

## General Studies Paper-II

- Q1. '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.**

(150 words) [10]

### Approach to question:

1. Constitutional Morality is the principle that guides the interpretation and application of the Constitution based on its essential features.
2. It emphasizes adherence to constitutional values and norms, ensuring the promotion of justice, equality, liberty and the rule of law.
3. The Sabarimala Temple Entry case (2018) highlighted that constitutional morality should prevail over religious practices that discriminate against women.
4. The doctrine of constitutional morality ensures that the Constitution remains a living document, adaptable to changing societal needs while safeguarding fundamental principles.

### Answer:

Constitutional Morality serves as the guiding principle for interpreting and applying a constitution, rooted in its essential facets. It emphasizes upholding constitutional values, principles and norms for the functioning of a just and democratic society.

### Relevant Judicial Decisions on Constitutional Morality:

1. **Keshavananda Bharati case (1973):** The Supreme Court held that Constitutional Morality is an inherent part of the basic structure of the Constitution. The judgment emphasized interpreting the Constitution to protect core values of justice, equality and the rule of law.
2. **Minerva Mills case (1980):** The Court stressed the importance of a harmonious balance between the legislature, executive and judiciary, with no organ exercising unlimited power or transgressing constitutional limits.
3. **Navtej Singh Johar case (2018):** The Court upheld Constitutional Morality while striking down Section 377, protecting fundamental rights of equality, dignity and personal autonomy in same-sex relationships.

Constitutional Morality plays a vital role in upholding constitutional values and fundamental rights, ensuring a just and democratic society. Judicial decisions, as exemplified by the cases mentioned above, demonstrate the significance of Constitutional Morality in interpreting and applying the Constitution.

- Q2. Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in the higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness.**

(150 words) [10]

### Approach to question:

1. Greater representation of women in the higher judiciary is desirable to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness.
2. Women judges bring unique perspectives, experiences and insights that enhance the quality and fairness of judicial deliberations.
3. Diverse representation in the higher judiciary reflects the pluralistic nature of society, ensuring that different voices and concerns are taken into account.
4. It aligns with international commitments and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Answer:

Promoting greater representation of women in the higher judiciary is not only desirable but crucial to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness in the justice system. It addresses historical under representation, brings diverse perspectives, challenges biases, inspires confidence, empowers women, addresses women-specific issues, reflects societal diversity and aligns with international commitments.

### Status of representation of Women in Higher Judiciary:

1. From 1950 to 2009, only three women judges were appointed to the Supreme court.
2. By the end of 2021, only four female judges were there in Supreme court.
3. At the High court level, the female representation is just 11.5% and in Subordinate Judiciary it is 30%.
4. There has never been a woman Chief Justice of India.

5. Supreme court was established in 1950. First female Supreme Court judge was appointed in 1989.

#### Importance of Women's Representation in the Higher Judiciary:

- Promoting Gender Equality:** Increasing women's presence in the higher judiciary breaks down systemic barriers, achieving gender equality in positions of power within the legal profession.
- Diverse Perspectives and Insights:** Women judges bring unique perspectives, enriching judicial deliberations and leading to fairer judgments.
- Addressing Gender Biases:** Women judges challenge gender-related biases, fostering an environment of impartiality and trust in the justice system.
- Inspiring Confidence:** Women's representation in the judiciary inspires confidence among women litigants, increasing access to justice.

Greater representation of women in the higher judiciary is a crucial step towards an inclusive and just legal system. It addresses historical imbalances, brings diverse perspectives, empowers women and aligns with international commitments on gender equality.

#### Q3. How have the recommendations of the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission of India enabled the states to improve their fiscal position?

(150 words) [10]

##### Approach to question:

- Enhanced Share of Central Taxes:** The 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission increased the share of states in the divisible pool of central taxes from 32% to 42%, providing a substantial boost to their revenue.
- Grants-in-Aid:** The Commission recommended an increase in grants-in-aid to states to address specific needs such as disaster management, local body grants and maintenance of infrastructure.
- Flexibility in Fund Utilization:** The Commission emphasized giving states more autonomy in utilizing funds, reducing the number of centrally-sponsored schemes and providing greater flexibility in their implementation.

##### Answer:

The recommendations of the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission in India have had a significant impact on improving the fiscal position of states. Through various measures, states have been able to enhance their financial resources and promote socio-economic development.

- Increased Share of Central Taxes:** The Commission raised the states' share in the divisible pool of central taxes from 32% to 42%, providing them with greater revenue allocation for infrastructure development and social welfare programs.

