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**INDIAN CONSTITUTION
& POLITY**

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**GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-2
ANALYSIS**

“The Attorney General of India plays a crucial role in guiding the legal framework of the Union Government and ensuring sound governance through legal counsel.”
Discuss his responsibilities, rights and limitations in this regard.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction:

The Attorney General of India is the chief legal advisor to the Union Government, appointed under Article 76 of the Constitution.

Body:

He advises the government on legal issues, represents it in courts, and can participate in parliamentary debates without voting rights. However, he cannot hold office of profit or appear against the government.

Conclusion:

His role ensures lawful and constitutionally sound governance.

Introduction

The **Attorney General (AG) of India** is the highest law officer in the country and serves as the **chief legal advisor to the Government of India**.

Established under **Article 76** of the Indian Constitution, the office of the Attorney General plays a pivotal role in shaping the legal framework and supporting the Union Government through expert legal counsel.

As the principal advocate for the Union in the Supreme Court and other courts, the Attorney General ensures that the government functions within the constitutional and legal bounds.

Body

A. Responsibilities of the Attorney General of India

1. Legal Advisor to the Government of India

1. Advises the President and the Union Government on legal matters referred to him (Article 76).
2. Helps ministries draft legally sound legislation and policies.
3. Example: The AG was consulted during the abrogation of **Article 370** in 2019 to ensure constitutional compliance.

Representation in Courts

- Represents the Union Government in all cases in the **Supreme Court** and High Courts where the Government of India is a party.
- Participates in important constitutional cases.
- Example: The AG represented the Centre in the **Ayodhya land dispute** and **demonetization** case hearings.

Defending Union Legislation

- Defends the constitutionality of Union legislation in courts.
- Ensures that laws passed by Parliament withstand judicial scrutiny.
- Example: In the **Right to Privacy case (2017)**, the AG argued in favor of Aadhaar, citing national interest.

Participation in Parliamentary Proceedings

- Can be invited to speak and participate in proceedings of both Houses of Parliament.
- However, does not have voting rights (Article 88).
- Example: The AG may clarify legal implications of a bill during parliamentary debates.

B. Rights of the Attorney General

1. Right to Audience in All Courts

1. Can appear in any court of law in India, including lower courts, if the government is involved.
2. Example: AG may appear before tribunals or arbitrators in international disputes.

2. Right to Participate in Parliamentary Debates

1. Entitled to speak in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and their committees but cannot vote.

3. Right to Hold Private Practice

1. Unlike a government servant, the AG is **not barred** from private legal practice.
2. This is subject to certain restrictions — he/she cannot advise parties against the government or accept offices of profit.

C. Limitations of the Attorney General

1. Not a Member of the Cabinet

1. The AG is not a member of the Council of Ministers and hence does not participate in decision-making at the executive level.

2. No Executive Authority

1. Cannot issue orders or take decisions independently. Only advises; the final decision lies with the executive.

Conflict of Interest Possibility

1. Since the AG can engage in private practice, concerns of **conflict of interest** can arise.
2. Example: Former AG **Mukul Rohatgi** represented private clients while serving as AG, which raised ethical concerns.

Lack of Fixed Tenure

1. The AG holds office at the **pleasure of the President**, meaning he/she can be removed without a fixed term. This affects the independence of the office.

Cannot Represent Against the Government

1. The AG cannot appear against the Union Government or advise entities that may sue the Government of India.

Conclusion

The Attorney General of India occupies a constitutionally significant position at the crossroads of law and governance. By offering legal advice, defending government actions in courts, and guiding the executive through constitutional complexities, the AG ensures that the rule of law is upheld in governance.

Women's social capital complements in advancing empowerment and gender equity. Explain.



Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction:

Women's social capital—networks, relationships, and community engagement—plays a vital role in empowerment and gender equity.

Body:

It enables knowledge sharing, mutual support, and collective action, enhancing women's access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making. Social capital also challenges gender norms and fosters leadership.

Conclusion:

Thus, strengthening women's social capital accelerates inclusive development and gender equality.

Introduction

Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, norms, and trust that enable individuals and communities to function effectively.

For women, social capital includes support systems such as **self-help groups, community networks, women's collectives, cooperatives, and informal associations**, which play a transformative role in advancing **empowerment and gender equity**.

