



APSC Mains 2023 TS - 12 (GS Paper 2)

Duration – 3 Hrs

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(Please fill your details correctly)

Medium

English ☒

Assamese ☐

INDEX NUMBER			INSTRUCTIONS
Q.NO.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained.	Please read each of the following instruction carefully before attempting the questions: - There are TWENTY questions and printed in ENGLISH. - All questions are compulsory - The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it. - The answers must not exceed 150 words for 10 marks and 250 words for 15 marks. - Content is more important than the number of words. - Answers must be written in the medium authorised in the Admission Certificate which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorised one. - Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off
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TOTAL:	250		Remarks: Signature of the Student: <i>Debanjan Das</i>



Brief report of Performance Evaluation of student in the paper

	Poor	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
Understanding the context and demand of the questions					
Relevancy of the content					
Structure and flow of the answer					
(a) Introduction					
(b) Body					
(c) Conclusion					
Subject knowledge					
Language of the answer					
Presentation					
(a) Underline to the keywords					
(b) Use of flowcharts or diagrams					
(c) Paragraph limits and overall					
Understanding of directives					
Factual correctness					
Overall performance					

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Q1. Do you see pressure groups as a genuine mechanism for ensuring broader and more participative democracy? Critically comment. (10 marks/150 words)

Pressure groups are bodies which is constituted by members of civil society. Their main function is to highlight the concerns of all sections of society.

Significance of pressure groups

- i) Creates awareness about the challenges in society especially those faced by the unprivileged.
- ii) Holds the government accountable for its actions and ensures government actions are for society's well-being.
- iii) Creates moral pressure and legal pressure of government to act for society's development.

iv) Uphold constitutionalism by government.

Concerns about pressure groups

i) Vested national and international interests
Eg. intelligence reports suggested that NGOs like Greenpeace affected the GDP by 2-3% by their obstructive actions.

ii) Stringent control by Government -
Some of the NGOs and pressure groups acting for tribal welfare are being prosecuted as obstructionist.

iii) Most of pressure groups are elitist and concentrated around urban centres. This raised concern about inclusivity of such pressure groups.

Thus pressure group as a genuine mechanism for participative democracy may be hindering progress. It requires proper monitoring inclusive participation.

Q2. The main objective of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 is to enable tribal society to assume control over their livelihoods and traditional rights. Critically examine the implementation of the Act. (10 marks/150 words)

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Q3. Examine the challenges of fiscal federalism in India.

(10 marks/150 words)

Federalism is a basic structure of Indian constitution as upheld by the Supreme court on numerous occasions. Federalism applied in economic sphere is fiscal federalism.

Meaning of fiscal federalism

- i) Devolution of funds by centre to state. Eg. 15 finance Commission has recommended 42% devolution of funds to states.
- ii) Collection of taxes by states - article 268, 269 & 270 guide the levy and collection of taxes by centre and states.
- iii) States also have right to raise sovereign funds from domestic market subject to the limits prescribed under FRBM act.

Challenges of fiscal federalism in India

- i) States fight for more fund devolution
- ii) Some states contest inequality of fund devolution. E.g. 15th finance commission method of devolution is contested by states.
- iii) Financing of populist policies through unsustainable market borrowing creates fiscal burden.
- iv) FRBM act restricts market borrowing by states under ceiling loan from centre.

Thus, fiscal federalism is necessary for inclusive development of states but the centre's concern of fiscal consolidation is also important. In this regard, GST Council is a good example of Centre-State coordination in fiscal exercise in India.

Q4. What are the challenges and issues regarding the functioning of NGOs in India? Analyse. (10 marks / 150 words)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are part of the civil society dimension of governance in India. NGOs act as the bridging link between the government and the governed masses.

Importance of NGOs

- i) NGOs are not-for-profit organisations whose purpose is the development of society.
 - ii) They act as voice of the unprivileged.
 - iii) They provide valuable feedback to the government about the pulse of the masses.
 - iv) They help the government schemes and policies reach the remote corners of India.
- NGOs however face several challenges during their operation.