- Grants-in-Aid:** The Commission recommended higher grants-in-aid to address specific needs, disaster management and infrastructure maintenance, enabling states to implement critical projects.
- Flexibility in Fund Utilization:** The reduction in centrally-sponsored schemes allowed states to allocate resources according to their unique priorities, leading to more efficient utilization of funds.
- Strengthening Local Bodies:** The Commission emphasized empowering local bodies with higher fund allocations, promoting grassroots governance and decentralization.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission's recommendations have significantly contributed to the fiscal health of states in India. By increasing revenue shares, providing grants-in-aid, promoting flexibility in fund utilization, empowering local bodies, offering performance-based incentives, facilitating debt restructuring, emphasizing fiscal discipline and introducing equalization grants, states have strengthened their financial resources and pursued balanced regional growth and socio-economic progress.

#### Q4. To what extent, in your view, the Parliament is able to ensure accountability of the executive in India?

(150 words) [10]

##### Approach to question:

- Legislative Oversight:** Parliament exercises its accountability role through legislative oversight, including question hour, debates and parliamentary committees to scrutinize the executive's actions and policies.
- Enactment and Amendment of Laws:** Parliament has the power to enact and amend laws, ensuring that the executive operates within the framework of the law and is accountable for its actions.
- Budgetary Control:** Parliament exercises control over the executive by approving the budget and scrutinizing government expenditures, ensuring fiscal responsibility and accountability.

##### Answer:

Parliament plays a crucial role in ensuring accountability of the executive in India. Various mechanisms, such as legislative oversight, budgetary control, questioning, debates and impeachment powers provide avenues for holding the executive accountable. However, the extent to which Parliament can fulfill this role depends on multiple factors.

##### Extent of Parliament's Ability to Ensure Executive Accountability:

- Legislative Oversight:** Parliament exercises oversight through question hour, debates and

committees. The effectiveness of this mechanism depends on MPs' willingness to raise pertinent questions and hold the executive accountable.

2. **Enactment and Amendment of Laws:** Parliament sets the framework for the executive's actions through lawmaking. This ensures that the executive operates within legislative boundaries, promoting accountability.
3. **Budgetary Control:** Parliament approves the budget and scrutinizes expenditures. Effective budgetary control ensures proper spending and accountability for financial decisions.
4. **Impeachment Power:** Parliament can impeach high-ranking officials. Impeachment proceedings are rare and require strong evidence and political consensus.

While the Parliament's role in holding the executive accountable is vital, its effectiveness hinges on various factors. Strengthening parliamentary institutions, promoting transparency, enhancing debate quality, encouraging public participation and ensuring independent oversight are crucial for maximizing the ability to ensure executive accountability in India.

**Q5. Pressure groups play a vital role in influencing public policy making in India". Explain how the business associations contribute to public policies.**

(150 words) [10]

**Approach to question:**

1. **Advocacy and Representation:** Business associations represent the interests and concerns of the business community to policy makers.
2. **Policy Recommendations:** Business associations offer policy recommendations to address challenges faced by their members and promote favorable business environments.
3. **Capacity Building:** Business associations play a role in capacity building by providing training, resources and support to their members.
4. **Monitoring and Compliance:** Business associations monitor policy implementation and compliance. They work closely with policy makers to ensure that policies are effectively implemented and address the intended objectives.

**Answer:**

Business associations in India have a significant impact on public policy-making. They represent the interests of the business community and provide valuable insights to policy makers. Through advocacy, expertise, stakeholder engagement and policy recommendations, they shape policies that promote economic development and benefit the business sector.

**Role of Business Associations in Influencing Public Policy:**

1. **Advocacy and Representation:** Business associations act as a collective voice, advocating for policies that benefit their members and the broader business sector. They engage with policy makers and regulatory bodies to influence policy formulation and implementation.
2. **Expertise and Research:** Business associations possess specialized knowledge and conduct research to provide valuable insights to policy makers. They analyze market trends and economic aspects to guide policy decisions.
3. **Policy Recommendations:** Business associations propose policy measures that address challenges faced by their members and promote a favorable business environment. Policy makers consider these recommendations while formulating policies.

Business associations' involvement in public policy-making is instrumental in promoting a conducive business environment and driving economic growth. Through their advocacy, expertise and stakeholder engagement, they ensure that the business community's interests are considered, fostering a balanced and inclusive approach to policy formulation in India.

**Q6. "Besides being a moral imperative of Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development". Analyze.**

(150 words) [10]

**Approach to question:**

1. **Health as a Moral Imperative:** A primary health structure is essential as it fulfills the moral responsibility of a welfare state to provide accessible and affordable healthcare to all citizens.
2. **Poverty Alleviation:** Accessible primary healthcare helps address health inequalities and reduces the financial burden on vulnerable populations.
3. **Education and Human Development:** A primary health structure is a necessary pre-condition for quality education and human development. By ensuring the well-being of children, it enhances school attendance, cognitive development and learning outcomes.

**Answer:**

The statement emphasizes the significance of a primary health structure as a moral imperative of a Welfare State and a necessary precondition for sustainable development. A robust primary health structure ensures equal access to healthcare, human capital development, economic productivity, poverty alleviation, education,

social cohesion, environmental sustainability and resilience.

