UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik

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GS-II: GOVERNANCE

Previous Year Questions

UPSC Mains 2013 – 2024

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Governance

1. Appointment to Various Constitutional Posts; Constitutional Bodies (Powers, Functions and Responsibilities); Statutory, Regulatory and Quasi-judicial Bodies

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II Polity)	Year	Marks
Constitutional Bodies & Finance Commission	Discuss the recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission which have been a departure from the previous commissions for strengthening the local government finances.	2013	**10**
	Discuss the role of the National Commission for Backward Classes in the wake of its transformation from a statutory body to a constitutional body.	2022	**10**
	Exercise of CAG's powers in relation to the accounts of the Union and the States is derived from Article 149 of the Indian Constitution. Discuss whether audit of the Government's Policy implementation could amount to overstepping its own (CAG) jurisdiction.	2016	**12.5**
	How have the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission of India enabled the States to improve their fiscal position?	2021	**10**
	How is the Finance Commission of India constituted? What do you about the terms of reference of the recently constituted Finance Commission? Discuss.	2018	**15**
	The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has a very vital role to play. Explain how this is reflected in the method and terms of his appointment as well as the range of powers he can exercise.	2018	**10**
	Whether National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions? Examine.	2018	**10**
	"The duty of the Comptroller and Auditor General is not merely to ensure the legality of expenditure but also its propriety." Comment.	2024	**10**
Quasi-Judicial Bodies, Tribunals & Enforcement Agencies	The jurisdiction of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) regarding lodging an FIR and conducting probe within a particular State is being questioned by various States. However, the power of the States to withhold consent to the CBI is not absolute. Explain with special reference to the federal character of India.	2021	**15**
	"The Central Administration Tribunal which was established for redressal of grievances and complaints by or against central government employees, nowadays is exercising its powers as an independent judicial authority." Explain.	2019	**10**
	How far do you agree with the view that tribunals curtail the jurisdiction of ordinary courts? In view of the above, discuss the constitutional validity and competency of the tribunals in India.	2018	**15**
	What is a quasi-judicial body? Explain with the help of concrete examples.	2016	**12.5**

Sectoral Regulatory Bodies: SEBI, IRDA & Railways	For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institutions remain independent and autonomous. Discuss in the light of the experiences in recent past.	2015	**12.5**
	The product diversification of financial institutions and insurance companies, resulting in overlapping of products and services strengthens the case for the merger of the two regulatory agencies, namely SEBI and IRDA. Justify.	2013	**10**
	The setting up of a Rail Tariff Authority to regulate fares will subject the cash strapped Indian Railways to demand subsidy for obligation to operate non-profitable routes and services. Taking into account the experience in the power sector, discuss if the proposed reform is expected to benefit the consumers, the Indian Railways or the private container operators.	2014	**12.5**
Statutory Bodies, NHRC & Human Rights Commissions	'A national Lokpal, however strong it may be, cannot resolve the problems of immorality in public affairs'. Discuss.	2013	**10**
	Discuss the role of the Competition Commission of India in containing the abuse of dominant position by the Multi-National Corporations in India. Refer to the recent decisions.	2023	**10**
	Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer.	2017	**15**
	Multiplicity of various commissions for the vulnerable sections or the society leads to problems or overlapping jurisdiction and duplication of functions. Is it better to merge all commissions into an umbrella Human Rights Commission? Argue your case.	2018	**15**
	National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in India can be most effective when its tasks are adequately supported by other mechanisms that ensure the accountability of a government. In light of the above observation assess the role of NHRC as an effective complement to the judiciary and other institutions in promoting and protecting human rights standards.	2014	**12.5**
	Though the Human Rights Commissions have contributed immensely to the protection of human rights in India, yet they have failed to assert themselves against the mighty and powerful. Analyzing their structural and practical limitations, suggest remedial measures.	2021	**15**
	Which steps are required for constitutionalization of a Commission? Do you think imparting constitutionality to the National Commission for Women would ensure greater gender justice and empowerment in India? Give reasons.	2020	**15**

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2. Government Policies & Interventions for Development of Various Sectors (Issues in their Design and Implementation)

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II Governance & Social Justice)	Year	Marks
Government Schemes: Connectivity & Digital Identity	The basis of providing urban amenities in rural areas (PURA) is rooted in establishing connectivity. Comment.	2013	10
	The Gati-Shakti Yojana needs meticulous coordination between the government and the private sector to achieve the goal of connectivity. Discuss.	2022	10
	Two parallel run schemes of the Government viz. the Adhaar Card and NPR, one as voluntary and the other as compulsory, have led to debates at national levels and also litigations. On merits, discuss whether or not both schemes need run concurrently. Analyse the potential of the schemes to achieve developmental benefits and equitable growth.	2014	12.5
Structural Reforms: LPG, FDI & Multi-level Planning	'In the context of neo-liberal paradigm of development planning, multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost effective and remove many implementation blockages.'-Discuss.	2019	15
	Has the Indian governmental system responded adequately to the demands of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization started in 1991? What can the government do to be responsive to this important change?	2016	12.5
	Policy contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate 'protection and prevention of degradation' to environment. Comment with relevant illustration.	2018	10
	The need for cooperation among various service sector has been an inherent component of development discourse. Partnership bridges bring the gap among the sectors. It also sets in motion a culture of 'Collaboration' and 'team spirit'. In the light of statements above examine India's Development process.	2019	15
	Though 100 percent FDI is already allowed in non-news media like a trade publication and general entertainment channel, the Government is mulling over the proposal for increased FDI in news media for quite some time. What difference would an increase in FDI make? Critically evaluate the pros and cons.	2014	12.5

