



SARTHAK

General Studies Mains Test Series

Test Code: 02

(Indian Polity, Contemporary Issues)

Time Allowed: 2 Hours 30 Mins

Maximum Marks: 190

Question Paper Specific Instructions.

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions:

- There are total 15 questions in test printed in **ENGLISH**.
- **All questions are compulsory.**
- Answer must be written in **medium authorized in the Admission Certificate**, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. no marks will be allotted for answers written in medium other than the authorized one.
- Any page or portion of the **page left blank** in the Question -Cum- Answer booklet must be **clearly struck off**.
- **Word limit** in question should be adhered to.
- The number of **marks** carried by question/part is **indicated against it**.

Note : All questions are compulsory

1. "IT Amendment Rules of 2023 which aim to combat false information and disinformation are seen to be problematic due to wide powers to authority". Examine critically. (150 words) 10
2. The founding fathers of Indian Constitution placed "fraternity" in the preamble. Comment. Do you think the idea of fraternity is more relevant today than it has ever been in our nation? (150 words) 10
3. Discuss reasons for inclusion of fundamental rights in the constitution. Highlight their role in increasing participatory democracy in India? (150 words) 10
4. India's use of the Sedition Law is impeded with issues and the calls for changes. Discuss (150 words) 10
5. Critically examine the role of Central Vigilance Commission in curbing corruption. (150 words) 10
6. Examine the significance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions as a potential source of funding to address the development gap in the north-eastern region of India. (150 words) 10
7. Parliamentary system of India and United Kingdom (U.K.) seems to be converging as well as diverging at some point of time. Highlight the key points with examples. (150 words) 10
8. Parliamentary committees are important tool to keep the government accountable. Critically analyze (250 words) 15
9. Examine role, responsibilities of Enforcement Directorate (ED) while discussing its effectiveness at limiting financial crimes. What are the main challenges faced by the body? What steps can be taken to improve its performance? (250 words) 15
10. How would you define Universal Health Coverage (UHC)? What are the challenges encountered in implementing the concept of UHC in India? What potential solutions can be proposed to overcome these obstacles? (250 words) 15
11. "Doctrine of separation of power" in the Indian constitution does not hold completely true and there is an overlap between different organs of government. Examine while comparing it with USA. (250 words) 15
12. "Conflicts between federal and state governments over the implementation of developmental programs impact citizen the most". Critically examine. (250 words) 15
13. Disruption in parliamentary procedures has socio-political causes. Justify the statements with examples while mentioning measures to ensure accountability for such disruptions? (250 words) 15
14. The vital role civil society organizations (CSOs) play in advancing social justice and bolstering democracy is often hindered by their lack of access to funding. Examine. (250 words) 15
15. Mention grounds for disqualification of People's representatives by Representation of People Act 1951. Mention available remedial measures too. (250 words) 15

Q1. "IT Amendment Rules of 2023 which aim to combat false information and disinformation are seen to be problematic due to wide powers to authority ". Examine critically.

Why this question: IT rules have been recently amended and there are several discussions around it.

How to approach:

Directive word: Critically examine throws light on the negatives and positives where an aspirant needs to examine both sides of an issue and come to a balanced conclusion.

Structure of the answer:

- **Introduction:** Briefly start answer by introducing the IT laws.
- **Body:** Mention the amendments made in the law along its effects. Add after effects of the rules.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude on a positive note with a futuristic benefit of the amendments to the IT laws.

ANSWER:

The planned IT Amendment Rules of 2023 are aimed at combating false information and disinformation have raised concerns due to the broad and vague authority they provide to censor material and punishments to individuals for its dissemination.

Problematic aspects of the law:

1. **Government as a Regulating Body:** The inclusion of a fact-checking unit under the government's authority raises concerns about its role as a regulating body. There is a risk that the government's labelling of information as "*false*" or "*fake*" could be misused to suppress media organizations' requests for clarification or in-depth analysis.
2. **Potential for Abuse of Authority:** The authority granted to the fact-checking unit can potentially be abused to curb *free speech and expression (Article 19)*. Without a robust system of checks and balances, there is a risk of arbitrary decisions and stifling of dissenting voices.
3. **Lack of Right of Appeal or Judicial Scrutiny:** The absence of right of appeal or judicial scrutiny limits the ability to challenge decisions made by the fact-checking unit. This undermines the *principle of due process* and accountability.
4. **Impact on Information Access and Freedom:** The broad powers given to the fact-checking unit can have a chilling effect on citizens' ability to access information and express their ideas freely. It may lead to *self-censorship* and hinder open dialogue and debate.
5. **Circumventing Due Process:** The proposed amendments may circumvent the established process for issuing takedown orders, as described in Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000. This raises concerns about transparency and adherence to legal safeguards.