**Analysis of the Significance of a Primary Health Structure:**

1. **Moral Imperative of Welfare State:** A primary health structure aligns with the concept of a Welfare State, ensuring equal opportunities for healthcare and well-being for all citizens, regardless of socio-economic status.
2. **Human Capital Development:** Accessible healthcare promotes human capital development by enhancing health outcomes, reducing disease burden and increasing productivity, contributing to sustainable development.
3. **Economic Productivity:** A healthy workforce resulting from primary healthcare leads to higher economic productivity, labor participation and stability, positively impacting sustainable economic growth.

A primary health structure serves as both a moral imperative and a necessary foundation for sustainable development. It addresses the well-being and dignity of all citizens, fosters human capital development, supports economic productivity and poverty alleviation, promotes education and social cohesion, contributes to environmental sustainability and strengthens resilience to health crises.

**Q7. “‘Earn while you learn’ scheme needs to be strengthened to make vocational education and skill training meaningful”. Comment. (150 words) [10]**

**Approach to question:**

1. **Enhancing practical experience:** By integrating work opportunities alongside learning, students can gain hands-on experience in their chosen field. This strengthens their skills and bridges the gap between theory and practice.
2. **Industry relevance:** Working while learning exposes students to real-world challenges and industry demands. They can adapt to changing trends and develop relevant skills that make them job-ready upon completion of their education.
3. **Employability prospects:** Earning while learning enhances employability by fostering a better understanding of industry expectations and requirements.

**Answer:**

The 'Earn while you learn' scheme holds great promise for enhancing vocational education and skill training by integrating work opportunities with learning. However, to ensure its effectiveness, there is a need to strengthen the scheme further. This can be achieved through practical exposure, industry relevance, financial independence,

improved employability prospects, holistic development and supportive policies.

1. **Practical Exposure:** Strengthening the scheme involves expanding the range of industries and occupations covered, providing students with a wide variety of practical exposure options for skill development.
2. **Industry Relevance:** Establishing stronger partnerships between educational institutions and industries would ensure that the training curriculum aligns with market demands, enhancing students' industry readiness.
3. **Financial Independence:** Strengthening the scheme can be achieved by providing financial incentives like tax breaks or scholarships to reduce the financial burden on students pursuing vocational education.

Enhancing the 'Earn while you learn' scheme is vital for making vocational education and skill training more meaningful and effective. By providing practical exposure, industry relevance, financial independence, better employability prospects, holistic development and policy support, the scheme can effectively bridge the gap between education and employment, equipping students with the skills and experience needed for successful careers in their chosen fields.

**Q8. Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through micro-financing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. (150 words) [10]**

**Approach to question:**

1. **Economic Empowerment:** Micro-financing enables women to access credit and start income-generating activities. This enhances their economic independence, reduces poverty and breaks the cycle of financial deprivation.
2. **Improved Nutrition:** Micro-financing can support women in starting businesses related to agriculture, food processing, or nutrition. By generating income, women can afford nutritious food for their families, thereby addressing malnutrition.
3. **Community Development:** Women SHGs encourage collective decision-making and resource pooling. This fosters social cohesion, empowering women to address community issues like education, healthcare and sanitation.

**Answer:**

The vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition can be effectively broken through micro-financing of women Self-Help Groups (SHGs). This approach empowers women, enhances their economic status and addresses nutritional needs.

1. **Economic Empowerment:** Micro-financing enables women to access credit and start

income-generating activities, reducing poverty and enhancing economic independence. For instance, India's National Rural Livelihood Mission successfully uplifted households through microfinance for women SHGs.

- Improved Nutrition:** Micro-financing supports businesses related to agriculture, food processing and nutrition, allowing women to afford nutritious food for their families. The "Kudumbashree" program in Kerala, India, improved nutritional outcomes for women and children.
- Community Development:** Women SHGs encourage collective decision-making, empowering women to address community issues like education and healthcare. The "Gram Vikas" program in Odisha, India, led to positive impacts on gender equality and health outcomes.

Micro-financing of women SHGs is a transformative approach that can effectively break the cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition. By providing economic empowerment, addressing nutritional needs, fostering community development and supporting women's leadership, micro-financing initiatives create positive impacts on individuals and societies.

- Q9. "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's". In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years. (150 words) [10]**

**Approach to question:**

- Economic Cooperation:** India has deepened economic ties with Africa through trade, investment and development projects. Bilateral trade has witnessed substantial growth and India has extended lines of credit and investments in sectors like infrastructure, agriculture and renewable energy.
- Energy Cooperation:** India has collaborated with African countries to secure energy resources and expand access to electricity. Partnerships include investments in oil and gas exploration, renewable energy projects and knowledge sharing in the energy sector.
- Security Cooperation:** India has deepened security cooperation with African nations, including counterterrorism efforts, capacity building in defense and security sectors and maritime security collaborations.

