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UPSC Mains 2024 PSIR Paper 1

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Q1(a) · 10 marks

Behavioral approach to Political Science.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

The behavioural approach studies observable political behaviour, attitudes, and systems rather than constitutions alone.

Easton defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values in a system of demand, support, and output.

Dahl tested power through actual decisions; Almond and Verba linked democracy to civic culture.

The method is empirical, comparative, and often quantitative.

Post-behavioural and institutional critics restored justice, the state, and rules that surveys cannot invent.

Introduction

The behavioural approach studies politics through observable acts, attitudes, and regularities rather than through the wording of constitutions alone. It asks how people vote, demand, support, and obey. **David Easton** and **Robert Dahl** made this the mid-twentieth-century programme of political science.

Body

What it studies

Behaviouralists take the unit of analysis as behaviour that can be described and, where possible, measured: voting, party identification, elite decision, and civic attitude. **Easton** defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values and pictured a political system with inputs of demand and support and outputs of decisions. **Dahl** studied who actually prevails in community decisions, which is a behavioural test of power. **Gabriel Almond** and **Sidney Verba** linked stable democracy to a civic culture of attitudes, not only to a written constitution.

The method is empirical, comparative, and often quantitative. Concepts should be operationalised. The Chicago school and **Charles Merriam** prepared the ground. The claim was that political science could accumulate findings across countries instead of restating legal

forms.

Limits

Critics said the approach evacuated justice, the state, and historical structure. Easton's own post-behavioural turn after 1969 asked for relevance. New institutionalists later showed that similar attitudes produce different outcomes under different rules. The approach remains necessary for what citizens and elites actually do. It is not a complete theory of right or of constitutional design.

Flow diagram

Behavioural approach -> Observable acts and attitudes

Behavioural approach -> Easton system

Behavioural approach -> Dahl decisions

Behavioural approach -> Civic culture

Behavioural approach -> Post-behavioural limits

Conclusion

The behavioural approach made political science a study of observable political conduct, systems, and attitudes. Easton, Dahl, Almond, and Verba set its core. It must sit beside institutions and normative theory, because measurement does not by itself say which allocation of values is just.

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Q1(b) · 10 marks

Pluralist theory of State.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Theories of the State

Revision summary

Pluralist theory treats the democratic state as an arena of competing organised groups rather than as a single-class or closed-elite machine.

Bentley and Truman described politics as group process; Dahl called competitive democracy a polyarchy of multiple minorities.

Resources of influence are dispersed, so who governs can vary by issue.

Bachrach and Baratz, Lukes, Gramsci, and Lindblom show agenda control, manufactured wants, hegemony, and the privileged position of business.

The theory explains open contest in polyarchies; it does not exhaust structural power.

Introduction

Pluralist theory treats the modern democratic state as an arena in which many organised groups compete, bargain, and check one another. No single class or closed elite is assumed to hold all political power. **Robert Dahl's** polyarchy is the best-known statement of this view.

Body

The claim

Arthur Bentley and **David Truman** described politics as group process. Interests organise, press government, and are constrained by overlapping memberships. The state is not a neutral machine in a vacuum, but it is also not only a committee of one class. Public policy is the result of multiple minorities in contest.

Dahl argued that in a polyarchy, resources of influence - votes, organisation, information, money - are dispersed. Who governs varies by issue. Business may prevail on one file; unions or neighbourhood groups on another. Elections, opposition, and freedom of association keep the contest open. This answers **Mosca** and **Mills** on a closed elite, and **Marx** on a unified bourgeois state, at least for competitive democracies.

Criticisms

Bachrach and **Baratz** named **non-decision: some issues never reach the agenda**. **Steven Lukes** added a third face of power in shaping wants. **Gramsci's** hegemony explains consent that is not free bargaining. **Lindblom** later admitted the privileged position of business. Indian politics shows both plurality of parties and the weight of organised capital and caste associations. Pluralism remains a map of open contest. It is weaker as a full theory of structural power.

Flow diagram

Pluralist state -> Many groups
Pluralist state -> Dahl polyarchy
Pluralist state -> Issue-specific influence
Critics -> Non-decision
Critics -> Gramsci hegemony

Conclusion

Pluralist theory of the state holds that organised groups share and contest influence in a polyarchy. Dahl, Truman, and Bentley stated the core against a single ruling class. Agenda control, hegemony, and the special place of business remain the serious limits of the account.

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Q1(c) · 10 marks

Locke's views on Revolution.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Locke treats government as a trust to protect life, liberty, and estate under standing law.