While tackling false information is crucial, it is essential to address these concerns and find a balanced approach.

Recommendations to improve the situation:

1. **Emphasize rebuttal and Fact-Checking:** Encourage the use of fact-checking methods to rebut false information, highlighting inconsistencies and providing accurate information to counter misinformation.
2. **Collaboration with Technological Platforms:** Work collaboratively with social media platforms to develop effective algorithms and mechanisms to remove fake news promptly, while ensuring transparency and accountability.
3. **Focus on Education:** Promote cybersecurity and media literacy education at all levels of the academic curriculum to equip citizens with the skills to critically evaluate information and combat misinformation.
4. **Strengthen Regulatory Mechanisms:** Enhance and restructure regulatory bodies like the Press Council of India (PCI) to strike a balance between the right to information, media freedom, and the responsibility to combat disinformation.
5. **Impartial Verification Bodies:** Establish an impartial body to verify information shared on social media and other platforms, ensuring that decisions are transparent and subject to scrutiny.
6. **Establish Ombudsman Organizations:** Promptly address complaints related to fake news through ombudsman organizations that can take appropriate action based on established guidelines.

It is essential for the government to review and address the concerns raised by the IT Amendment Rules, 2023 and engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders to safeguard press freedom, free expression, and the public's right to access information.

2. The founding fathers of Indian Constitution placed “fraternity” in the preamble. Comment. Do you think the idea of fraternity is more relevant today than it has ever been in our nation?

Why this question: The issue of communal hate is increasing in society creating barriers for harmony and brotherhood.

How to approach:

Directive word: Describe means to write in details about the issue

Structure of the answer:

- **Introduction:** Introduce answer by defining fraternity.
- **Body:** Add the concept of fraternity, its relevance and needs in present society while linking it with present scenario. Mention its importance.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude on a positive note by highlighting futuristic benefit of fraternity.

ANSWER:

The concept of fraternity (**42nd constitution amendment act**) is more relevant today than it has ever been in our nation. In the face of growing communal hate and divisions, it is imperative to uphold the principles of brotherhood and unity that our founding fathers envisioned (**Article 51A**).

Meaning of fraternity in the Indian context:

1. The idea of fraternity denotes *moral duties* rather than legal rights. **Example:** need to treat others fairly and with respect.
2. It suggests putting communal cohesiveness ahead of personal identity.
3. *According to the Constitution*, fraternity plays a significant role in upholding "the dignity of the individual" and the "unity" of the country.
4. In order to achieve fraternity, acknowledgement of moral equality of all people must exist, i.e. to uphold respect for one another in spite of differences in religion, caste, language, culture, ethnicity, class, and gender (**Article 15**).
5. Sense of brotherhood that transcends differences in religion, language, location, or sector (**Article 51A**) is promoted through single citizenship.

Relevance of fraternity in contemporary India:

1. **Promoting Social Harmony:** Fraternity encourages a sense of togetherness and solidarity among diverse communities. In a pluralistic society like India, fraternity acts as a binding force that promotes social harmony and peaceful coexistence.
2. **Countering Divisive Forces:** The rise of divisive forces based on identity politics and communalism necessitates a strong emphasis on fraternity. It serves as a counterforce to these divisive tendencies by fostering a spirit of inclusiveness, empathy, and understanding among citizens. Fraternity reminds us that our shared humanity is stronger than our differences.
3. **Strengthening Democracy:** Fraternity is a fundamental pillar of a functioning democracy. It encourages mutual respect, dialogue, and cooperation among citizens, leading to a more inclusive and participatory democracy. Upholding fraternity build a society that values diverse opinions, promotes constructive debate, and works towards the collective well-being.
4. **Preserving National Unity:** It reinforces the idea of a single Indian citizenship that transcends regional, linguistic and religious barriers. In a country as vast and diverse as India, fraternity serves as a unifying force that binds together as one nation, fostering a sense of belonging and shared destiny.
5. **Upholding Constitutional Values:** The preamble includes the principle of fraternity which sets the foundation for democratic framework. It reminds of commitment to justice, equality, and liberty, which can only be realized in a society where fraternity thrives.