**Answer:**

In recent years, India has expanded its influence in Africa, recognizing the continent's economic potential and the importance of stronger partnerships. India's engagement in Africa is characterized by economic cooperation, development assistance, capacity building, energy collaboration, security ties and cultural exchanges. This

approach is based on South-South cooperation, mutual respect and shared development objectives.

- Economic Cooperation:** India has become one of Africa's largest trading partners, with significant investments in sectors like telecommunications, infrastructure and agriculture, contributing to Africa's economic growth.
- Development Assistance:** India provides development assistance through lines of credit for critical infrastructure, agriculture, healthcare, education and renewable energy projects.
- Capacity Building and Education:** India emphasizes capacity building and education by offering scholarships, training and technical expertise to African students and professionals.

India's influence in Africa is rooted in collaborative partnerships, recognizing the continent's growth potential and shared development goals. As Africa's growth story continues, India's engagement is expected to deepen ties and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

- Q10. "The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, which is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union". Explain. (150 words) [10]**

**Approach to question:**

- Economic Dominance:** China has emerged as the world's second-largest economy, posing a significant challenge to US economic supremacy. Its rapid growth, technological advancements and global trade influence have reshaped the global economic order.
- Technological Competition:** China's advancements in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, 5G and quantum computing present a formidable challenge to US technological dominance.
- Military Expansion:** China has been rapidly modernizing its military capabilities, including naval expansion, space programs and cyber capabilities.

**Answer:**

The USA is currently confronting an existential threat from China, which has emerged as a formidable challenger, surpassing the erstwhile Soviet Union. This assertion is based on various factors, including:

- Economic Supremacy:** China's sustained economic growth and technological advancements have transformed it into the world's second-largest economy, posing a significant challenge to the USA's global economic leadership.
- Technological Competition:** China's rapid progress in emerging technologies challenges US technological dominance and presents a direct rivalry in areas like artificial intelligence and 5G.

3. **Military Modernization:** China's significant investments in modernizing its military capabilities challenge US military superiority, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.
4. **Techno-authoritarianism:** China's combination of an authoritarian political system with advanced technological capabilities presents an ideological challenge to the USA's promotion of liberal democracy.

Addressing the challenge posed by China requires a multifaceted strategy from the USA, encompassing economic competitiveness, innovation, strengthening alliances, protecting national security interests, promoting democratic values and strategic diplomacy. Recognizing the long-term nature of the competition, the USA must adopt a nuanced approach that combines competition with cooperation where possible.

**Q11. 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. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:**

1. **Constitutional Framework:** The Constitution of India provides for a federal structure where powers are distributed between the central and state governments. While law and order fall under the domain of the states, the CBI is empowered to investigate certain offenses under central laws and in specific situations as mandated by the central government.
2. **National Importance:** The CBI investigates cases that have national implications, such as those related to corruption, terrorism, economic offenses and inter-state crimes.
3. **Cooperative Federalism:** India follows the principle of cooperative federalism, where the central and state governments work together to achieve common goals.

**Answer:**

The jurisdiction of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to lodge an FIR and conduct investigations within individual states in India has been a matter of contention. While some states have raised concerns about the CBI's authority, it is essential to understand the federal character of India and the constitutional provisions that govern the relationship between the central and state governments. This concise overview will examine the key points surrounding the CBI's jurisdiction and the balance between federalism and national interest.

1. **Federal Structure of India:** India's governance follows a federal structure where powers are divided between the central and state governments. The Constitution assigns certain subjects to the exclusive jurisdiction of the central government, while others fall under the state governments' domain. Law and order generally come under the purview of the states.
2. **CBI's Jurisdiction:** The CBI is a central investigative agency responsible for probing specific offenses under central laws and cases of national importance. These offenses include corruption, economic offenses, inter-state crimes and cases that extend beyond the jurisdiction of a single state.
3. **Cooperative Federalism:** India's constitutional framework promotes cooperative federalism, emphasizing collaboration between the central and state governments for the nation's interest. It recognizes the need for centralized agencies like the CBI to investigate crimes with national ramifications, necessitating a unified approach.
4. **Consent of State Governments:** Generally, the CBI seeks the state government's consent before initiating an investigation within a state.

The jurisdiction of the CBI to investigate within states has faced scrutiny, but the power of states to withhold consent is not absolute. The federal character of India, cooperative federalism and the necessity for centralized agencies to handle offenses with national implications are crucial factors in determining the CBI's jurisdiction.

**Q12. 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. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:**

**Limitations:**

1. **Lack of Independence:** Human Rights Commissions in India often face challenges in maintaining independence due to their composition, which includes members with affiliations to the government or political parties.
2. **Limited Jurisdiction:** The jurisdiction of these commissions is restricted to human rights violations committed by government officials and they have limited authority over private entities or non-state actors.
3. **Inadequate Powers:** The commissions lack the power to enforce their recommendations and orders, rendering them reliant on the cooperation of the concerned authorities.