In societies where women often face structural barriers to economic and political participation, social capital becomes a crucial vehicle for mobilization, voice, solidarity, and access to opportunities.

Body

A. How Women's Social Capital Contributes to Empowerment and Gender Equity

1. Promotes Collective Action and Solidarity

1. Women's networks help build unity and collective identity to advocate for common interests.
2. Example: **SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association)** in India has over 2 million women members advocating for better wages and working conditions.

Enhances Access to Resources and Opportunities

- Social capital enables women to access credit, healthcare, education, and information through community support.
- Example: **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** under **DAY-NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission)** have mobilized over **8 crore women** in India, offering microloans and income-generating opportunities.
- This financial inclusion improves economic independence and bargaining power.

Builds Leadership and Decision-Making Capacity

- Participation in groups fosters confidence, negotiation skills, and leadership abilities.
- Example: Women leaders in **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** have emerged from grassroots collectives, enabling them to make decisions affecting their communities.
- Studies show that areas with women sarpanches often witness improved development indicators such as water supply and education.

Strengthens Political Participation

- Women's social networks encourage greater participation in formal political processes.
- Example: In Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, SHG women have been instrumental in mobilizing voter turnout and raising awareness of rights and entitlements.

Provides Emotional and Psychological Support

- Social ties among women offer emotional strength to deal with domestic violence, discrimination, or mental health issues.
- Example: Women's collectives in Kerala's **Kudumbashree Mission** provide a safe space for dialogue and support, contributing to overall well-being.

Conclusion

Women's social capital serves as a powerful engine for **empowerment and gender equity**. It fosters economic independence, leadership, social resilience, and collective voice, all of which are essential for challenging systemic inequalities. In both rural and urban settings, strong networks among women have been shown to catalyze social change, reduce gender disparities, and drive inclusive development.

e-governance projects have a built-in bias towards technology and back-end integration than user-centric designs. Examine.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction:

E-governance aims to improve public service delivery through technology.

Body:

However, many projects focus more on technological infrastructure and back-end integration than user experience. This leads to complex interfaces, limited accessibility, and low citizen engagement, especially among marginalized groups.

Conclusion:

Balancing tech efficiency with user-centric design is crucial for inclusive and effective e-governance.

Introduction

E-governance refers to the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for delivering government services, exchange of information, and integration of various systems and services.

It aims to improve **efficiency, transparency, accountability, and citizen participation** in governance. While e-governance initiatives in India like **Digital India, UMANG, and eCourts** have made significant strides, many projects tend to prioritize **technological sophistication and internal integration** over **citizen-centric design**.

Body: Bias Toward Technology Over User-Centric Design

1. Focus on Automation and Digitization of Government Processes

1. Priority is often given to converting offline files and internal workflows to digital formats.
2. Example: **eOffice** project automates file movement within departments but doesn't directly benefit citizens.
3. Such systems make internal governance efficient but lack direct citizen engagement.

Complex Portals with Poor User Interface (UI) and User Experience (UX)

- Many government portals are difficult to navigate, have language limitations, or are not mobile-optimized.
- Example: The early version of the **GST portal** faced criticism from small traders due to complexity and poor interface.

Lack of Co-Creation with End Users

- Projects are often designed top-down, without consulting the actual users — citizens, frontline workers, etc.
- This results in features that are either underused or misaligned with public needs.
- Example: Studies show that many rural citizens struggle with **Common Service Centres (CSCs)** due to digital illiteracy.

Neglect of Last-Mile Connectivity and Inclusion

- E-governance assumes universal access to internet and smartphones, ignoring digital divide.
- According to **NSSO (2019)**, only **24% of Indian households** had internet access; this further skews usage towards urban males.
- Thus, tech-driven systems leave out vast sections of the population.

B. Why User-Centric Design is Essential in E-Governance

1. Improves Accessibility and Usage

1. Simple interfaces, voice-enabled services, and vernacular languages make systems more inclusive.
2. Example: **UMANG app** now supports regional languages and simplified navigation for easier use.

2. Builds Trust and Adoption

1. Citizens are more likely to engage with services that are intuitive and responsive.
2. Example: **Delhi's Mohalla Clinics** have integrated simple e-registration systems, increasing citizen trust in public health services.