Challenges faced by NGOs

- i) Lack of funds
- ii) Corruption or misappropriation of funds
- iii) Lack of voluntary service by youth
- iv) Insufficient delegation of functional powers for implementation of schemes
- v) Ethical cloud due to nefarious activity by vested foreign interests

Government initiatives for NGOs

- i) Amendment to FCRA (2010) to make sadhar based registration and fund-use restriction.
- ii) S Vijay Kumar Committee recommendations on registration simplification, audit and accreditation and model governing body.

Thus, as NGOs are a vital cog to the governance in India, its rejuvenation rather than sanctions is needed at present

Q5. How can e-governance initiatives help in increasing farmers' income? Illustrate. (10 marks/150 words)

E-governance refers to the use of information technology (websites, apps, portals) for exercising the powers of government as mandated in a democracy.

Significance of E-governance

- i) Increases the reach of the government
- ii) Makes governance a two-way street by welcoming citizen's inputs. E.g. citizen suggestions for draft bills.
- iii) Makes governance transparent and inclusive.

E-governance initiatives have been used in different sectors in India. Application of e-governance in agricultural sectors can bring more benefits to the farmers.

[E-governance helps increase farmer income]

- i) Government initiated e-National agricultural market for online trade of farm produce
- ii) Farmers can cut the middlemen in traditional mandi resulting in more a price discovery and realisation income
- iii) Initiatives like PM KISAN becomes more efficient due to JAM trinity
- iv) Conclusive land titles schemes such as Mission Bhoomi (Orissa) Bhoomi (Karnataka) makes farmers get access credit and finance support through land ownership.

Thus, e-governance has introduced efficiency & transparency in agri-sector which is besieged by hidden unemployment and income inequalities.

Q6. Discuss the need for codification of parliamentary privileges in India, in light of the uncertainty and ambiguity around them. (10 marks 150 words)

The parliamentary proceedings in India is of utmost importance for its democratic functioning. Keeping in mind the sanctity of the parliamentary process, the members of parliament are provided certain privileges.

Need for Parliamentary privileges

- i) Ensure free speech and expression without fear of any legal action.
- ii) Promote sanctity of the temple of democracy.
- iii) Minimum disturbance in parliamentary proceedings by outside events.

However, recently it has been observed the parliamentary privileges can be misused and thus there is a need

to codify such privileges.

Why parliamentary privileges needs to be codified

i) The current Lok Sabha has about 30% MPs with criminal cases. 11% have heinous crime case against them. Thus, parliament has become a refuge for alleged criminals.

ii) The parliamentary proceedings are increasingly being marked by heinous behaviour unparliamentary language and restrictive action curtailing their rights by government.

Thus, in the temple of democracy to ensure discipline, there is a need to codify the tenets of behaviour to function more smoothly.

Q7. Discuss the reforms that must be undertaken to strengthen the World Trade Organisation in order to address the vulnerabilities in the present global trading system. (10 Marks/150 words)

The World trade organisation was formed in 1995 to coordinate inter-national trade, formulate inclusive trade policies and to redress concerns of trade disputes.

Currently, the WTO suffers from several drawbacks which makes the global trading vulnerable.

Drawbacks in World Trade Organisation

- i) WTO imposes restrictions on countries providing input subsidies. (Amber box subsidies). Due to this developing countries like India, Brazil, South Africa have been at odds with WTO. ~~Recent~~
- ii) Global pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war induced food crisis has led

to demand for more unrestricted
subsidy policy of WTO

- iii) Covid-19 pandemic showed that India's demand for liberal IPR administration in pharma sector is necessary for global health coverage.

Reforms needed in WTO

- i) Re-negotiate amber box subsidies to make food crisis target - Most of food production is done in developing countries.
- ii) Address developing nations industrial growth need - national treatment policy promotes import at the cost of stagnation of local industries which require protectionist measures.

Thus, a collaboration of developed and developing countries to create a win-win situation is needed for sustainable development.

Q8. Discuss how the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) in the dispute resolution processes will help in overcoming the challenges associated with the functioning of courts and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) forums. (10 Marks/150 words)

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Q9. Despite various provisions concerning disqualification of legislators under The Representation of The People Act, 1951, the issue of criminalization of politics is still unresolved to a large extent in India. Discuss (10 marks/150 words)

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Q10. Bangladesh is critical not just for India's "Neighbourhood First" strategy, but also for the "Act East" policy. Discuss the efforts made by the two countries to develop their relationship in this setting. (10 marks/150 Words)

Bangladesh got its independence in 1971 as a result of operation Vijay on December 26. Since then Bangladesh and India have signed several treaties for friendship and promotion of trade.