The idea of fraternity is of utmost relevance in present-day India. It serves as a vital **antidote** to divisive forces, promotes social harmony, strengthens democracy, preserves national unity and upholds constitutional values. Embracing fraternity is essential for fostering a society that values inclusiveness,

empathy, and collective well-being. A stronger nation that cherishes its rich diversity can be built through fraternity.

3. Discuss reasons for inclusion of fundamental rights in the constitution. Highlight their role in increasing participatory democracy in India?

Why this question: Fundamental rights are known as Magna Carta of India and questions on this topic is usually asked in UPSC.

How to approach:

Directive word: Discuss means a debate where reasoning is backed up with evidences for and against an argument to finally arrive at a conclusion.

Structure of the answer:

- **Introduction:** Briefly introduce answer by giving background of fundamental rights along with the articles in which it is mentioned.
- **Body:** Mention factors leading to their inclusion in constitution, safeguard and connection with human rights. Also mention when they are not applicable.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude answer by focusing on the benefits and needs of fundamental rights.

ANSWER:

The Fundamental Rights is defined as the basic human rights of all citizens which are outlined in **Part III (Article 12-35)** of the Constitution. They are subjected to limitations and are enforceable by the courts. The 'Bill of Rights' (also known as the Fundamental Rights) incorporated in the US Constitution served as the model for the Fundamental Rights in the Indian Constitution.

Reasons for inclusion of fundamental rights in the constitution:

1. India was a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. It is considered essential for the *development of the personality* of every individual and to preserve human dignity.
3. It allows citizen to move the Supreme courts for their enforcement, if and when they are violated **(Article 32)**.
4. To provide equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India **(Article 14)**
5. To abolish discrimination of all forms from the society **(Article 15)**
6. To provide equal opportunity to all the citizens in public employment **(Article 16)**
7. To abolish untouchability directly or indirectly **(Article 17)**
8. To provide freedom of speech and expression to the people **(Article 19)**
9. To provide a life of dignity and liberty **(Article 21)**

Role of fundamental rights in participatory democracy:

1. **Good governance:** They provide *rights against state* and ensures good governance. It affects various policies and decisions making processes undertaken by the government. **Example:** right to freedom to speech
2. **Feedback mechanism:** Citizen have right to express their opinions which ensure better implementation of policies and plugging of various loopholes.
3. **Better policy implementation:** People's participations is important especially when policies seeks to make a behavioral change. **For example:** Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Beti Bachao Beti Padoo etc. were made successful due to involvement of people at a local level.
4. **4. Accountability:** Accountable government removes misunderstanding and built trust by increasing answerability to people. **For example:** RTI has increased accountability in government due to increased participation of citizens.
5. **Free media and social media (Article 21):** Provide an open platform for people to give opinions to help government in dispute readdressal. **For example:** Use of Twitter by railways, municipalities to solve various issues.
6. **Connectivity:** It connects citizens directly to the government through courts or media.

Fundamental rights are essential part of Constitution because they are like the backbone of the country. They are essential for safeguarding people's interests. There is also a role for judicial review (**Article 32, 226**). The Supreme Court and the High Courts can declare any law unconstitutional on the grounds that it is violative of the fundamental rights. The fundamental rights are the real AMRIT of constitution in this **"AAZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV"**.

4. India's use of the Sedition Law is impeded with issues and the calls for changes. Discuss

Why this question: Supreme Court has recently passed a decree regarding sedition law.

How to approach:

Directive word: Discuss necessitates a debate where reasoning is backed up with evidence to make a case for and against an argument and finally arriving at a conclusion.

Structure of the answer:

- **Introduction:** Introduce answer by writing about Sedition law of India.
- **Body:** Explain the law and suggest the changes required in it. Add brief history and features while mentioning few comparisons with other countries.
- **Conclusion:** In conclusion mention its need and importance for national security.

