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Q2(a)

What do you understand by the terms 'governance', 'good governance' and 'ethical governance'?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- What do you understand by the terms 'governance', 'good governance' and 'ethical governance'?

Revision summary

Governance is the process of steering public and related power, wider than the cabinet alone.

- **Good governance is a quality standard:** rule of law, participation, transparency, equity, efficiency and accountability.

Ethical governance tests ends and means by honesty, impartiality, compassion and constitutional dignity.

Efficiency at harm is not ethical; private kindness inside a corrupt system is not ethical governance either.

A civil servant must join process, performance and conscience.

Introduction

These three terms sit on one ladder. Governance is how power is actually used. Good governance is that use judged by results and process that citizens can live with. Ethical governance is the same work judged by right and wrong, not only by speed and growth.

Body

Governance

- Governance is the process by which public authority, and sometimes private and community power, steer a society: making rules, allocating money, delivering services, and settling disputes.
- It is wider than "the government". Courts, regulators, local bodies, parties, media, firms and civil society all govern in parts.
- The World Bank popularised the word as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources.
- Governance can be effective or broken, clean or captured. The word itself is descriptive.

Good governance

- Good governance is a quality test. The United Nations and the **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** have used overlapping marks: participation, rule of law, transparency,

responsiveness, consensus-orientation, equity, effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability.

- In Indian practice this looks like a speaking order, a published tender, a working panchayat, Direct Benefit Transfer, and a court that can be reached.
- The **Right to Information Act, 2005**, citizen charters, e-governance and social audit are tools of good governance.
- **Good governance still can be morally thin:** a State may be efficient at eviction or at targeting a minority. Speed and order are not the whole of goodness.
- **Sevottam and service guarantees try to make "good" measurable at the counter:** time, quality, grievance.

Ethical governance

- Ethical governance asks whether the same process respects dignity, honesty, impartiality, compassion and the Constitution.
- It is governance whose ends and means can be justified to the weakest person who bears the cost.
- Integrity systems - asset disclosure, procurement law, the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**, the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013** - are ethical governance in institutional form.
- Ethical governance refuses a "result" bought by a fake encounter, a cooked environmental clearance, or a hush fund.
- **It includes care:** a pension that arrives, a police station that records a woman's complaint, a mine that does not steal a river.
- The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission's** Fourth Report, Ethics in Governance, treated ethics as a condition of good government, not as a Sunday lecture.
- **Relation of the three:** all ethical governance should be good governance, but not all "good" dashboards are ethical. Governance is the activity; good is the performance; ethical is the conscience and the rights test.

Why the distinction matters for a civil servant

- An officer can hit a target by humiliating a queue. That may look like good governance on a chart and fail ethical governance.
- An officer can be personally kind while keeping a corrupt system. That is private ethics without ethical governance.
- **The job is to join the three:** lawful process, effective delivery, and a clean conscience toward the stranger.

Flow diagram

Governance -> How power is used
 Good governance -> Law participation results
 Ethical governance -> Integrity dignity just means
 How power is used -> Good governance
 Good governance -> Ethical governance

Conclusion

Governance is how power steers society. Good governance is that steering with participation, law, transparency, equity and results. Ethical governance adds integrity, dignity and just means. Charts without conscience are not enough.

Facts & figures

Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Fourth Report

Ethics in **Governance (2007)** linked integrity systems to the quality of Indian government.

United Nations principles of good governance

Participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus, equity, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability are the usual list.

Right to Information Act, 2005

A statutory tool of transparent and accountable governance in India.

Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

An institutional piece of ethical governance: independent inquiry into allegations against public functionaries.

World Bank usage of governance

Described governance as the manner of exercising power in managing economic and social resources for development.

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