When the trust is destroyed by arbitrary rule, the government is dissolved and power returns to the community.

Revolution is this resumption of original right, not every private act of force against a lawful magistrate.

The argument rejects Filmer and answers **Hobbes** by making a last appeal against tyranny.

1688 and the American Declaration used this grammar of consent and the right to alter destructive government.

Introduction

John Locke in the Two Treatises of Government treats government as a trust created by consent to protect life, liberty, and estate. Revolution is not a taste for disorder. It is the residual right of the people when that trust is dissolved by arbitrary power.

Body

The trust and its breach

In the state of nature people have natural law but lack an impartial judge. They form political society and set a legislature that must rule by standing law. The executive is a fiduciary power. If the prince or the legislature acts contrary to the trust - by arbitrary taxation, by destroying the legislature, by placing the people under a foreign power, or by a long train of abuses - government is dissolved. Power returns to the community.

Locke insists that this is not a licence for every discontent. Private force against a lawful magistrate is not the same as the people acting when the constitution is already broken. The appeal is to heaven only when no earthly judge remains. **Filmer's** patriarchal kingship is rejected because no one is born the property of a ruler.

Political meaning

The argument armed 1688 and later **Jefferson's** 1776 claim that a people may alter a government destructive of rights. It also limits revolution: the end is the restoration of law and property, not a war of all against all. **Hobbes** feared that right; **Locke** made it the last check on tyranny. Later constitutional democracy regularises the same idea as elections, higher law, and removable rulers.

Flow diagram

Government as trust -> Consent and standing law
Government as trust -> Breach: arbitrary power
Breach: arbitrary power -> People resume power
People resume power -> New legislature under rights

Conclusion

Locke's view of revolution is the people's right to resume original power when rulers destroy the trust of consent, law, and rights. It is a constitutional last resort, not a theory of permanent insurrection. Western bills of rights still speak in that language.

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WRAP Exams

Q1(d) · 10 marks

Decline of Liberalism.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Liberalism's core is equal individual rights, limited government, and a civil society distinct from the state.

Decline has been claimed in the face of world war, fascism, Stalinism, the social question, and contemporary illiberal majorities.

Laski, Schmitt, and communitarians named different failures of classical or procedural liberalism.

Rawls, constitutional basic-structure doctrine, and Habermas show a reconstruction rather than a simple death.

Decline is a recurring crisis diagnosis; the vocabulary of rights against arbitrary power remains in use.

Introduction

Liberalism is the political doctrine of equal individual rights, limited government, law, and a civil society that is not absorbed by the state. Talk of its decline has accompanied almost every crisis of the last century. The task is to say what was said to be declining, and what survived.

Body

What was said to decline

Classical liberalism of **Locke**, **Mill**, and the night-watchman state faced mass democracy, organised labour, and two world wars. **Harold Laski** and others argued that laissez-faire could not meet unemployment and that positive freedom required a social state. Fascism and Stalinism denied the individual as the unit of right. **Schmitt** attacked liberal parliament as endless talk. After 1945, **Berlin** feared that positive liberty could crush negative liberty. In the late twentieth century, communitarians said the unencumbered self was empty. Today, populist majorities and surveillance states again test bills of rights.

- **Decline, then, has meant several things:** the retreat of market-limited government, the weakening of parliamentary civility, and the rise of regimes that reject constitutional limits.

What did not end

Rawls rebuilt liberal justice as fairness. Constitutional courts, including India's after **Kesavananda Bharati**, treated basic liberties as not wholly at the mercy of a temporary majority. The welfare state revised liberalism; it did not always abolish it. **Habermas** still ties legitimacy to public reason. The word decline is accurate as a warning about illiberal concentration of power. It is inaccurate as an obituary. Liberalism remains the language in which those concentrations are still criticised.

Flow diagram

Liberal core -> Rights and limited state

Talk of decline -> War and dictatorship

Talk of decline -> Social question

Talk of decline -> Populist majority

Liberal core -> Rawls courts public reason

Conclusion

- **The decline of liberalism names real pressures:** war, mass politics, social crisis, and illiberal rule. The core claim of rights against arbitrary power has been revised more often than it has been buried. Decline is a recurring diagnosis, not a completed historical fact.

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Q1(e) · 10 marks

Linkage between Power and Hegemony.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Concept of power, hegemony, ideology and legitimacy.

Revision summary

Power is the capacity to produce political effects, from Dahl's A-over-B decisions to agenda control and class structure.