Bangladesh is critical for India's Neighbourhood First & act east policy.

[Significance of Indo-Bangladesh relations]

- i) Bangladesh is key trading partner of India with Bilateral Trade of more than \$10 billion in India's favour.
- ii) Internal Security - many insurgent groups take refuge in Bangladesh. In

2008, Bangladesh Rifles launched campaign to destroy military camps.

- iii) Infrastructure connectivity - some of key projects such as Agartala - Akhaura rail link, inland waterway connectivity make Bangladesh essential to India.

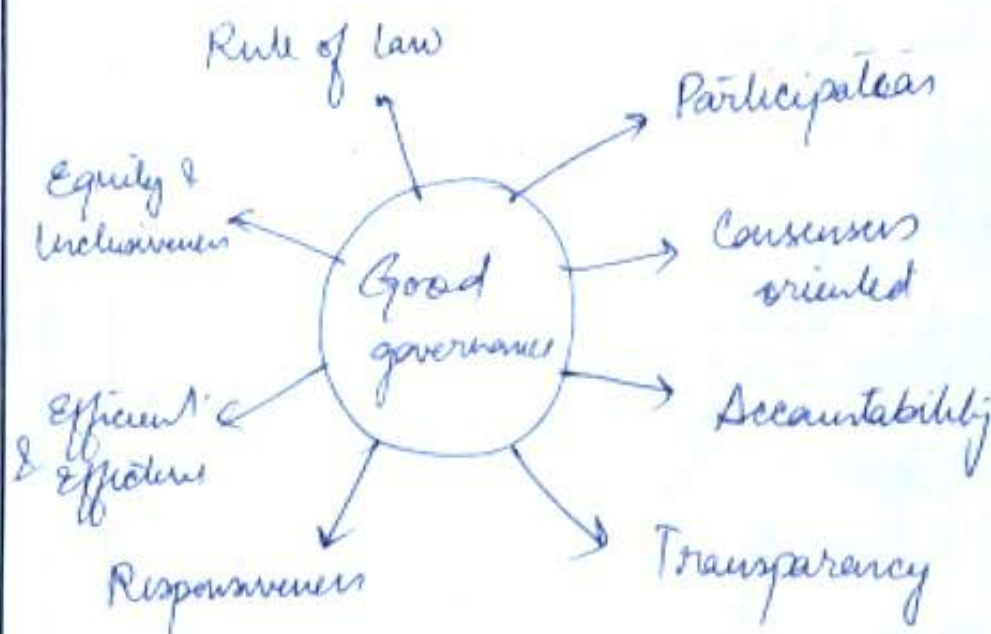
Efforts by two countries to strengthen relations

- i) Water-sharing treaty of Barak river
- ii) River tourism and infra-connectivity treaty
- iii) Collaboration in education & health sector.

Although there are some irreconcilable issues like illegal immigrants in north-east and Rohingya issue, proper dialogue and common objective of poverty elimination converges the interest of both countries.

Q11 Good governance needs good institutions, but it is the people manning the institution which impart it its true character. In this perspective, discuss the need for civil services reforms and challenges in implementation. (15 marks/250 words)

Good governance is needed to ensure the overall development of the society. Features of good governance include.



Although institutional framework are needed for good governance it is the people manning the institution which impart it its true character.

Thus civil service plays a Key role in good governance.

[Impact of Civil Service]

- i) Takes the governance to the ground level.
- ii) Necessary for bottoms-up approach in governance
- iii) Ensures just allocation of limited resources
- iv) Valuable feedback and monitoring of schemes.

But civil services can have a negative impact on good governance.

[Negative Impact of ~~good~~ Civil Service]

- i) Promote corruption if
- ii) Inequity and
- iii) Free rider issue

Thus, we need reforms in civil services to promote good governance

Reform needed in civil service

- i) Ethical governance.
- ii) Increased accountability
- iii) Effective schemes implementation.

