  - Limited taxation powers of States
  - Compensation delays → fiscal stress
- **Centrally Sponsored Schemes** still conditional

- Rising **cess & surcharge** (not shareable with States) → reduces divisible pool
  - Increasing **off-budget borrowings**
- 

## 5. Data / Evidence

- States' share in central taxes ↑ significantly post-14th FC
  - GST accounts for **~50% of indirect tax revenue**
  - Cesses & surcharges **~15–20% of gross tax revenue** (reducing devolution pool)
- 

## 6. Overall Assessment

- Shift from:
    - **Centralized, discretionary model** → **rule-based fiscal federalism**
  - But evolving towards **“cooperative yet controlled federalism”**
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Rationalize **cess & surcharge usage**
  - Ensure **timely GST compensation / reforms**
  - Strengthen **State fiscal capacity**
  - Enhance role of **Inter-State Council & NITI Aayog**
- 

### Conclusion:

Recent reforms have significantly strengthened fiscal federalism, yet persistent structural and policy challenges require continuous calibration to ensure true cooperative and balanced Centre–State financial relations.

Q. What are environmental pressure groups? Discuss their role in raising awareness, influencing policies and advocating for environmental protection in India.

### Introduction:

Environmental pressure groups are **non-governmental, voluntary organizations** that influence public opinion and policy for **environmental protection and sustainable development**.

---

## 1. Meaning & Features

- Organized groups outside government
- Use **advocacy, campaigns, litigation**
- Represent **public/environmental interests**
- Operate at **local, national, global levels**

### Examples:

- Centre for Science and Environment
  - Greenpeace India
  - World Wide Fund for Nature
- 

## 2. Role in Raising Awareness

- **Mass campaigns & social media outreach**

- Environmental education, reports, surveys
- Highlight issues:
  - Air pollution, climate change, deforestation

**Examples:**

- CSE reports on **Delhi air pollution crisis**
  - Chipko Movement (grassroots awareness)
- 

**3. Role in Influencing Policies**

- Policy advocacy, expert inputs, lobbying
- Participation in **EIA processes, public hearings**
- Engage with ministries, parliamentary committees

**Examples:**

- Contribution to **National Green Tribunal (NGT) strengthening**
  - Inputs in climate commitments (NDCs under Paris Agreement)
- 

**4. Role in Legal Activism (Judicial Intervention)**

- Filing **Public Interest Litigations (PILs)**
- Use judiciary for enforcement of environmental rights

**Key Case Laws:**

- **M.C. Mehta v. Union of India** → pollution control measures
  - **Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India** → Precautionary principle, Polluter Pays
- 

**5. Role in Advocacy & Grassroots Mobilization**

- Mobilize local communities
- Promote **sustainable practices**
- Resist environmentally harmful projects

**Examples:**

- Narmada Bachao Andolan → displacement & environmental concerns
  - Save Aarey movement (urban forest protection)
- 

**6. Contribution to Environmental Governance**

- Strengthen **participatory democracy**
  - Ensure **accountability of state & corporations**
  - Promote **sustainable development goals (SDGs)**
- 

**7. Challenges**

- Funding constraints, regulatory restrictions (FCRA issues)
  - Limited reach in rural areas
  - Allegations of **foreign influence / politicization**
  - Conflict with development priorities
- 

**8. Way Forward**

- Encourage **state–NGO collaboration**
  - Ensure **transparent funding mechanisms**
  - Strengthen **community participation**
  - Integrate NGOs in **policy formulation process**
- 

**Conclusion:**

Environmental pressure groups act as crucial intermediaries bridging citizens and the state, fostering awareness, accountability and sustainable policy-making in India.

**Q. Inequality in the ownership pattern of resources is one of the major causes of poverty. Discuss in the context of ‘paradox of poverty’.**

**Introduction:**

The *paradox of poverty* refers to the coexistence of **abundant resources with persistent poverty**, largely due to **unequal ownership and access**.

---

**1. Paradox of Poverty: Meaning**

- Regions rich in **natural/human resources** remain poor
- Growth without **equitable distribution**
- Also linked to “**resource curse**”

**Examples:**

- Mineral-rich states like Jharkhand, Odisha with high poverty
  - Tribal regions with forests but low human development
- 

**2. Inequality in Ownership of Resources**

**(a) Land Inequality**

- Skewed land distribution → **landlessness, marginal farmers**
- Limits income, credit access

**Data:**

- Top ~10% hold majority of agricultural land (various NSS estimates)
- 

**(b) Capital & Asset Inequality**

- Concentration of **wealth, capital, technology**
  - Oxfam: top 1% owns ~40–45% wealth in India
- 