Hegemony, for Gramsci, is leadership plus organised consent in the institutions of civil society.

A hegemonic class presents its project as universal; coercion remains in reserve when consent fails.

The link is that hegemony is power that has been made to look like common sense rather than like open force.

This account sits between a purely behavioural map of decisions and a purely coercive theory of the state.

Introduction

Power is the capacity to produce effects on others' conduct and on public outcomes. Hegemony, in **Antonio Gramsci's** sense, is a form of that capacity that works through leadership, culture, and consent in civil society, not only through the police. The two terms are linked: hegemony is power that has become accepted as common sense.

Body

Power

Dahl defined power in behavioural terms: A has power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something B would not otherwise do. **Bachrach** and **Baratz** added agenda control. **Lukes** added the shaping of wants. **Marx** located class power in ownership of the means of production. These are faces of the same problem: who can determine what happens.

Hegemony

Gramsci wrote in the Prison Notebooks that in the West the state is surrounded by trenches of civil society: parties, churches, schools, press. Rule is not only dominio (coercion) but direzione (leadership). A class is hegemonic when allied groups accept its project as universal. Consent is organised, not spontaneous. Crisis of hegemony appears when that consent cracks and coercion becomes visible.

The link is that hegemony is power plus legitimacy-work in culture. It explains why a constitutional state can serve class ends without daily tanks, and why **Dahl's** open decisions may still sit inside a manufactured common sense. Indian nationalist and caste publics show the same: who defines the nation is a hegemonic question, not only a question of votes.

Flow diagram

Power -> Dahl decisions

Power -> Agenda and wants

Hegemony -> Consent in civil society

Hegemony -> Leadership of a class project

Power -> Hegemony

Conclusion

Power is effective capacity. Hegemony is that capacity exercised as leadership and organised consent in civil society. Gramsci joins the two and thereby extends both Marxist class analysis and Dahl's decision-making map. Coercion remains when consent fails; it is not the whole of political power.

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Q2(a) · 20 marks

Elucidate the meanings inherent in the term "political" with appropriate illustrations.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

The political is not one object but a set of meanings used in political theory.

Easton's meaning is the authoritative allocation of values, illustrated by budgets, courts, and elections.

Aristotle and Arendt treat the political as public speech and action among citizens, illustrated by assemblies and satyagraha.

Marx, Schmitt, Dahl, and Gramsci treat it as organised power, conflict, decision, and hegemony.

Feminist theory and movements such as anti-arrack show that the public-private boundary itself is a political question.

Introduction

- **The word political does not name one object. It names a family of meanings:** the public allocation of values, the life of the polis, the contest for power, and the drawing of a line between public and private. To elucidate those meanings with illustrations is to show why students of political theory cannot treat the term as self-evident.

Body

Authoritative allocation

David Easton defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values for a society. A budget that funds a scheme and denies another, a court that upholds a right, and an election that authorises a cabinet are political in this sense. The illustration is ordinary government. What makes the act political is not passion but authority that binds.

The polis and public action

For **Aristotle**, the political is the life of the polis, where speech about justice is possible among citizens. **Hannah Arendt** recovered action and plurality: politics is appearing before others in a public space, not the household's labour and not the craftsman's making. Parliament, a Gram Sabha after the 73rd Amendment, and a satyagraha meeting are illustrations. A closed family decision is, on this map, not yet political.

Power, conflict, and the state

Realists and **Marx** treat the political as organised power and conflict. **Carl Schmitt** made the friend-enemy distinction the criterion of the political. War, party cleavage, and class struggle illustrate this darker sense. **Dahl's** decisions and **Gramsci's** hegemony both belong here: politics is who prevails and whose common sense rules.

Boundary work

Feminist theory, and **Carole Pateman** in particular, showed that calling the household pre-political hid male power. The slogan that the personal is political does not mean that every feeling is a statute. It means that marriage law, unpaid care, and domestic violence are already organised by public power. India's anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh

illustrated that a 'private' liquor economy was a public injury to women.

Liberal theory still needs a public-private distinction so that conscience is not fully administered. The political, then, is also the activity of drawing that line: what the state may command, and what it may not.

A working set of meanings

• **One may therefore say:** the political is (i) authoritative allocation, (ii) civic public action, (iii) organised power and conflict, and (iv) the contest over the public-private boundary. **Locke**'s civil government, **Rawls**'s basic structure, and **Habermas**'s public sphere each emphasise a different member of this set. Illustrations should be matched to the meaning in use, or debate talks past itself.