**Answer:**

The Human Rights Commissions in India have played a crucial role in safeguarding human rights in the country. This concise analysis highlights the structural and practical limitations of these commissions and proposes remedial measures to enhance their effectiveness in protecting human rights.

1. **Lack of Independence:** Concerns arise over the independence of Human Rights Commissions due to the presence of members affiliated with the government or political parties. To address this, transparent and impartial selection processes for commission members should be implemented to ensure their independence in decision-making.
2. **Limited Jurisdiction:** The commissions' jurisdiction is often confined to human rights violations committed by government officials, leaving non-state actors and private entities beyond their reach. Expanding the scope of their jurisdiction to include non-state actors and socio-economic rights violations would enable them to address a broader range of human rights issues.

**Practical Limitations:**

1. **Resource Constraints:** Insufficient budgets, staffing, infrastructure and training hinder the commissions' ability to address human rights violations. Providing adequate financial resources would bolster their capacity to function efficiently.
2. **Delays in Justice:** The complaint redressal process in Human Rights Commissions suffers from delays, impacting the timely resolution of human rights violations. Streamlining procedures and implementing time-bound mechanisms would ensure prompt resolution of cases.

Addressing the structural and practical limitations of Human Rights Commissions in India is essential to enhance their effectiveness in protecting human rights. By ensuring their independence, expanding jurisdiction, granting enforcement powers, providing adequate resources, streamlining procedures and conducting public outreach, these commissions can assert themselves against powerful entities and promote justice and accountability.

**Q13. Analyze the distinguishing features of the notion of Equality in the Constitutions of the USA and India. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:****USA:**

1. **Equal Protection Clause:** The Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause guarantees equal protection of the law to all individuals, prohibiting state governments from denying equal rights.
2. **Emphasis on Negative Rights:** The US Constitution primarily focuses on preventing the government from infringing upon individual rights rather than promoting positive measures.

**India:**

1. **Inclusive Approach:** The Indian Constitution adopts a more inclusive understanding of equality, aiming to uplift disadvantaged groups and promote social justice.
2. **Affirmative Action:** The Constitution provides for affirmative action measures, such as reservations in educational institutions and government jobs, to address historical injustices and ensure representation of marginalized groups.

**Answer:**

The concept of equality in the Constitutions of the USA and India displays unique characteristics that reflect the historical context and values of these two democratic nations. Examining these distinguishing features allows us to gain insights into their distinct approaches to equality and the measures adopted to address social injustices.

**USA:**

1. **Individual Rights Focus:** The US Constitution prioritizes the protection of individual rights and liberties, ensuring equal treatment before the law and safeguarding against discrimination based on protected characteristics.
2. **Equal Protection Clause:** The Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution incorporates the Equal Protection Clause, which prohibits states from denying any person equal protection of the laws, fostering equal treatment and combating discrimination.

**India:**

1. **Inclusive Approach:** The Indian Constitution adopts a more inclusive notion of equality, recognizing historical discrimination against marginalized communities and aiming to address societal inequalities through affirmative action and social justice measures.
2. **Affirmative Action:** Provisions for affirmative action, such as reservations in education and government jobs, are incorporated in the Indian Constitution to uplift historically disadvantaged groups, providing equal opportunities and representation.
4. **Historical Context:** The US Constitution was drafted in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, while India's Constitution was adopted in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The historical context and experiences of the two nations shaped their distinct approaches to equality.
5. **Socioeconomic Equality:** While the US Constitution concentrates mainly on political and legal equality, the Indian Constitution seeks to address socioeconomic disparities, emphasizing the reduction of income, wealth and social status gaps.

The Constitutions of the USA and India exhibit unique characteristics in their approaches to equality. The US Constitution emphasizes individual rights, equal protection and negative rights, while the Indian Constitution adopts a more inclusive approach, addressing historical injustices through affirmative action and social justice measures.

**Q14. Explain the constitutional provisions under which Legislative Councils are established. Review the working and current status of Legislative Councils with suitable illustrations. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:**

**Constitutional provisions under which Legislative Councils are established include:**

1. **Article 169:** This article allows for the creation or abolition of Legislative Councils in states by passing a resolution in the State Legislative Assembly with a special majority.
2. **Article 171:** This article outlines the composition and qualifications of members of Legislative Councils.

**Reviewing the working and current status of Legislative Councils:**

1. **Working:** Legislative Councils serve as a revising chamber, providing a forum for in-depth debate and scrutiny of legislation.
2. **Current Status:** As of now, Legislative Councils exist in several states, including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. However, some states, such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, have abolished their Legislative Councils.

**Answer:**

Legislative Councils are an essential component of India's bicameral legislative system. Established under specific constitutional provisions, these councils play a significant role in the legislative process by providing an opportunity for in-depth review, representation of local interests and introducing checks and balances. However, their working and current status vary across states..