Challenges in implementation

- i) Lack of participation by people.
- ii) Lack of education and awareness.
- iii) Tendency of people to hoard benefits.

Thus, good governance requires institutional robustness, responsible civil services and a participative public to deliver its results.

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Q12. How far do you agree that the Indian government system has a structural bias towards the executive while the role of other arms of the state is limited? Discuss. (15 marks/250 words)

The Indian constitution has provided for three organs of government, i.e.,

- i) Legislative
- ii) Executive
- iii) Judiciary.

Although in theory the three organs should collaborate to deliver optimum governance and development, it can be said that the Indian government has structural bias towards executive while role of other arms are limited.

Executive is stronger compared to
Legislature

- i) The members of executive i.e., the prime minister and council of ministers.

are also voting members of parliament. This gives them opportunity to influence the debate and discussion according to executive convenience.

- i) Executive has ordinance making powers having same effect as the law.
- ii) The leader of parliament is usually the prime minister, thus giving control of parliament to PM.
- iii) ^{Legislature} ~~Executive~~ can create parliamentary committees which has only powers to advice. Real power is wielded by cabinet committee.

Executive Superiority to Judiciary

- i) Executive in many respects carries

- the judicial duties. E.g. tribunals.
- ii) Preventive detention law gives supreme powers to executive and can be used against the detractors of executive.
- iii) Article 355 & 356 gives emergency powers to centre to take control of state. On such situation the judicial rights of people may be curtailed.

Thus, the constitution had provided certain rights to executives for efficient governance without any hindrance. But these discretionary can end-up weakening the democratic governance and needs some steps like power devolution to panchayat and state.

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Q13. The preamble is not a mere solemn resolution; but majestic expression of philosophy, principles and purpose of the constitution. Elaborate.

(15 marks/250 words)

The preamble of Indian constitution is the succinct view of the ideals cherished by our founding fathers and the vision of a developed India.

The preamble is not a mere resolution, but expression of philosophy, principles and purpose of constitution.

Key principles of the Constitution

1) Democracy - means rule by the people. This makes every citizen equal stakeholder in the growth of India. Constitution ensures there is not just procedural democracy but substantive democracy as well. Eg. RPA, 1951 promotes procedural democracy & but fundamental rights promote substantive

democracy.

ii) Socialism - as a diverse, agrarian, low income country, the constitution more focus on inclusive development rather than individual growth. Hence, right to private property was trumped by Article 39(b), 39(c) which aims for equitable distribution of wealth as held by Supreme Court in Minerva Mills case, 1980.

iii) Secularism - Indian secularism promotes equal treatment of all religions. Thus, state is not insulated from religion but is actively involved in its reform and ensures equal rights both inter and intra - religion. Thus, India follows substantive secularism.

- iv) Liberty - ensures absence of any constraint as well as enabling environment for self growth. Eg article 19
- v) Equality - ensures no discrimination on religious, gender grounds and also promotes affirmative action to promote lower classes
- vi) Justice - social, political and economic. Articles 39, 38, 41, 42, 43 of part A of constitution promotes justice as enshrined in preamble.

Thus, the preamble adopts from the philosophical dimensions of French revolution (liberty, equality), American independence (democracy) and socialism from Russian revolution to give direction to Indian state.

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Q14. Examine the significance of Representation of People's Act, 1951 in maintaining the sanctity of electoral politics in India. In light of recent events, evaluate the demands of Election Commission of India for reforms in RPA 1951 and Model Code of Conduct (15 marks/250 words)

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Q15. The arrangements like 'Bi-laterals', 'pluri-laterals' and 'Mini-laterals' are gaining more traction over 'Multilaterals' in contemporary international relations. Give a reasoned account for such rise citing suitable examples and the challenges that come along with it. (15 marks/250 words)

Inter-^{national} relations is the set of guidelines which determines the interaction with foreign countries. After world war II the world moved to an era of multilateralism. Eg. United Nations (UN)

Significance of UN

- i) Promotes international unity & peace.
- ii) Promotes inclusive growth.
- iii) Provides a forum to discuss any dispute.

However, over the last couple of decades it has been observed to face certain issues w.r.t its functioning.