Flow diagram

Political -> Easton allocation
Political -> Aristotle / Arendt public
Political -> Power and conflict
Political -> Public-private boundary
Public-private boundary -> Feminist illustration

Conclusion

The term political means authoritative allocation, public civic action, organised power, and the drawing of the public-private line. Easton, **Aristotle**, Arendt, **Marx**, Schmitt, Dahl, Gramsci, and feminist theory name these senses. Clear writing states which meaning is in play and illustrates it, rather than treating political as a single undefined atmosphere.

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Q2(b) · 15 marks

Marxism is a political theory of action demanding strict compliance with its core principles. Comment.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Equality

Revision summary

Marx's eleventh thesis makes Marxism a theory that must issue in action, not only in interpretation.

Core principles include historical materialism, class struggle, and the critique of bourgeois property and state.

Lenin added organised seizure of power; that is the strictest political form of compliance.

Popper, Stalinism's record, and later critics show the danger when strictness silences fallible inquiry.

Gramsci and M. N. Roy keep Marxism as action while restoring hegemony, ethics, and the human person to the centre.

Introduction

Marxism is not only a description of class society. The eleventh thesis on **Feuerbach** says that philosophers have interpreted the world, and that the point is to change it. That is a political theory of action. The further claim that action must comply strictly with core principles is both a strength of discipline and a source of dogma. A comment must hold both sides.

Body

Theory of action

Karl Marx and **Engels** analysed capitalism as a historical mode of production: commodity, surplus value, class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The analysis is meant to issue in praxis. The proletariat is not only an economic category. It is the agent that can abolish class by abolishing the conditions of its own existence. **Lenin** added organisation: a party, a seizure of the state, a dictatorship of the proletariat that is to wither. Action is therefore not optional commentary. It is the test of the theory.

Core principles, in this register, include historical materialism, class struggle, the critique of bourgeois right, and internationalism. Strict compliance means that reform which leaves exploitation intact is not the goal, and that theory is not a menu of private opinions.

The problem of strictness

If compliance becomes a closed catechism, criticism dies. **Popper** attacked historicism on this ground. Stalinism showed how a science of history can silence action that was supposed to emancipate. **Gramsci** already complicated the picture: in the West, war of position in civil society matters as much as a single insurrection. **M. N. Roy** later insisted on the humanistic and ethical content of Marxism against mechanical materialism and against Comintern tutelage. The New Left recovered **Marx's** early writings on alienation and species-being.

So Marxism demands action guided by principles. It does not, in its best readings, demand that every later fact be forced into a 1848 sentence. Indian Marxists who entered peasant and

worker struggles, and those who faced the Emergency, lived this tension between programme and circumstance.

Comment

- **The statement is largely true of classical Marxism:** it is a theory of action, and it names principles that are not merely advisory. The comment must add that those principles include critique, including critique of the party that claims to incarnate them. Humanistic Marxism, Roy, and Gramsci keep action without treating strictness as the end of thought.

Flow diagram

Marxism -> Praxis / change the world
Marxism -> Core principles
Core principles -> Class and historical materialism
Strict compliance -> Discipline
Strict compliance -> Risk of dogma
Roy Gramsci -> Humanistic and positional action

Conclusion

Marxism is a political theory of action because it binds explanation to praxis and names class emancipation as the end. Core principles give that action its direction. Strict compliance becomes a vice when it forbids criticism. Roy and Gramsci show how the same tradition can keep humanistic and strategic openness without dropping the demand to act.

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Q2(c) · 15 marks

The nature of relationship between equality of democratic citizenship and liberty of citizens is influenced by economic equality. Comment.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Equality

Revision summary

Democratic citizenship is equal civil and political standing; liberty is freedom from arbitrary interference and the chance to use that standing.

Marshall's social rights and Rawls's fair opportunity and difference principle treat economic conditions as part of justice, not as a private afterthought.

Marx and Ambedkar warn that political equality on a base of class and caste inequality is unstable and often empty.

Indian Directive Principles, reservations, and Minerva Mills show the constitutional attempt to keep rights and socio-economic justice together.

Economic equality in this argument is a floor against domination, not a demand to trade away equal basic liberties.

Introduction

- **Democratic citizenship promises equal standing:** the same vote, the same basic rights, the same claim to be heard. Liberty promises that this standing is not an empty title, but a space in which citizens can act without arbitrary interference. Economic inequality changes both. It can turn equal citizenship into a form and liberty into a privilege of those who can afford to use it.