ANSWER:

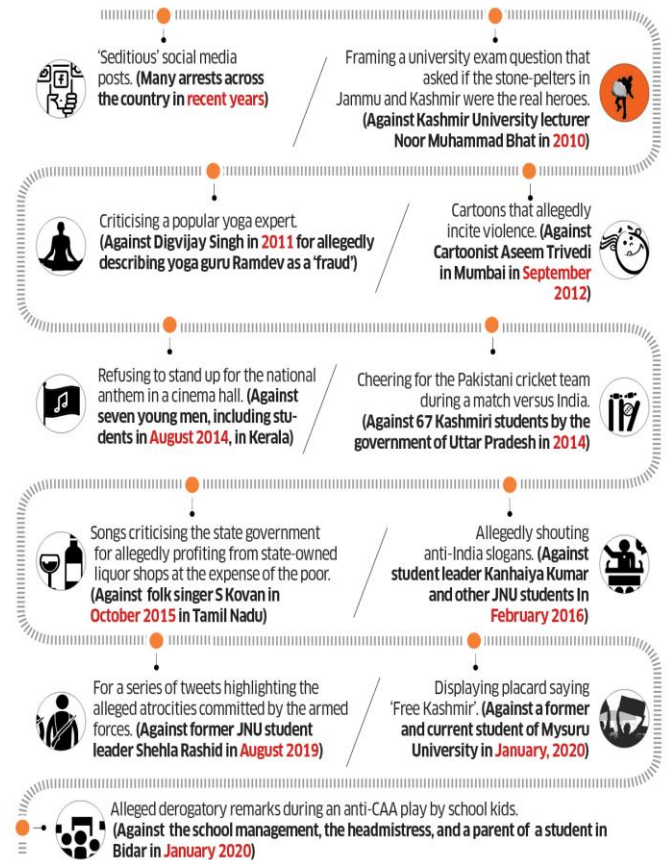
The Sedition Law in India is outlined in **Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)** and defines sedition as "any act that attempts to bring hatred or contempt towards the government established by law or excites disaffection against it". The law was introduced during the colonial era in 1870 and has been retained in

the Indian legal system since. It is argued that the law is vaguely worded and can be used to suppress dissenting voices, curtail political opposition and undermine democratic principles.

India's use of the Sedition Law has been a subject of significant criticism and raises several key issues.

1. **Freedom of Expression:** The sedition law has often been used as a tool to suppress freedom of expression due to broad and ambiguous language of the law allows for its misuse, enabling authorities to target individuals who criticize the government or express dissenting opinions. The existence of the sedition law and its frequent use create a climate of fear and self-censorship
2. **Vague and Overbroad Definition:** The use of terms such as "*disaffection*" and "*hatred*" is subjective and lacks clarity, making it susceptible to misuse. This ambiguity gives authorities wide-ranging discretion leading to arbitrary arrests and harassment of individuals based on differing interpretations of sedition.
3. **Misuse for Political Purposes:** The sedition law has been criticized for being used as a political tool to silence critics and suppress opposition voices. There have been instances where it has been invoked against individuals solely for expressing dissenting opinions, criticizing government policies, or participating in peaceful protests.
4. **Violation of International Standards:** India's use of the sedition law has drawn criticism from international human rights organizations and legal experts. The United Nations and other international bodies have expressed concerns about the law's compatibility with international human rights standards, particularly the right to freedom of expression.
5. **Lack of Accountability and Transparency:** The process of invoking the sedition law lacks transparency and there is a lack of clear guidelines or safeguards to prevent its misuse. The criteria for determining sedition charges and the decision-making process behind invoking the law are often opaque..
6. **Inconsistent Judicial Interpretation:** There have been varied interpretations of the sedition law while the Supreme Court has recognized the need to balance free speech rights and national security concerns, there have been instances where lower courts have upheld sedition charges even in cases involving legitimate exercise of free speech.