Issues in functioning of UN

- i) UNSC is controlled by P-5

permanent members who can veto any decision. Eg China blocks India's attempts to designate global terrorists.

ii) Unable to force resolutions on major powers - China's transgressions in South China sea and Russian aggression on Ukraine couldn't be stopped due to UNGA resolutions.

iii) Voice of global south finds itself unrepresented in global bodies.

Other organisations of multi-lateral arrangements like WTO have failed to address the issues of developing nations.

i) Amber box issue - where input subsidy by developing countries are

not allowed.

ii) IPR denies access of Technology
 in pharma sectors to developing
 countries.

iii) Recently, WTO ruled against
 India in ITA dispute.

In view of various challenges in
 multilateral organisation, bi-lateral
pluri-lateral and mini-lateral arrange-
 ments are finding more resonance
 in international relations as they
provide localized solutions beyond
 the one-size-fits-all attitude of
multi-lateral organisation.

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Q16. Do you agree with the assertion that the higher judiciary in India needs to be more transparent and accountable? Share your views. (15 marks/250 words)

The constitution of India has provided for an independent judiciary to ensure better social justice. This is represented by the federalism in legislature and executive organ but unitary nature of judicial administration.

Significance of unitary judiciary

- i) Ensures a coherent interpretation of all laws. ~~and~~
- ii) Prevents awkward clash in implementation of central & state laws.
- iii) Promotes substantive justice by eliminating separate courts for state and central laws.
- iv) Ensures better coordination between high courts and subordinate courts.

Unitary judiciary also envisaged a more transparent and accountable judiciary. However, there is an assertion that higher judiciary needs to be more transparent and accountable.

Reasons for claim for more transparency and accountability

- i) In India, we have a backlog of over 4.7 Cr cases. This leads to delay of justice.
 - ii) Many cases get into cycle of appeals due to unsatisfactory interpretation of statutory laws.
 - iii) Opaqueness of judicial procedure leads to judicial illiteracy among the masses.
- Article 39 A of Directive principle

of state policy promotes free legal aid to all. But the judicial process scares away most of poor litigants.

In view of the above arguments the Supreme Court has initiated several reforms for accountability of court.

Reforms in Judiciary by Supreme Court

- i) live-broadcast of proceedings of Supreme Court, to be gradually applied to all courts.
- ii) Justice watch tower - denoting the pendency of cases. Eg. Gujarat high court has displayed case load statistics in displays.
- iii) Promotion of local language in court

Thus, promoting transparency and accountability in judiciary is needed in a country with draconian preventive detention laws and high amount of extrajudicial deaths (348 in 2022).

Q17. India and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenants on which the two political systems are based. (15 marks/250 words)

India and USA are two of the largest democracies in the world. While USA is the oldest democracy, India is the largest functioning democracy with its 1.4 billion population.

Although India & USA are two distinct communities there are several common and unique democratic values of India and USA.

Common tenants of democracy in India and USA

- 1) Representative democracy - peoples representatives run the governance of the countries.

- ii) Focus on federalism - powers are shared between the central government and state government.
- iii) Judicial activism - both the judiciaries in India and USA are actively protecting the basic rights of its citizens.

Divergence of political systems in India and USA

- i) USA is presidential democracy while India is parliamentary democracy.
- ii) USA separates religion and state while Indian secularism promotes mutual co-existence, minority rights and constructive interference by govern.

ment. Eg. Indian government aboli-
shed triple talag and provided
equal pro inheritance rights to
women.

iii) Judiciary in USA in federal,
federal courts exercise federal cases
while state laws are implemented by
state courts. India provides for
common judiciary. Eg High courts
can judge both state & central laws.

iv) USA legislature have fixed repre-
sentation from each state. Eg senate
has 2 seats from each state.

In India seats are proportional
to the population density.

Thus, both USA & India has been
seeing convergence in ~~its~~ their democr

atic ethos. Recently, USA invited India to a World Democratic Forum where PM Modi had spoken about India's long tradition in democracy.

Q18. It is argued that having a large number of ministries good impedes governance. But it can also be argued that it brings in efficiency by decentralising decisions and accountability? What do you think? Share your views and arguments. (15 marks/250 words)

Good governance is the major objective of government to ensure effective development and social justice.