Body

Equality of citizenship and liberty

T. H. Marshall distinguished civil, political, and social rights. Equal citizenship in a democracy is first civil and political: **Locke**'s person under law, the franchise, association. Liberty here is both negative - not being arbitrarily jailed or censored - and the positive capacity to take part. **Isaiah Berlin** warned against crushing negative liberty in the name of a single real self. **John Rawls** answered by giving equal basic liberties lexical priority, then adding fair equality of opportunity and the difference principle so that liberty is not formal only.

How economic equality enters

If income, land, and education are concentrated, the poor citizen has the vote and little time, counsel, or media to use it. Campaign finance, unpaid care, and bonded labour show the point. **Marx** called bourgeois liberty the liberty of the property owner. **Ambedkar** insisted that political democracy cannot last on a base of social and economic inequality. India's Directive Principles, reservations, and land-reform attempts are constitutional admissions of that fact.

Economic equality need not mean identical incomes. It means a floor and a check on domination: the least advantaged can still be citizens in **Rawls**'s sense. Without that, equality of citizenship and liberty pull apart. The rich enjoy both; the poor are equal on paper and unfree in the market and the village.

Minerva Mills treated the harmony of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles as part of the basic structure. That judicial line is a comment on this question: liberty of citizens and socio-economic justice are not two unrelated lists.

Flow diagram

Equal citizenship -> Vote and civil rights
Liberty -> Non-arbitrary action
Economic equality -> Equal citizenship
Economic equality -> Liberty
Economic inequality -> Formal rights only

Conclusion

Equality of democratic citizenship and liberty of citizens support each other when economic inequality is limited enough that rights can be used. Extreme economic inequality makes citizenship formal and liberty unequal. **Rawls**, Marshall, **Ambedkar**, and the Indian pairing of rights with directive principles all state that relation. The comment is therefore an agreement with the given statement, with the caveat that economic equality is a condition of effective liberty, not a licence to abolish basic rights.

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Q3(a) · 20 marks

The debate on human rights is caught between the limitations of both universalism and cultural relativism. Comment.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Rights

Revision summary

Universalism claims equal human rights for every person; the UDHR and Rawls's basic liberties are leading statements.

Its limit is that lists can reflect one civilisation's power and can thin out social and cultural claims.

Cultural relativism protects diversity and warns against missionary human-rights politics.

Its limit is that custom can then shield caste, patriarchy, and authoritarian local power from criticism.

The debate is caught between those limits; Habermas and the Indian Constitution seek equal personhood with protected cultural space, not a choice of one pole.

Introduction

The human-rights debate asks whether there are rights that every person holds simply as a person, or whether rights are only the product of a culture and cannot be judged from outside. Universalism and cultural relativism each answer that question, and each runs into a limit. Contemporary argument is often stuck between those limits rather than beyond them.

Body

Universalism and its limit

Universalism holds that human beings have equal moral status. The 1948 Universal Declaration, the two 1966 Covenants, and Kant's person as an end state this. Locke's natural rights and Rawls's equal basic liberties are political forms of the same claim. Torture, slavery, and denial of the vote are wrong even if a local custom blesses them.

The limitation is that universal lists have often been written in the language of a particular civilisation. Colonial powers used civilisation talk to deny self-rule. A thin list of civil-political rights can ignore subsistence, culture, and group life. Bhikhu Parekh and critics of Western human-rights diplomacy argue that imposing one legal form can be another hegemony in Gramsci's sense.

Cultural relativism and its limit

Cultural relativism holds that moral rules are internal to a way of life. To condemn a practice from a UN office is, on this view, ethnocentrism. This protects diversity and warns against missionary politics. Dharmashastra's duty-centric order, or a community's personal law, cannot be translated without remainder into an individual-rights sheet.

The limitation is severe. Relativism can license caste humiliation, female seclusion, and authoritarian custom as 'culture'. Ambedkar refused to treat caste as a protected cultural right. Okin asked whether multiculturalism is bad for women. If every criticism is imperialism, the victim inside the culture has no appeal. Human rights then collapse into whatever the powerful locally name as tradition.

Caught between

The debate is caught between these limits because a pure universalism forgets history and power in the writing of the list, and a pure relativism forgets the person who suffers. **Habermas seeks a procedural way out: rights justified in public reason among those affected, not exported as a finished catechism. India's Constitution tries a practical settlement: Articles 14 to 32 state justiciable rights, Articles 25 to 30 protect religion and minorities, and the basic structure after Kesavananda Bharati stops a majority from erasing liberty.** That is neither a closed Western list nor a blank cheque to custom.