Some examples of 'seditious' activities



Calls for changes in the Sedition Law:

1. **Narrowing the Scope:** There is a need to narrow down the scope of the sedition law to ensure that it is not misused to suppress dissent and criticism of the government. The law should be restricted to instances where there is a direct incitement to violence or an attempt to overthrow the government by force.
2. **Balancing Free Speech:** The Sedition Law should be brought in line with the principles of free speech and expression enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The law should not impede legitimate criticism of the government or peaceful expression of dissent. The *Supreme Court's Kedar Nath Singh judgment* provides guidelines but further clarity is required to prevent misuse.
3. **Safeguarding Journalists and Activists:** Journalists and activists play a crucial role in upholding democratic values and exposing wrongdoing. The Sedition Law should not be used to target them for their critical reporting or activism, specific provisions should be incorporated to protect the *freedom of the press and the right to dissent*.
4. **Reviewing Punishments:** The punishment prescribed under the sedition law is severe, including imprisonment for life. There is a need to review and reconsider the penalties imposed under this law. The punishment should be proportionate to the offense and should not act as a deterrent to the exercise of free speech.
5. **Preventing Misuse:** Safeguards should be put in place to prevent the misuse of the sedition law for political or personal vendettas. Strict guidelines and oversight mechanisms should be established to ensure that the law is used only in genuine cases that pose a threat to national security.

While the sedition law has a role in safeguarding national security, there is a pressing need to review and amend it to prevent its misuse and ensure that it upholds the principles of free speech, democratic values and the right to dissent. Striking a balance between national securities and protecting fundamental rights is crucial in creating a robust legal framework that respects democratic principles.

5. Critically examine the role of Central Vigilance Commission in curbing corruption.

Why this question: Sh. P. K. Srivastava was appointed as new Central Vigilance Commissioner on 29th May 2023.

How to approach:

Directive word: Critically examine throws light on the negatives and positives where an aspirant needs to examine both sides of an issue and come to a balanced conclusion.

Structure of the answer:

- **Introduction:** Introduce answer with recommendation of K. Santhanam Committee to establish Central Vigilance Commission to curb corruption.
- **Body:** Mention power, function of CVC along with steps taken by it to curb corruption.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude answer by highlighting reasons for strengthening power of CVC.

ANSWER:

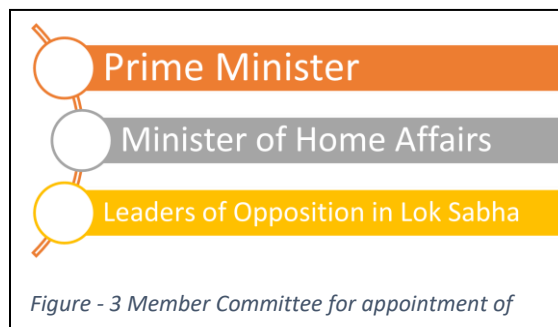
Central Vigilance Commission was established by the Government in 1964 by **Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 (CVC Act)** on the recommendations of the *Committee on Prevention of Corruption* headed by **Shri K. Santhanam**. It is an apex vigilance institution which is free of control from any executive authority.

Power and functions of Central Vigilance Commissioner to curb corruption:

1. **Advisory Role:** CVC guides government and public sector organizations to prevent corruption through recommendations and best practices.
2. **Investigation and Prosecution:** Probes corruption complaints, recommends action, and oversees investigations by the CBI.
3. **Monitoring and Review:** Monitors corruption cases committed under the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** by certain categories of public servants, reviews procedures, and conducts inspections to ensure compliance.
4. **Whistle-blower Protection:** Receives and protects whistle-blowers' complaints, ensuring confidentiality and preventing retaliation.
5. **Preventive Vigilance:** Promotes integrity, ethics, and transparency through awareness programs and training for public servants. The CVC's role in curbing corruption has both strengths and limitations.

Steps to be curbing corruption

1. **Independence:** The CVC enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy, enabling it to carry out impartial investigations and recommend appropriate action without undue influence.
2. **Oversight and Accountability:** The CVC's oversight and review mechanisms help identify systemic issues and loopholes in governance, leading to reforms and improvements in public administration.
3. **Whistle-blower Protection:** The CVC's role in protecting whistle-blower encourages individuals to come forward with corruption-related information, leading to increased transparency and accountability.



The Central Vigilance Commission investigates corruption, recommends action, promotes vigilance, protects whistle-blower, but needs strengthening, enhanced authority, and address limitations for greater impact.