**(c) Access to Common Resources**

- Forests, water bodies controlled by **state/corporates**
  - Marginalized groups excluded
- 

**(d) Human Capital Inequality**

- Unequal access to **education, health**
  - Perpetuates intergenerational poverty
- 

**3. How Inequality Causes Poverty**

- **Low productivity trap** → lack of assets → low income → no investment
  - **Credit exclusion** (no collateral)
  - **Exploitative labour relations**
  - **Regional disparities** (BIMARU vs developed states)
- 

#### 4. Evidence / Reports

- **World Inequality Lab** → rising income & wealth inequality
  - **NITI Aayog MPI** → multidimensional poverty concentrated in resource-rich but unequal regions
- 

#### 5. Case Studies / Examples

- **Resource curse**: mining areas with poor HDI
  - Urban paradox: **slums near economic hubs**
  - Agriculture: small farmers vs large landholders income gap
- 

#### 6. Government Interventions

##### (a) Land & Asset Reforms

- Land ceiling laws, tenancy reforms (limited success)

##### (b) Inclusive Growth Policies

- MGNREGA → wage employment
- PMJDY → financial inclusion
- DBT → targeted subsidies

##### (c) Human Capital Development

- NEP 2020, Ayushman Bharat
- 

#### 7. Challenges

- Poor implementation of land reforms
  - Elite capture of resources
  - Regional imbalance persists
  - Informal sector dominance
- 

#### 8. Way Forward

- Ensure **equitable asset distribution**
  - Strengthen **land reforms & land records digitization**
  - Promote **inclusive growth & skilling**
  - Enhance **social sector spending**
  - Empower local governance (Panchayats in resource management)
- 

#### Conclusion:

Addressing inequality in resource ownership is key to resolving the paradox of poverty, ensuring that resource abundance translates into inclusive and sustainable development.

Q. “In contemporary development models, decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities are not located close to the source of information and execution defeating the objectives of development.” Critically evaluate.

**Introduction:**

Contemporary development models often exhibit **centralized decision-making**, distancing authority from ground realities, thereby undermining efficiency, inclusiveness and outcomes.

---

**1. Meaning of the Statement**

- **Decisions taken at higher levels** (Centre/State)
  - **Execution at local level** (district/village)
  - Creates **information asymmetry & implementation gaps**
- 

**2. Issues with Centralized Development Model**

**(a) Information Gap**

- Local needs not reflected in policy design
- “One-size-fits-all” approach

**Example:**

- Uniform agricultural schemes ignoring regional diversity
- 

**(b) Implementation Deficit**

- Poor coordination between planners & implementers
  - Delays, cost overruns
- 

**(c) Lack of Accountability**

- Decision-makers far from beneficiaries
  - Weak grievance redressal
- 

**(d) Reduced Community Participation**

- Top-down planning → **exclusion of stakeholders**
  - Undermines democratic decentralization
- 

**(e) Inefficiency & Resource Wastage**

- Misallocation due to lack of ground-level inputs
- 

**3. Evidence / Institutional Insights**

- **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** → emphasized decentralization & subsidiarity
  - **World Bank** → local governance improves service delivery outcomes
- 

**4. Counter-View (Need for Centralization)**

- Ensures **uniform standards & equity**
- Necessary for:
  - National infrastructure

- Disaster management
- Macroeconomic stability

**Example:**

- Centralized vaccine procurement during COVID-19 (initial phase)
- 

## 5. Indian Context: Steps Towards Decentralization

### (a) Constitutional Measures

- **73rd & 74th Amendments** → Panchayati Raj, Urban Local Bodies
  - Principle of **subsidiarity**
- 

### (b) Institutional Mechanisms

- **NITI Aayog** → cooperative federalism
  - District Planning Committees
- 

### (c) Digital Governance

- Real-time data (DBT, MIS systems) → bridging information gaps
- 

## 6. Persistent Challenges

- **Fiscal dependence** of local bodies
  - Capacity constraints at grassroots
  - Bureaucratic centralization persists
  - Weak devolution (3Fs: Funds, Functions, Functionaries)
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Strengthen **decentralized planning (bottom-up approach)**
  - Ensure **true devolution of 3Fs**
  - Build **local capacity & institutions**
  - Promote **participatory governance (Gram Sabhas)**
  - Use **data-driven localized decision-making**
- 

### **Conclusion:**

Bridging the gap between decision-making and execution through deeper decentralization and local empowerment is essential for achieving inclusive and effective development outcomes.

Q. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has to address the challenges faced by children in the digital era. Examine the existing policies and suggest measures the Commission can initiate to tackle the issue.