The comment, then, is agreement with the statement as a diagnosis. The way through is a universalism of equal personhood that remains open to cultural form, and a respect for cultures that cannot override the equal liberty of members, especially of women and oppressed castes.

Flow diagram

Universalism -> Equal personhood
Universalism -> Limit: particular lists and hegemony
Relativism -> Cultural meaning
Relativism -> Limit: victims inside custom
Middle -> Habermas public reason
Middle -> Indian rights plus cultural articles

Conclusion

- **Universalism gives human rights their point:** some injuries are wrong everywhere. Cultural relativism gives them their warning: lists can hide power and ignore meaning. Each alone fails. The debate is caught between those failures until rights are justified as equal personhood that still leaves room for legitimate difference, as constitutional democracies such as India's attempt to do.

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Q3(b) · 15 marks

Deliberative democracy seeks to promote democratic decision making about public issues among the citizens. Discuss.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Democracy: Classical and contemporary theories; different models of democracy

Revision summary

Deliberative democracy treats legitimacy as public reasoning among free and equal citizens about common issues.

Habermas's discourse ethics and public sphere, Cohen's institutional principles, and Dryzek's authenticity thesis are core statements.

It promotes citizen decision-making through reasoned debate, citizens' assemblies, Gram Sabhas, and public hearings, not through votes alone.

Rawls's public reason is a related liberal constraint on what counts as an acceptable political argument.

Inequality, Gramscian hegemony, and the scale of the modern state are the main limits; deliberation should improve representation, not pretend to abolish it.

Introduction

Deliberative democracy holds that democratic legitimacy comes not only from counting votes but from public reasoning among free and equal citizens about what they ought to do. It seeks to promote decision-making on public issues by talk that can change preferences, not only by bargaining among fixed interests. **Jürgen Habermas** is the central theorist of this claim.

Body

The idea

Habermas locates legitimacy in the public sphere and in discourse ethics: norms are valid if they could meet the agreement of all affected as participants in a practical discourse. Joshua Cohen stated institutional principles: deliberation is reasoned, inclusive, and aimed at a rationally motivated consensus, with voting as a fall-back. John Dryzek stressed authentic deliberation against manufactured consensus. The contrast is with Schumpeter's elite competition and with a market model of the voter as consumer.

- **Promotion of citizen decision-making takes several forms:** parliamentary debate that must give reasons, citizens' assemblies, Gram Sabhas under the **73rd Amendment**, public hearings on projects, and media that is not only propaganda. **Rawls's** public reason in Political Liberalism is a cousin: citizens offer arguments that others can accept as free and equal, not only sectarian comprehensive doctrines.

Discussion of the claim

The claim is right that democracy is more than aggregation. A budget hearing that forces officials to answer, or a panchayat that debates a road against a liquor shop, is decision-making among citizens. Deliberation can reveal information and can civilise conflict.

Limits are equally part of a discussion. Economic and educational inequality distort who speaks, which returns to the last question's point about economic equality. **Gramsci** reminds us that the public sphere can be hegemonic rather than free. Scale makes a nation-state unlike a Greek assembly; representation remains necessary. Identity vetoes can freeze talk. India's experience with public hearings in environmental clearance, and with noisy television,

shows both the promise and the capture of deliberative forms.

Deliberative democracy therefore seeks to promote citizen decision-making. It does so best as a standard for existing representative and local institutions, not as a replacement of elections by endless talk among those already advantaged.

Flow diagram

Deliberative democracy -> Habermas public sphere

Deliberative democracy -> Reasons among equals

Deliberative democracy -> Forums: parliament Gram Sabha hearings

Limits -> Inequality and hegemony

Limits -> Scale and representation

Conclusion

Deliberative democracy promotes public decision-making by requiring reasons among citizens, not only votes among consumers. Habermas, Cohen, and related theorists state the ideal. Inequality, hegemony, and scale limit it. The practical task is to build forums - from Parliament to the Gram Sabha - in which those limits are reduced rather than ignored.

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Q3(c) · 15 marks

Dharmashastra presents a duty-centric worldview for individuals and communities. Comment.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Dharmashastra is a corpus of dharma teaching in which right conduct, law, and kingship are organised as duty.

Persons hold svadharma by status and stage of life; the king holds rajadharma to protect and to maintain order.

Community is a structured whole, not a contract of identical individuals as in **Locke** or **Rawls**.

Gandhi drew a moral duty ethic from this climate while attacking untouchability; **Ambedkar** rejected birth-based duty as the core of caste.

