



VISION IAS

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS 2013-2023 (SYLLABUS-WISE)

Indian Constitution: Historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure

- Explain the constitutional perspective of Gender Justice with the help of relevant Constitutional Provisions and case laws. (2023) 15
- “The Constitution of India is a living instrument with capabilities of enormous dynamism. It is a constitution made for a progressive society.” Illustrate with special reference to the expanding horizons of the right to life and personal liberty. (2023) 15 Marks
- “Right of movement and residence throughout the territory of India are freely available to the Indian citizens, but these rights are not absolute”. Comment. (2022) 10
- ‘Constitutional Morality’ is rooted in the Constitution itself and is founded on its essential facets. Explain the doctrine of ‘Constitutional Morality’ with the help of relevant judicial decisions. (2021) 10
- “Parliament’s power to amend the Constitution is a limited power and it cannot be enlarged into absolute power.” In the light of this statement explain whether Parliament under Article 368 of the Constitution can destroy the Basic Structure of the Constitution by expanding its amending power? (2019) 15
- Examine the scope of Fundamental Rights in the light of the latest judgement of the Supreme Court on Right to Privacy. (2017)15
- Discuss each adjective attached to the word ‘Republic’ in the ‘Preamble’. Are they defensible in the present circumstances? (2016) 12.5
- Did the Government of India Act, 1935 lay down a federal constitution? Discuss. (2016) 12.5
- Discuss the possible factors that inhibit India from enacting for its citizen a uniform civil code as provided for in the Directive Principles of State Policy. (2015) 12.5
- Starting from inventing the ‘basic structure’ doctrine, the judiciary has played a highly proactive role in ensuring that India develops into a thriving democracy. In light of the statement, evaluate the role played by judicial activism in achieving the ideals of democracy. (2014) 12.5
- What do you understand by the concept “freedom of speech and expression”? Does it cover hate speech also? Why do the films in India stand on a slightly different plane from other forms of expression? Discuss. (2014) 12.5
- Discuss Section 66A of IT Act, with reference to its alleged violation of Art 19. (2013) 10
- ‘The Supreme Court of India keeps a check on arbitrary power of the Parliament in amending the Constitution.’ Discuss critically. (2013) 10
- The size of the cabinet should be as big as governmental work justifies and as big as the Prime Minister can manage as a team. How far is the efficacy of a government then inversely related to the size of the cabinet? Discuss. (2014) 12.5
- Many State Governments further bifurcate geographical administrative areas like Districts and Talukas for better governance. In light of the above, can it also be justified that more number of smaller States would bring in effective governance at State level? Discuss. (2013) 10

Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, Issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure

- Explain the significance of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act. To what extent does it reflect the accommodative spirit of federalism? (2023) 15



- 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 States to withhold consent to the CBI is not absolute. Explain with special reference to the federal character of India. (2021) 15
- How far do you think cooperation, competition and confrontation have shaped the nature of federation in India? Cite some recent examples to validate your answer (2020) 15
- Indian constitution exhibits centralising tendencies to maintain unity and integrity of the nation. Elucidate in the perspective of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897; The Disaster Management Act, 2005 and recently passed Farm Acts. (2020) 15
- From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain. (2019) 10
- =Explain the salient features of the constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016. Do you think it is efficacious enough 'to remove cascading effect of taxes and provide for common national market for goods and services'? (2017) 15
- To what extent is Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, bearing marginal note "Temporary provision with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir", temporary? Discuss the future prospects of this provision in the context of Indian polity. (2016) 12.5
- The concept of cooperative federalism has been increasingly emphasised in recent years. Highlight the drawbacks in the existing structure and the extent to which cooperative federalism would answer the shortcomings. (2015) 12.5
- Though the federal principle is dominant in our Constitution and that principle is one of its basic features, but it is equally true that federalism under the Indian Constitution leans in favour of a strong Centre, a feature that militates against the concept of strong federalism. Discuss. (2014) 12.5

Devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein

- To what extent, in your opinion, as the decentralization of power in India changed the governance landscape at the grassroots? (2022) 10
- The strength sustenance of local institutions in India has shifted from their formative phase of 'Functions, Functionaries and Funds' to the contemporary stage of 'Functionality'. Highlight the critical challenges faced by local institutions in terms of their functionality in recent times. (2020) 15
- "The reservation of seats for women in the institutions of local self- government has had a limited impact on the patriarchal character of the Indian Political Process." Comment. (2019) 15
- Assess the importance of the Panchayat system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what sources the Panchayats can look out for financing development projects? (2018) 15
- "The local self-government system in India has not proved to be effective instrument of governance". Critically examine the statement and give your views to improve the situation. (2017) 10
- In absence of well-educated and organised local level government system, 'Panchayats' and 'Samitis' have remained mainly political institutions and not effective instruments of governance. Critically discuss. (2015) 12.5
- Khap panchayats have been in the news for functioning as extra-constitutional authorities, often delivering pronouncements amounting to human rights violations. Discuss critically the actions taken by the legislative, executive and the judiciary to set the things right in this regard. (2015) 12.5

Separation of powers between various organs, dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions

- Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in the higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness. (2021) 10
- Judicial Legislation is antithetical to the doctrine of separation of powers as envisaged in the Indian Constitution. In this context justify the filing of large number of public interest petitions praying for issuing guidelines to executive authorities. (2020) 15
- Do you think that constitution of India does not accept principle of strict separation of powers rather it is based on the principle of 'checks and balance'? Explain (2019) 10
- Whether the Supreme Court Judgment (July 2018) can settle the political tussle between the Lt. Governor and elected government of Delhi? Examine. (2018) 15



- Discuss the essentials of the 69th Constitutional Amendment Act and anomalies, if any, that have led to recent reported conflicts between the elected representatives and institution of Lieutenant Governor in the administration of Delhi. Do you think that this will give rise to a new trend in the functioning of the Indian Federal Politics? (2016) 12.5

Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these

- Explain the structure of the Parliamentary Committee system. How far have the financial committees helped in the institutionalisation of Indian Parliament? (2023) 15 Marks
- Discuss the role of presiding officers of state legislatures in maintaining order and impartiality in conducting legislative work and in facilitating best democratic practices. (2023) 10 Marks
- Discuss the essential conditions for exercise of the legislative powers by the Governor. Discuss the legality of re-promulgation of ordinances by the Governor without placing them before the Legislature. (2022) 15
- Discuss the role of the Vice –Presidents of India as the chairman of the Rajya Sabha. (2022) 10
- Do Department -related Parliamentary Standing Committees keep the administration on its toes and inspire reverence for parliamentary control? Evaluate the working of such committees with suitable examples. (2021) 15
- =Explain the constitutional provisions under which Legislative Councils are established. Review the working and current status of Legislative Councils with suitable illustrations. (2021) 15
- To what extent, in your view, the Parliament is able to ensure accountability of the executive in India? (2021) 10
- “Once a speaker, Always a speaker’! Do you think the practice should be adopted to impart objectivity to the office of the Speaker of Lok Sabha? What could be its implications for the robust functioning of parliamentary business in India. (2020) 10
- Rajya Sabha has been transformed from a ‘useless stepney tyre’ to the most useful supporting organ in past few decades. Highlight the factors as well as the areas in which this transformation could be visible. (2020) 15
- Individual Parliamentarian’s role as the national lawmaker is on a decline, which in turn, has adversely impacted the quality of debates and their outcome. Discuss. (2019) 15
- Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of the Estimates Committee. (2018) 10
- The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding a joint session of the two houses of the Parliament. Enumerate the occasions when this would normally happen and also the occasions when it cannot, with reasons thereof. (2017) 15
- “The Indian party system is passing through a phase of transition which looks to be full of contradictions and paradoxes.” Discuss. (2016) 12.5
- What was held in the Coelho case? In this context, can you say that judicial review is of key importance amongst the basic features of the Constitution? (2016) 12.5
- The ‘Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and its Members’ as envisaged in Article 105 of the Constitution leave room for a large number of un-codified and un-enumerated privileges to continue. Assess the reasons for the absence of legal codification of the ‘parliamentary privileges’. How can this problem be addressed? (2014) 12.5
- The role of individual MPs (Members of Parliament) has diminished over the years and as a result healthy constructive debates on policy issues are not usually witnessed. How far can this be attributed to the anti-defection law which was legislated but with a different intention? (2013) 10
- Constitutional mechanisms to resolve the inter-state water disputes have failed to address and solve the problems. Is the failure due to structural or process inadequacy or both? Discuss. (2013) 10

Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary; Ministries and Departments of the Government

- Account for the legal and political factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356 by the Union Governments since mid 1990s. (2023) 15 Marks
- “Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence is a prerequisite of democracy.” Comment. (2023) 10
- “The most significant achievement of modern law in India is the constitutionalization of environmental problems by the Supreme Court.” Discuss this statement with the help of relevant case laws. (2022) 10



- “The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India.” Discuss. (2019) 15
- Under what circumstances can the Financial Emergency be proclaimed by the President of India? What consequences follow when such a declaration remain in force? (2018) 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
- Critically examine the Supreme Court’s judgement on ‘National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014’ with reference to appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India. (2017) 10
- Resorting to ordinances has always raised concern on violation of the spirit of separation of powers doctrine. While noting the rationales justifying the power to promulgate ordinances, analyse whether the decisions of the Supreme Court on the issue have further facilitated resorting to this power. Should the power to promulgate the ordinances be repealed? (2015) 12.5
- What are the major changes brought in the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 through the recent Ordinance promulgated by the President? How far will it improve India’s dispute resolution mechanism? Discuss. (2015) 12.5
- Does the right to clean environment entail legal regulation on burning crackers during Diwali? Discuss in the light of Article 21 of Indian Constitution and Judgement(s) of the Apex court in this regard. (2015) 12.5
- Instances of President’s delay in commuting death sentences has come under public debate as denial of justice. Should there be a time limit specified for the President to accept/reject such petitions? Analyse. (2014) 12.5

Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies, Statutory, regulatory, and various quasi-judicial bodies

- Who are entitled to receive free legal aid? Assess the role of the National Legal Service Authority (NALSA) in rendering free legal aid in India. 2023 (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
- 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
- How have the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission of India enabled the states to improve their fiscal position? (2021) 10
- 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
- “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
- In the light of recent controversy regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), what are the challenges before the Election Commission of India to ensure the trustworthiness of elections in India? (2018) 10
- “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
- How is the Finance Commission of India constituted? What do you know about the terms of reference of the recently constituted Finance Commission? Discuss. (2018) 15
- 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
- Multiplicity of various commissions for the vulnerable sections of the society leads to problems of overlapping jurisdiction & duplication of functions. Is it better to merge all commissions into an umbrella human rights commission? Argue your case. (2018) 15
- 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
- What is quasi-judicial body? Explain with the help of concrete examples. (2016) 12.5



- 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
- 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
- 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

Comparison of the Indian constitutional scheme with that of other countries

- Compare and contrast the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty. (2023) 10 Marks
- Critically examine the procedures through which the Presidents of India and France are elected. (2022) 15
- Analyze the distinguishing features of the notion of Equality in the Constitutions of the USA and India. (2021) 15
- The judicial systems in India and UK seem to be converging as well as diverging in the recent times. Highlight the key points of convergence and divergence between the two nations in terms of their judicial practices. (2020) 10
- What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism? (2019) 10
- India and USA are the two large democracies. Examine the basic tenets on which the two political systems are based. (2018) 15

Salient features of the Representation of People's Act

- Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in the light of the evolution of the Model Code of Conduct. (2022) 15
- While the national political parties in India favour centralisation, the regional parties are in favour of State autonomy." Comment. (2022) 15
- Discuss the procedures to decide the disputes arising out of the election of a Member of the Parliament or State Legislature under the Representation of the People Act, 1951. What are the grounds on which the election of any returned candidate may be declared void? What remedy is available to the aggrieved party against the decision? Refer to the case laws. (2022) 15
- "There is a need for simplification of procedure for disqualification of persons found guilty of corrupt practices under the Representation of peoples Act" Comment (2020) 10
- On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the Representation of People Act, 1951? Also mention the remedies available to such person against his disqualification. (2019) 15
- 'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people' Discuss. (2017) 10
- To enhance the quality of democracy in India the Election Commission of India has proposed electoral reforms in 2016. What are the suggested reforms and how far are they significant to make democracy successful? (2017) 15