### **Introduction:**

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights must address emerging digital risks to children through **robust policy enforcement and proactive regulatory innovation.**

---

## 1. Challenges Faced by Children in Digital Era

- **Cyberbullying, online harassment** → mental health issues
- **Online sexual abuse (OCSEA), grooming**

- **Exposure to harmful content**
  - **Data privacy violations, tracking, profiling**
  - **Gaming addiction, financial exploitation**
  - **Cross-border cybercrime, anonymity issues**
- 

## **2. Existing Policy & Legal Framework**

### **(a) Child Protection Laws**

- **POCSO Act, 2012** → covers online sexual abuse
  - **Juvenile Justice Act, 2015** → child protection framework
- 

### **(b) Digital & Data Protection Laws**

- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**
    - Parental consent mandatory
    - Restricts tracking/targeted ads
  - **IT Rules (2021–23)**
    - Due diligence by intermediaries
    - Removal of illegal content
- 

### **(c) Institutional Mechanisms**

- National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal
  - CERT-In advisories
  - Child helplines (1098), POCSO e-Box
- 

### **(d) Regulatory Initiatives**

- NCPCR push for **age verification, content moderation**
  - KYC-based verification proposals
- 

## **3. Gaps in Existing Framework**

- Weak **age-verification mechanisms**
  - **Fragmented reporting systems**
  - Low **digital literacy among parents/teachers**
  - Poor enforcement across platforms
  - Rapid tech evolution (AI, deepfakes) outpacing laws
- 

## **4. Measures NCPCR Can Initiate**

### **(a) Regulatory & Policy Measures**

- Develop **Child Online Safety Code** (safety-by-design, default privacy)
  - Mandate **privacy-preserving age assurance systems**
  - Enforce **algorithm audits & child impact assessments**
  - Strengthen regulation of **EdTech, gaming, social media**
- 

### **(b) Monitoring & Enforcement**

- Create **Digital Child Safety Cell within NCPCR**

- One-stop “**Report–Remove**” platform integrating portals
  - Periodic **compliance audits of platforms**
- 

### (c) Awareness & Capacity Building

- Nationwide **digital literacy campaigns** (schools, anganwadis)
  - Training for **parents, teachers, law enforcement**
  - Curriculum integration of **cyber safety**
- 

### (d) Technological Interventions

- AI-based detection of **CSAM & harmful content**
  - Collaboration with global agencies (INTERPOL, tech firms)
  - Tools for **parental control & screen-time regulation**
- 

### (e) Support Systems

- Strengthen **mental health counselling services**
  - Child-friendly grievance redressal mechanisms
  - 24×7 helplines for cyber abuse victims
- 

## 5. Best Practice / Global Learning

- Age-appropriate design codes (UK model)
  - Increasing debate on **age restrictions/social media regulation** globally
- 

## 6. Overall Evaluation

- Existing policies → **comprehensive but reactive**
  - Need shift to **preventive, child-centric digital governance**
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Integrate **law + technology + awareness**
  - Promote **multi-stakeholder approach** (Govt + NGOs + Tech firms)
  - Continuous **policy updation with emerging technologies**
- 

### Conclusion:

By moving towards a proactive, technology-driven and child-centric regulatory approach, NCPCR can effectively safeguard children’s rights in the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem.

Q. Energy security constitutes the dominant kingpin of India’s foreign policy, and is linked with India’s overarching influence in Middle Eastern countries.” How would you integrate energy security with India’s foreign policy trajectories in the coming years?

### Introduction:

Energy security—ensuring **reliable, affordable and diversified energy supply**—is a central pillar of India’s foreign policy, especially shaping its engagement with West Asia (Middle East).

---

## 1. Link Between Energy Security & Foreign Policy

- India imports **~85% crude oil, ~50% gas** → high external dependence

- West Asia supplies **~60% of oil imports**
  - Energy ties drive:
    - Strategic partnerships
    - Diaspora protection (~8–9 million Indians in Gulf)
    - Trade & investment flows
- 

## 2. Current Foreign Policy Trajectory

### (a) West Asia Outreach

- Strong ties with:
    - Saudi Arabia
    - United Arab Emirates
    - Iran
  - Long-term crude supply agreements
  - Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) partnerships
- 

### (b) Diversification Strategy

- Expanding imports from:
    - Russia (discounted oil post-Ukraine war)
    - United States
    - Africa
  - Reduces overdependence on Middle East
- 

### (c) Multilateral & Regional Platforms

- **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** leadership
  - **IEA engagement** (association status)
  - I2U2 grouping (India–Israel–UAE–USA)
- 