The Constitution shifts to justiciable rights, while still naming duties, which is the modern political settlement of this worldview.

Introduction

- **Dharmashastra is the classical Sanskrit corpus of teaching on dharma:** right conduct, law, and social order. Texts such as the Manusmriti and later commentaries do not begin from the rights-bearing individual of **Locke**. They begin from duties that vary by status, stage of life, and community. That is a duty-centric worldview, and it has shaped Indian political thought even where the Republic later wrote rights.

Body

Duty before right

In this worldview a person is a bearer of svadharma. The householder, the king, the student, and the renouncer have distinct obligations. The king's rajadharma is protection, punishment of the wicked, and maintenance of varna-ashrama order. Community is not an aggregate of contractors. It is a structured whole in which each station has a function. **Gandhi** later drew a moralised duty ethic - swaraj as self-rule and trusteeship - partly from this climate, while rejecting untouchability.

The contrast with liberalism is sharp. **Rawls** starts from free and equal persons who choose principles. Dharmashastra starts from an already ranked order and asks how each must act. Obligation is not primarily the other side of a right against the state. It is the fulfilment of a cosmic and social role.

Comment

The statement is accurate as a description of the tradition's centre of gravity. The comment must add two political facts. First, duty-centric order can sustain care, restraint of rulers, and a thick community ethic that rights talk sometimes thins. Second, the same order historically encoded caste and gender hierarchy. **Ambedkar** burned the Manusmriti because duty attached to birth was, for him, the opposite of equal citizenship. The Constitution's Part III is a deliberate shift toward rights, while Directive Principles and fundamental duties in **Article 51A** show that the Republic did not abolish duty as a public language.

A political-theory comment therefore accepts the duty-centric claim and refuses to romanticise it. Dharmashastra presents a worldview of obligations for individuals and

communities. Modern Indian democracy must translate whatever is living in that ethic - restraint, care, public duty - into a frame of equal persons, not restore ranked dharma as law.

Flow diagram

Dharmashastra -> Svadharma
Dharmashastra -> Rajadharma
Dharmashastra -> Ranked community
Liberal rights -> Equal persons
Ambedkar -> Equal persons

Conclusion

Dharmashastra orients persons and communities to station-specific duty rather than to uniform individual rights. That is its worldview. **Gandhi** moralised duty; **Ambedkar** rejected birth-based duty as graded inequality. The comment is that the diagnosis is right, and that a constitutional democracy may keep public duty only on the ground of equal citizenship.

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Q4(a) · 20 marks

Legitimacy adds positive value to political authority and obligation. Discuss.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Concept of power, hegemony, ideology and legitimacy.

Revision summary

Authority is recognised command; obligation is the reason to obey; legitimacy is the rightfulness that joins them.

Weber's traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational types explain why people experience rule as more than force.

Locke grounds obligation in consent and trust; **Habermas** in public reason; **Beetham** in legality, justifiability, and expressed consent.

Legitimacy adds positive value by making rule compatible with dignity and by making obedience civic rather than merely prudent.

Emergency politics and basic-structure judicial review illustrate the loss and the institutional claim of that value.

Introduction

Political authority is the recognised right to issue binding commands. Political obligation is the citizen's reason to obey those commands as more than fear of punishment. **Legitimacy** is the quality that makes authority and obligation rightful. The statement that legitimacy adds positive value is correct: it turns power into authority and habit into duty.

Body

Distinctions

Power can exist as force. **Dahl's** A-over-B relation may rest on a gun. Authority exists when B takes A's command as entitled. Obligation exists when B has a moral or civic reason to comply.

Max Weber made legitimacy the sociological hinge: traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational types explain why obedience is experienced as rightful. Without some such belief, rule is occupation.

- **Positive value means this:** legitimacy does not only help a regime last. It makes rule compatible with dignity. **Locke's** trust and consent give obligation a moral source; when the trust breaks, obligation lapses and revolution becomes thinkable. **Habermas adds that in modernity, legitimacy should be discursively generated: law that could meet the agreement of those affected.** **David Beetham** specifies legality, justifiability in terms of shared beliefs, and expressed consent.

How the value is added

A tax paid because the budget was debated and the government can be dismissed is different from a levy extracted by terror, even if both fill a treasury. **Gramsci's** hegemony can manufacture a look of legitimacy; that is why indoctrination is a counterfeit of the same need. India's Emergency showed how quickly constitutional authority can be displaced, and how much the 1977 vote mattered as a restoration of consent.