3. Increases Efficiency of Service Delivery

1. User-centric designs reduce the need for intermediaries, improve feedback loops, and minimize grievances.

4. Empowers Marginalized Sections

1. Inclusive digital services empower women, rural communities, and differently-abled individuals by making governance accessible.

C. Positive Examples of User-Centric E-Governance

1. Aarogya Setu App (2020)

1. Initially criticized for privacy issues and poor design, but later improved with user feedback and simplified access.

2. Bhoomi Project – Karnataka

1. Digitization of land records was backed by user training and kiosks in local languages, leading to high adoption.

3. Digital Seva Kendras (CSCs)

1. Designed to provide human assistance in accessing e-services, bridging digital literacy gaps.

4. MyGov Platform

1. A participatory governance model that allows citizens to give feedback, suggest policies, and contribute to decision-making.

Conclusion

While India's e-governance journey has achieved considerable progress in digitizing government operations, the **bias toward technology and back-end integration often overshadows citizen needs**. Without user-centric design, such systems risk becoming tools for bureaucratic convenience rather than public empowerment.

Civil Society Organizations are often perceived as being anti-State actors than non-State actors. Do you agree? Justify.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction:

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are key non-State actors in democratic governance.

Body:

While some perceive them as anti-State due to their role in questioning policies, CSOs primarily aim to ensure accountability, transparency, and rights-based development. They often complement State efforts through advocacy, service delivery, and community mobilization.

Conclusion:

Thus, CSOs are not inherently anti-State but act as constructive partners in governance.

Introduction

- **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)** are non-State, voluntary organizations that operate independently to represent the interests of various sections of society.
- These include NGOs, advocacy groups, community-based organizations, professional associations, religious groups, and think tanks.
- While CSOs are **constitutionally and democratically legitimate** actors in a pluralistic society, they are often perceived — especially by governments — as **anti-State** rather than merely **non-State**.
- This perception arises when CSOs challenge state policies, expose corruption, highlight human rights violations, or mobilize dissent.

Body: Are CSOs Anti-State or Non-State Actors?

A. Why CSOs Are Perceived as Anti-State Actors

1. Role in Questioning State Policies and Actions

1. CSOs often question government decisions, demand transparency, or oppose laws seen as unjust.
2. Example: **Greenpeace India** has opposed large-scale infrastructure and mining projects, drawing criticism from the State for allegedly obstructing development.

Exposure of Corruption and Misgovernance

- CSOs that expose inefficiencies or corruption are seen as adversaries.
- Example: **Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)** regularly publishes data on criminal and financial backgrounds of politicians, leading to political discomfort.

Mobilization of Protests and Public Opinion

- Many CSOs lead protests or mobilize citizens on issues like land rights, environment, education, etc.
- Example: During the **Narmada Bachao Andolan**, CSOs opposed dam projects, leading to long-standing conflicts with the State.

Funding from Foreign Sources

- Foreign-funded NGOs are often accused of promoting external agendas, especially when they critique State policy.
- Example: In 2020, **Amnesty International India** was forced to halt operations after its accounts were frozen over FCRA violations.

B. Why CSOs Should Be Seen as Non-State Actors (Not Anti-State)

1. They Supplement, Not Sabotage Governance

1. CSOs often work in areas the State cannot reach — health, education, disaster relief, etc.
2. Example: During the **COVID-19 pandemic**, CSOs like **Goonj**, **Oxfam**, and **SEWA** played a vital role in distributing relief, PPEs, and awareness.

2. Promote Participatory Democracy

1. CSOs act as a bridge between citizens and the State, amplifying the voices of marginalized communities.
2. Example: **MKSS (Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan)** contributed to the creation of the **RTI Act (2005)** — empowering citizens, not undermining the State.

3. Complement Government Schemes

1. Many CSOs partner with government programs like **Swachh Bharat**, **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**, and **Skill India**.
2. Example: NGOs like **Pratham** have helped improve learning outcomes in partnership with State governments.

They play a **constructive, watchdog, and participatory role** in governance, especially in advocating for the marginalized, holding power accountable, and supplementing service delivery.



Thank you

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