## 3. Challenges

- **Geopolitical instability** (Iran–Israel tensions, Gulf conflicts)
  - Supply disruptions (Russia–Ukraine war)
  - Price volatility → inflationary pressures
  - Energy transition vs fossil fuel dependence
- 

## 4. Integrating Energy Security with Foreign Policy (Way Forward)

### (a) Strategic Diversification

- Broaden supplier base (Latin America, Africa)
  - Invest in **overseas oil & gas assets (ONGC Videsh)**
- 

### (b) Strengthening West Asia Partnerships

- Move beyond buyer–seller → **comprehensive strategic ties**
- Collaborate in:
  - Petrochemicals
  - Infrastructure

- Food-energy corridors

---

### (c) Energy Transition Diplomacy

- Lead **renewable energy alliances**
- Export **green hydrogen technologies**
- Collaborate with Gulf countries on **clean energy investments**

---

### (d) Maritime & Supply Chain Security

- Secure **Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs)**
- Strengthen presence in **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**

---

### (e) Strategic Reserves & Domestic Capacity

- Expand **Strategic Petroleum Reserves**
- Promote **biofuels, EVs, solar energy**
- Reduce import dependence long-term

---

### (f) Diaspora & Economic Diplomacy

- Protect Indian workforce in Gulf
- Leverage remittances (~\$100 billion annually)

---

## 5. Strategic Significance

- Enhances India's **geopolitical leverage**
- Balances relations (US–Iran, Israel–Arab world)
- Positions India as **energy transition leader of Global South**

---

## 6. Overall Assessment

- Shift from **passive import dependence** → **proactive energy diplomacy**
- Balancing **energy security + strategic autonomy**

---

### Conclusion:

Integrating energy security with foreign policy through diversification, strategic partnerships and clean energy leadership will be crucial for sustaining India's growth and global influence.

Q. "The reform process in the United Nations remains unresolved, because of the delicate imbalance of East and West and entanglement of the USA vs. Russo-Chinese alliance." Examine and critically evaluate the East-West policy confrontations in this regard.

#### Introduction:

UN reforms, especially of the Security Council, remain stalled due to **geopolitical contestation between Western powers and the Russia–China axis**, reflecting an enduring East–West divide.

---

## 1. Need for UN Reforms

- UNSC reflects **1945 power structure**, not current realities
- Under-representation of **Global South (Asia, Africa, Latin America)**

- Demand for expansion in **permanent & non-permanent seats**

#### **Groups:**

- G4 (India, Germany, Japan, Brazil)
  - African Union (Ezulwini Consensus)
- 

## **2. Nature of East–West Divide**

### **(a) Western Bloc Position**

- Led by United States and allies
  - Supports **limited expansion**
  - Emphasis on:
    - Efficiency
    - Status quo of veto power
- 

### **(b) Russia–China Axis**

- Russia and China
  - Resist reforms that **dilute P5 dominance**
  - Selective support (e.g., China hesitant on India’s candidature)
- 

## **3. Key Areas of Confrontation**

### **(a) Expansion of UNSC**

- Disagreement on:
    - Number of permanent members
    - Inclusion of new veto powers
- 

### **(b) Veto Power Issue**

- P5 unwilling to dilute or abolish veto
  - Seen as **undemocratic but strategically essential**
- 

### **(c) Regional Rivalries**

- China opposes India
  - US ambivalence on reform pace
  - African representation unresolved
- 

### **(d) Geopolitical Conflicts**

- Ukraine war → sharp East–West polarization
  - Syria, Indo-Pacific issues → UNSC deadlocks
- 

## **4. Impact on UN Reform Process**

- **Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN)** remain inconclusive
  - Lack of consensus → procedural delays
  - Increasing **irrelevance of UNSC in conflict resolution**
- 

## **5. Critical Evaluation**

## Arguments Supporting Statement

- **Power politics > institutional reform**
  - East–West rivalry leads to **mutual vetoes & deadlock**
  - UN becomes arena of **strategic competition**
- 

## Counter-Arguments

- Other factors also responsible:
    - **North–South divide**
    - Lack of consensus among reform aspirants
    - Complex amendment procedure (2/3rd + P5 ratification)
- 

## 6. India's Position

- Advocates **reformed multilateralism**
  - Member of G4
  - Emphasizes:
    - Equity
    - Representation of Global South
- 

## 7. Way Forward

- Build **broad-based coalition (G4 + Africa)**
  - Incremental reforms (intermediate category seats)
  - Limit veto use (code of conduct)
  - Revitalize **multilateral diplomacy**
- 

## Conclusion:

While East–West rivalry significantly impedes UN reforms, overcoming broader structural and political constraints is essential to make the UN more representative and effective.