Features of good governance



To promote good governance, decentralisation of power is also suggested.

Consequently, governments have ~~been~~ created many ministries to decentralise decision making.

Advantages of large no. of ministries

- i) Proper focus can be made on minute details of a project. Eg. ministry of roadways doesn't have to think about railways.
- ii) Fund utilisation and allocation can be more efficient.
- iii) Promotes transparency and efficiency.

Disadvantages of large no. of ministries

- i) Incoherence of growth pedagogy
- ii) Could lead to mutual obstruction.
- iii) Could cause unnecessary competition -

for funds, promotions, etc.

1) ~~Lack of accountability~~

Thus, increasing the number of ministries can have both positive and negative impacts. The way forward can be to decentralise ministries (more no. of ministries) in sectors which require more in-depth governance like education or health. But sector which require regulation only could be centralised. Eg. ministry of transport:

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Q19. The position of legislative councils in state legislatures is much weaker than the Rajya Sabha in Parliament Analyse. (15 marks/250 words)

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Q20 The Union list prevails the other lists in terms of distribution of legislative powers in the Indian Constitution. Discuss. (15 marks/250 words)

Indian constitution promotes federalism and it is accepted as a basic structure by the Supreme Court.

The legislative power as given in constitution under schedule VII are divided into :

- i) Union list - laws can be made by central govt. only. (97 subjects)
- ii) State list - laws can be made by state govt. only (58 subjects).
- iii) Concurrent list - both centre and state can make laws (61 subjects).

The union list with 97 subjects prevails over state & concurrent list in terms of distribution of powers.

Reason for more subjects in Union list

- i) Constitution envisioned a federation with stronger centre (inspired by Canadian constitution).
- ii) This was required to ensure consistency in a vast and diverse country like India.
- iii) It also promoted central role in minimising inequality, which promoted socialism.

Consequences of more power in Union list

- i) Centre - State conflict over concurrent list subjects
- ii) States demand for more devolution.

- of power.
- iii) Failure of some important laws like land reforms due to insufficient implementation at state level.
 - iv) Rise of combative federalism.
 - v) Insufficient execution of central projects leading to leakage and corruption.
 - vi) Inequality between states. Eg. Kerala, Karnataka are highly developed while BIMARU states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh are least developed.
 - vii) Rise of left wing terrorism.

Thus in the context of growth of development there is a need for greater political and economic devolution of

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power to states.

QUESTIONS

- Q1. Do you see pressure groups as a genuine mechanism for ensuring broader and more participative democracy? Critically comment. (10 marks/150 words)
- Q2. The main objective of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 is to enable tribal society to assume control over their livelihoods and traditional rights. Critically examine the implementation of the Act. (10 marks/150 words)
- Q3. Examine the challenges of fiscal federalism in India. (10 marks/150 words)
- Q4. What are the challenges and issues regarding the functioning of NGOs in India? Analyse. (10 marks/150 words)
- Q5. How can e-governance initiatives help in increasing farmers' income? Illustrate. (10 marks/150 words)
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- Q13. The preamble is not a mere solemn resolution; but majestic expression of philosophy, principles and purpose of the constitution. Elaborate. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q14. Examine the significance of Representation of People's Act, 1951 in maintaining the sanctity of electoral politics in India. In light of recent events, evaluate the demands of Election Commission of India for reforms in RPA 1951 and Model Code of Conduct. (15 marks/250 words)

- Q15. The arrangements like 'Bi-laterals', 'pluri-laterals' and 'Mini-laterals' are gaining more traction over 'Multilaterals' in contemporary international relations. Give a reasoned account for such rise citing suitable examples and the challenges that come along with it. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q16. Do you agree with the assertion that the higher judiciary in India needs to be more transparent and accountable? Share your views. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q17. India and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenants on which the two political systems are based. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q18. It is argued that having a large number of ministries good impedes governance. But it can also be argued that it brings in efficiency by decentralising decisions and accountability? What do you think? Share your views and arguments. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q19. The position of legislative councils in state legislatures is much weaker than the Rajya Sabha in Parliament Analyse. (15 marks/250 words)
- Q20. The Union list prevails the other lists in terms of distribution of legislative powers in the Indian Constitution. Discuss. (15 marks/250 words)