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3. Development Processes and the Development Industry — Role of NGOs, SHGs, Various Groups and Associations, Donors, Charities, Institutional and Other Stakeholders

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II Governance & Social Justice)	Year	Marks
Civil Society, NGOs & Development Funding	Can Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations present an alternative model of public service delivery to benefit the common citizen? Discuss the challenges of this alternative model.	2021	15
	Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures in India.	2023	15
	Examine critically the recent changes in the rules governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976.	2015	12.5
	How can the role of NGOs be strengthened in India for development works relating to protection of the environment? Discuss throwing light on the major constraints.	2015	12.5
	In the Indian governance system, the role of non-state actors has been only marginal. Critically examine this statement.	2016	12.5
	Do you agree with the view that increasing dependence on donor agencies for development reduces the importance of community participation in the development process? Justify your answer.	2022	15
	Public charitable trusts have the potential to make India's development more inclusive as they relate to certain vital public issues. Comment.	2024	10
Self-Help Groups, Microfinance & Women's Empowerment	'The emergence of Self Help Groups(SHGs) in contemporary times points to the slow but steady withdrawal of the state from developmental activities'. Examine the role of the SHGs in developmental activities and the measures taken by the Government of India to promote the SHGs.	2017	15
	"Micro-Finance as an anti-poverty vaccine, is aimed at asset creation and income security of the rural poor in India". Evaluate the role of Self Help Groups in achieving the twin objectives along with empowering women in rural India.	2020	15
	Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples.	2021	10
	The legitimacy and accountability of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their patrons, the micro-finance outfits, need systematic assessment and scrutiny for the sustained success of the concept. Discuss.	2013	10
	The penetration of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in rural areas in promoting participation in development programmes is facing socio-cultural hurdles. Examine.	2014	12.5

	The Self-Help Group (SHG) Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP), which is India's own innovation, has proved to be one of the most effective poverty alleviation and women empowerment programmes. Elucidate.	2015	**12.5**

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4. Transparency and Accountability — Institutional and Other Measures; Citizens Charter, E-Governance (Applications, Models, Successes, Limitations, Potential)

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II Governance & Social Justice)	Year	Marks
E-Governance: Models, Applications & Digital Service Delivery	"The emergence of Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) has initiated e-Governance as an integral part of government". Discuss.	2020	**10**
	E-Governance is not only about utilization of the power of new technology, but also much about critical importance of the 'use value' of information Explain.	2018	**10**
	e-governance, as a critical tool of governance, has ushered in effectiveness, transparency and accountability in governments. What inadequacies hamper the enhancement of these features?	2023	**10**
	Electronic cash transfer system for the welfare schemes is an ambitious project to minimize corruption, eliminate wastage and facilitate reforms. Comment.	2013	**10**
	Has digital illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, coupled with lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility hindered socio-economic development? Examine with justification.	2021	**15**
	Implementation of information and Communication Technology (ICT) based Projects / Programmes usually suffers in terms of certain vital factors. Identify these factors, and suggest measures for their effective implementation.	2019	**10**
	e-governance is not just about the routine application of digital technology in service delivery process. It is as much about multifarious interactions for ensuring transparency and accountability. In this context evaluate the role of the 'Interactive Service Model' of e-governance.	2024	**15**
Citizens' Charter & Service Delivery	Citizens' Charter is an ideal instrument of organizational transparency and accountability, but it has its own limitations. Identify the limitations and suggest measures for greater effectiveness or the Citizens Charter.	2018	**15**
	Though Citizen's charters have been formulated by many public service delivery organizations, there is no corresponding improvement in the level of citizens' satisfaction and quality of services being provided. Analyze.	2013	**10**
	The Citizens'charter has been a land mark initiative in ensuring citizen-centric administration. But it is yet to reach its full potential. Identify the factors hindering the realisation of its promise and suggest measures to overcome them.	2024	**15**
RTI, Whistleblowers, Anti-Corruption & Accountability Mechanisms	"Recent amendments to the Right to Information Act will have profound impact on the autonomy and independence of the Information Commission". Discuss.	2020	**10**
	Effectiveness of the goverment system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are	2016	**12.5**

	inter-dependent. Discuss their relationship with each other in context of India.		
	If amendment bill to the Whistleblowers Act, 2011 tabled in the Parliament is passed, there may be no one left to protect. Critically evaluate.	2015	**12.5**
	In the integrity index of Transparency International, India stands very low. Discuss briefly the legal, political, economic, social and cultural factors that have caused the decline of public morality in India.	2016	**12.5**
	In the light of the Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in corporate governance to ensure transparency, accountability.	2015	**12.5**
	Reforming the government delivery system through the Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme is a progressive step, but it has its limitations too. Comment.	2022	**10**
	What are the aims and objects of the recently passed and enforced, The Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024? Whether University/State Education Board examinations, too, are covered under the Act?	2024	**15**

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5. Role of Civil Services in a Democracy

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II Governance & Social Justice)	Year	Marks
Civil Service Reforms, Neutrality & Democratic Governance	"Institutional quality is a crucial driver of economic performance". In this context suggest reforms in Civil Service for strengthening democracy.	2020	10
	Has the Cadre based Civil Services Organisation been the cause of slow change in India? Critically examine.	2014	12.5
	Initially Civil Services in India were designed to achieve the goals of neutrality and effectiveness, which seems to be lacking in the present context. Do you agree with the view that drastic reforms are required in Civil Services. Comment	2017	15
	Traditional bureaucratic structure and culture have hampered the process of socio-economic development in India. Comment.	2016	12.5
	The Doctrine of Democratic Governance makes it necessary that the public perception of the integrity and commitment of civil servants becomes absolutely positive. Discuss.	2024	10

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