Governance and Policy Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation

- "Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (2023) 15 Marks
- The crucial aspect of developmental process has been the inadequate attention paid to Human Resource Development in India. Suggest measures that can address this inadequacy. (2023) 10
- 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
- Besides the welfare schemes, India needs deft management of inflation and unemployment to serve the poor and the underprivileged sections of the society. Discuss. (2022) 15
- "Besides being a moral imperative of Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development." Analyze. (2021) 10
- '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



- “Policy Contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate ‘protection and prevention of degradation’ to environment.” Comment with relevant illustrations. (2018) 10
- 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
- “For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institutions remain independent and autonomous.” Discuss in the light of experiences in recent past. (2015) 12.5
- Two parallel run schemes of the Government, viz. the Aadhaar 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
- 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
- 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
- An athlete participates in Olympics for personal triumph and nation’s glory; victors are showered with cash incentives by various agencies, on their return. Discuss the merit of state sponsored talent hunt and its cultivation as against the rationale of a reward mechanism as encouragement. (2014) 12.5
- Recent directives from Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas are perceived by the ‘Nagas’ as a threat to override the exceptional status enjoyed by the State. Discuss in light of Article 371A of the Indian Constitution. (2013) 10

Pressure groups & formal/informal associations & their role in Polity

- “Pressure groups play a vital role in influencing public policy making in India.” Explain how the business associations contribute to public policies. (2021) 10
- What are the methods used by the Farmers organizations to influence the policy- makers in India and how effective are these methods? (2019) 10
- How do pressure groups influence Indian political process? Do you agree with this view that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful as formal pressure groups in recent years? (2017) 10
- Pressure group politics is sometimes seen as the informal face of politics. With regards to the above, assess the structure and functioning of pressure groups in India. (2013) 10

Development processes and the development industry- the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders

- Skill development programmes have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement, analyse the linkages between education, skill and employment. (2023) 15
- Discuss the contributions of civil society groups for women’s effective and meaningful participation and representation in State Legislatures in India. (2023) 15
- 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
- “The states in India seem reluctant to empower urban local bodies both functionally as well as financially.” Comment 2023 (10 Marks)
- 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
- “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



- 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
- Despite Consistent experience of High growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive. (2019) 10
- 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
- "In the Indian governance system, the role of non-state actors has been only marginal." Critically examine this statement. (2016) 12.5
- "Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are interdependent" Discuss their relationship in the context of India. (2016) 12.5
- Examine critically the recent changes in the rules governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976. (2015) 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
- 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
- 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 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

Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, & potential

- e-governance, as a critical tool of governance, has ushered in effectiveness, transparency and accountability in governments. What inadequacies hamper the enhancements of these features? (2023) (10)
- "The emergence of Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) has initiated e-Governance as an integral part of government". Discuss. (2020) 10
- 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 only about utilization of the power of new technology, but also much about critical importance of the 'use value' of information. Explain. (2018) 10
- Electronic cash transfer system for the welfare schemes is an ambitious project to minimize corruption, eliminate wastage and facilitate reforms. Comment. (2013) 10

Citizens charters, Transparency & accountability & institutional & other measures

- "Recent amendments to the Right to information Act will have profound impact on the autonomy and independence of the Information Commission". Discuss (2020) 10
- The Citizen's 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 of the Citizens' Charter. (2018) 15
- Discuss the role of Public Accounts Committee in establishing accountability of the government to the people. (2017) 10
- In the light of Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in corporate governance to ensure transparency, accountability. (2015) 12.5
- "If amendment bill to the Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2011 tabled in the Parliament is passed, there may be no one left to protect." Critically evaluate. (2015) 12.5
- Though Citizens' 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. Analyse. (2013) 10



Role of civil services in a democracy

- “Institutional quality is crucial driver of economic performance”. In this context suggest reforms in Civil Services for strengthening democracy. (2020) 10
- 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
- In the integrity index of Transparency International, India stands very low. Discuss briefly the legal, political, social and cultural factors that have caused the decline of public morality in India. (2016) 12.5
- “Traditional bureaucratic structure and culture have hampered the process of socio-economic development in India.” Comment. (2016) 12.5
- Has the Cadre based Civil Services Organization been the cause of slow change in India? Critically examine. (2014) 12.5
- ‘A national Lokpal, however strong it may be, cannot resolve the problems of immorality in public affairs.’ Discuss. (2013) 10

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