1. **Article 169:** This article empowers the Parliament to create or abolish Legislative Councils in states. It requires the state Legislative Assembly to pass a resolution with a special majority supporting the creation or abolition of the Council. Upon receiving such a resolution, Parliament may pass a law to that effect.
2. **Article 171:** This article outlines the composition and qualifications of members of Legislative Councils. One-third of the members are elected by members of local authorities in the state, one-third by members of the State Legislative Assembly and the remaining members are nominated by the Governor.

**Working of Legislative Councils:**

1. **Revising Chamber:** Legislative Councils function as revising chambers, conducting detailed examination, review and debate of legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly.
2. **Expertise and Experience:** Members of Legislative Councils bring diverse expertise and experience from various fields, enriching legislative deliberations with valuable insights and perspectives.
3. **Andhra Pradesh:** Andhra Pradesh has a Legislative Council with 58 members, serving as a platform for comprehensive legislative deliberations and regional representation.
4. **Bihar:** Bihar's bicameral legislature includes a Legislative Council with 75 members, actively reviewing legislation and contributing valuable inputs.

Legislative Councils in India are established under constitutional provisions, granting the Parliament the power to create or abolish them based on the state Legislative Assembly's resolution. These councils serve as revising chambers, represent local interests and provide essential checks and balances in the legislative process.

**Q15. 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. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:**

1. **Oversight and Accountability:** These committees scrutinize the policies, budgets and performance of government departments, holding them accountable for their actions.
2. **Expertise and In-depth Examination:** The committees consist of members with expertise in specific domains. They conduct detailed examinations, summon officials and seek expert opinions, thereby ensuring a comprehensive review of government activities.
3. **Recommendations and Policy Influence:** The committees' recommendations influence policy-making and legislative processes.

**Answer:**

Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees play a crucial role in ensuring effective governance by scrutinizing government departments, holding them accountable and influencing policy-making. Their expertise, in-depth examination and policy recommendations make them vital instruments of parliamentary control. This concise analysis evaluates their significance and highlights examples of their effective working while also addressing the challenges they face.



- Oversight and Accountability:** Committees scrutinize government departments, policies and expenditure, ensuring transparency and holding the administration accountable. Questioning officials and examining documents bring crucial information to light.
- Expertise and In-depth Examination:** Committees consist of members with diverse expertise, aiding informed decision-making and constructive criticism. In-depth examinations help identify shortcomings and propose necessary reforms.
- Recommendations and Policy Influence:** Committee reports carry weight and influence policy-making, bridging the gap between theory and implementation. The government often considers their suggestions for new policies and amendments.

#### Challenges:

- Limited Powers:** Committees lack enforcement capabilities, relying on government willingness to act on their recommendations.
- Resource Constraints:** Time limitations and limited staff support affect the depth of their examination.
- Political Interference:** Party affiliations can influence committee workings, undermining their independence and effectiveness.

#### Measures for Improvement:

Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees play a vital role in promoting effective governance, transparency and accountability. Their expertise, oversight and policy recommendations inspire reverence for parliamentary control. Although they face challenges, empowering them with enforcement capabilities, enhancing resources and safeguarding their independence will further improve their effectiveness.

**Q16. Has digital illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, couple with lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility hindered socio-economic development? Examine with justification. (250 words) [15]**

#### Approach to question:

Yes, digital illiteracy, especially in rural areas, coupled with a lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility has hindered socio-economic development.

- Limited Access:** Rural areas often lack proper ICT infrastructure and connectivity, making it difficult for people to access digital resources and services, hampering their participation in the digital economy.
- Educational Disadvantage:** Digital illiteracy in rural areas limits access to online educational resources and e-learning opportunities, widening the educational gap between rural and urban areas.

- Economic Barriers:** Lack of digital skills and ICT accessibility hinder employment opportunities and entrepreneurial ventures, preventing rural communities from fully participating in the digital economy.

#### Answer:

Digital illiteracy, especially in rural areas, coupled with limited Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility, has become a major hindrance to socio-economic development. This concise analysis examines the issue and justifies the importance of addressing it to promote inclusive growth and bridge the digital divide.

- Limited Access to ICT Infrastructure:** Rural areas often lack proper ICT infrastructure, leading to limited internet connectivity and electricity availability. This hampers access to digital resources and services, affecting economic activities, education, healthcare and information access.
- Educational Disadvantage:** Digital illiteracy in rural areas limits access to online educational resources, e-learning platforms and digital tools. This creates an educational disadvantage, widening the gap between rural and urban areas and impacting future employability and socio-economic progress.
- Healthcare Challenges:** Digital illiteracy and limited ICT accessibility in rural areas affect healthcare delivery. Telemedicine, digital health records and health information dissemination become limited, hindering access to quality healthcare services and impacting health outcomes.

#### Justification:

- Empirical Evidence:** Extensive research has shown a clear correlation between digital illiteracy, limited ICT accessibility and socio-economic disparities. Regions with better ICT infrastructure and digital literacy programs have experienced higher socio-economic development.
- COVID-19 Pandemic:** The pandemic has further underscored the importance of digital literacy and ICT accessibility. The shift towards remote work, online education and telehealth services has highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by rural communities due to digital exclusion.

Digital illiteracy in rural areas, coupled with limited ICT accessibility, is a significant barrier to socio-economic development. Comprehensive efforts at the policy and grassroots levels are required to address this issue and unlock the potential of rural areas for sustainable development.

**Q17. "Though women in post-Independent India have excelled in various fields, the social attitude towards women and feminist movement has been patriarchal".**

**Apart from women education and women empowerment schemes, what interventions can help change this milieu?**

(250 words) [15]

**Approach to question:**

1. **Media and Cultural Influences:** Promoting gender-positive narratives, diverse representations of women and addressing gender biases in media, films, television and popular culture.
2. **Engaging Men and Boys:** Involving men and boys in gender equality initiatives, encouraging their active participation and promoting positive masculinity can help challenge patriarchal norms and foster supportive attitudes towards women.
3. **Engaging Religious and Community Leaders:** Collaborating with religious and community leaders to promote gender equality, challenge discriminatory practices and leverage their influence to change societal norms and attitudes.
4. **Supportive Work Environments:** Ensuring safe and inclusive work environments that provide equal opportunities, fair wages and policies supporting work-life balance.

**Answer:**

Despite women excelling in various fields in post-Independent India, the prevailing social attitude remains patriarchal, posing challenges for women's rights and the feminist movement. Beyond education and empowerment schemes, this concise analysis highlights key interventions that can bring about a transformative change in societal attitudes and promote gender equality.

1. **Legal Reforms:** Strengthen existing laws and introduce new legislation to protect women's rights, address gender-based violence and ensure equal opportunities and representation.
2. **Media and Cultural Influences:** Promote gender-positive narratives, diverse representations of women and address gender biases in media, films and popular culture.
3. **Engaging Men and Boys:** Involve men and boys in gender equality initiatives to challenge patriarchal norms and foster supportive attitudes towards women.
4. **Engaging Religious and Community Leaders:** Collaborate with religious and community leaders to challenge discriminatory practices and promote gender equality.
5. **Supportive Work Environments:** Ensure safe and inclusive work environments that provide equal opportunities and policies supporting work-life balance.

6. **Grassroots Movements and Civil Society Participation:** Encourage grassroots movements and NGOs to actively work towards women's empowerment and gender equality.
7. **Strengthening Institutional Mechanisms:** Enhance the effectiveness and autonomy of institutions working on women's rights.
8. **Engaging in Global Dialogues:** Participate in international forums and dialogues on women's rights and gender equality to learn from global best practices.
9. **Community Mobilization:** Engage with communities through grassroots initiatives and involve local leaders and influencers to promote gender equality.

In addition to women's education and empowerment schemes, a multi-faceted approach involving gender sensitization, legal reforms, media influences, engaging men and boys, involving religious and community leaders, supportive work environments, grassroots movements, strengthening institutional mechanisms, participating in global dialogues and community mobilization can transform the patriarchal milieu in post-Independent India.

**Q18. 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. (250 words) [15]**

**Approach to question:**

1. **Limited Resources:** NGOs often face resource constraints, including funding, manpower and infrastructure, which can limit their ability to scale up and deliver services on a large scale.
2. **Coordination and Collaboration:** Collaborating with government agencies and coordinating efforts can be challenging for NGOs.
3. **Limited Reach:** NGOs may not have the reach and infrastructure to penetrate remote areas or marginalized communities, leaving some sections of society underserved.
4. **Limited Policy Influence:** NGOs may face challenges in influencing policy decisions due to limited access to decision-making bodies and processes.

**Answer:**

Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) offer an alternative model of public service delivery, addressing social issues and advocating for marginalized communities. This concise analysis discusses these challenges and emphasizes the need for an enabling environment to support the work of Civil Society and NGOs in public service delivery.

### Challenges of Civil Society and NGOs in Public Service Delivery:

1. **Limited Resources:** NGOs often struggle with limited financial resources, hindering their ability to scale up operations and reach a larger population.
2. **Sustainability:** Reliance on project-based funding and uncertain financial stability can challenge the sustainability of NGOs' initiatives.
3. **Coordination and Collaboration:** Collaborating with government agencies and stakeholders demands time, resources and networking skills.
4. **Limited Reach:** Lack of resources and infrastructure may prevent NGOs from reaching remote areas or marginalized communities.
5. **Limited Policy Influence:** NGOs may face challenges in influencing policy decisions due to limited access to decision-making bodies.
6. **Fragmentation and Duplication:** Numerous NGOs working in similar sectors can lead to inefficiencies and gaps in service delivery.
7. **Public Perception:** Skepticism and lack of trust from the public can affect NGOs' acceptance and engagement in public service delivery.

### Overcoming Challenges and Creating an Enabling Environment:

1. **Supportive Policies:** Governments can create policies that recognize and support the work of NGOs, providing adequate funding and facilitating partnerships.
2. **Streamlined Regulatory Frameworks:** Simplified regulations can reduce barriers and bureaucratic hurdles for NGOs.

Civil Society and NGOs play a vital role in public service delivery, but they face various challenges. Creating an enabling environment through supportive policies, streamlined regulations, capacity-building initiatives, multi-stakeholder collaborations and increased public awareness is crucial to overcoming these challenges.

**Q19. Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India? (250 words) [15]**

#### Approach to question:

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) aims to promote regional stability, cooperation and economic integration among its member countries. For India, the SCO holds significant importance. It provides a platform for India to engage with Central Asian countries, including China and Russia, on various regional and global issues. It also provides a platform to address India's concerns related to cross-border terrorism and separatism. Overall, the SCO offers India a platform to enhance regional cooperation, expand its diplomatic outreach and pursue its economic and security interests in the Eurasian region.

### Answer:

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising eight member states, including China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

#### Aims and Objectives of the SCO:

1. **Enhancing Regional Security:** The SCO aims to promote regional stability and security by addressing common security threats like terrorism, separatism and extremism. It emphasizes cooperation in intelligence sharing, counter-terrorism operations and border security management.
2. **Promoting Economic Cooperation:** The SCO fosters economic cooperation among member states, focusing on trade, investment and infrastructure development. It aims to create a favorable environment for trade and investment, promote connectivity projects and facilitate economic integration in the region.
3. **Enhancing Energy Cooperation:** Energy cooperation is a crucial objective of the SCO. It facilitates the development and transportation of energy resources among member states, promoting energy security and stability in the region.
4. **Strengthening Cooperation on Regional Issues:** The SCO facilitates dialogue and cooperation on regional issues, including Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Middle East. It provides a platform for member states to coordinate their positions, promote conflict resolution and support stability and development in neighbouring regions.

#### Importance of the SCO for India:

1. **Regional Connectivity and Trade:** India benefits from the SCO's opportunities to enhance connectivity with Central Asian countries, China and Russia. It promotes regional integration and provides platforms for trade, investment and economic cooperation.
2. **Counter-terrorism Cooperation:** India faces security challenges from cross-border terrorism. The SCO's emphasis on counter-terrorism cooperation and intelligence sharing strengthens India's counter-terrorism efforts and cooperation with member states.

The SCO's aims and objectives center on enhancing regional security, promoting economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and addressing common challenges. For India, being an SCO member is significant as it opens opportunities for regional connectivity, counter-terrorism cooperation, regional diplomacy and engagement.

**Q20. The newly tri-nation partnership AUKUS is aimed at countering China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. Is it going to supersede the existing partnerships in the**

region? Discuss the strength and impact of AUKUS in the present scenario.

(250 words) [15]

**Approach to question:**

1. **Security Cooperation:** AUKUS strengthens security cooperation among its member countries, particularly in the areas of defense, technology sharing and intelligence.
2. **Balancing China's Influence:** AUKUS sends a clear message about the determination of member countries to counter China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific.
3. **Regional Dynamics and Responses:** AUKUS has generated mixed responses from regional stakeholders. While some countries view it positively as a step toward maintaining regional stability, others express concerns about its impact on regional dynamics and the potential for further escalation.

**Answer:**

The newly formed tri-nation partnership known as AUKUS, comprising Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, has garnered significant attention as it aims to counter China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. However, its strength and impact in the present scenario are subject to examination, as it is not intended to supersede existing partnerships but rather adds a new dimension to the strategic dynamics.

**Strength and Impact of AUKUS:**

1. **Enhanced Security Cooperation:** AUKUS strengthens security cooperation among its

member countries through advanced defense technologies and intelligence sharing. The partnership aims to bolster their collective capabilities to counter potential security threats in the Indo-Pacific, particularly China's assertiveness.

2. **Technological Advancements:** AUKUS aims to enhance technological cooperation, particularly in the domain of nuclear-powered submarines. This aspect provides its members with a significant strategic advantage, enhancing their deterrent capabilities and contributing to regional stability.
3. **Balancing China's Influence:** AUKUS reflects the member countries' clear intent to counterbalance China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific. It underscores their commitment to upholding a rules-based international order and ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific region, aligning with the interests of other regional partners with similar concerns.
4. **Complementing Existing Partnerships:** AUKUS is not meant to supersede existing partnerships but rather complements them. Partnerships like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which includes Australia, the United States, Japan and India, continue to play a crucial role in promoting regional security, economic cooperation and maintaining a rules-based order.

In conclusion, AUKUS, comprising Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, is aimed at countering China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific. However, it is not intended to supersede existing partnerships in the region. Its strength lies in enhanced security cooperation, technological advancements and a commitment to balancing China's influence.