Authoritarian regimes still seek coronation myths, development performance, or sacred kingship, which proves **Weber's** point: they too want positive value, not only fear. The democratic claim is that only revisable consent and public reason supply a legitimacy

adequate to free persons. **Rawls**'s well-ordered society is a picture of institutions that citizens can affirm.

Discussion

The statement should be accepted. Legitimacy adds positive value to authority by converting command into recognised office, and to obligation by converting obedience into civic duty. It also has a critical edge: if legitimacy is missing, authority is hollow and obligation is only prudence. Courts that invoke the basic structure in **Kesavananda Bharati** are claiming a legitimacy higher than a passing statute. That is positive value in institutional form.

Flow diagram

Power -> Authority
Legitimacy -> Authority
Legitimacy -> Obligation
Legitimacy -> Weber types
Legitimacy -> Habermas public reason
Fear alone -> Brittle domination

Conclusion

Legitimacy is what makes political authority rightful and political obligation more than fear. **Weber**, **Locke**, Habermas, and Beetham describe that added value in sociological, contractual, discursive, and empirical terms. Democracies institutionalise it as consent and law; dictatorships counterfeit it. In both cases the need for legitimacy shows that power alone is not yet political rule in the full sense.

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Q4(b) · 15 marks

Critically examine Plato's theory of Forms.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Plato's Forms are eternal objects of knowledge; visible things participate in them imperfectly.

The Republic uses this to justify philosopher-rulers who know the Good and to rank the just city above opinion and sophistry.

Aristotle questioned the separation of Forms; **Arendt** questioned a politics of fabrication and shadows rather than plurality.

Popper read the Republic as a closed, historicist blueprint hostile to criticism.

The critical balance is to keep a non-arbitrary standard of justice and to reject guardian monopoly over equal citizens.

Introduction

Plato's theory of Forms holds that the objects of true knowledge are eternal, intelligible realities - Justice, Beauty, the Good - of which visible things are imperfect participants. The Republic uses that metaphysics as a political theory: only those who know the Forms are fit to rule. A critical examination must take the epistemology and the city together.

Body

The theory

In the divided line and the cave, opinion (doxa) about changing things is distinguished from knowledge (episteme) of Forms. The Form of the Good is to the intelligible world what the sun is to the visible. Particular just acts are just by participating in Justice itself. Without that, names wander and sophists sell persuasion. The philosopher turns the soul toward the Forms and, in the Republic's story, must return to the cave to rule.

Politically this yields a city of three classes matching three parts of the soul, with philosopher-guardians who know the Good. Law and poetry are suspect because they copy copies. The noble lie binds the city. Knowledge, not consent in **Locke's** sense, is the title to authority.

Criticism

Epistemologically, **Aristotle** already asked how Forms explain change and how a separate Justice is known. If Forms are so separate, the political world of plurality that **Arendt** valued becomes a shadow, not the site of action. **Popper** charged **Plato** with a closed society: a blueprint of the whole, guardians, and hostility to piecemeal criticism. The charge is partly fair. The Republic does license rule by those who claim knowledge of the Good, and it is severe toward dissent.

The charge is also too simple. **Plato's** dialogues are themselves exercises in questioning. The Statesman and Laws give more room to law when philosophers are scarce. The theory of Forms still does political work: it says that justice is not whatever the strongest name it, which is an answer to Thrasymachus and, later, to a crude relativism.

For democratic theory the hard remainder is this. If only knowers of the Good may rule, **Habermas's** public of equals and **Dahl's** polyarchy are downgraded to cave talk. If there are

no standards beyond opinion, demagogues win. A critical examination therefore keeps Plato's demand for a non-arbitrary justice and rejects the political monopoly of a guardian class.

Flow diagram

Forms -> Knowledge vs opinion
Forms -> Form of the Good
Form of the Good -> Philosopher-rulers
Criticism -> Popper closed society
Criticism -> Arendt plurality
Criticism -> Democratic equals

Conclusion

Plato's Forms make justice an object of knowledge, not of appetite or majority mood. The Republic turns that claim into philosopher-rule. The criticism is that separate Forms and guardian knowledge threaten plurality, fallibilism, and equal citizenship. The lasting value is the refusal to let justice collapse into power. Democratic theory needs the standard without the closed city.

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Q4(c) · 15 marks

Manabendra Nath Roy's political thought highlighted the humanistic aspects of Marxism. Discuss.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Ideologies

Revision summary

Roy began as an international communist organiser and a critic of colonial capitalism in Marxist terms.

His later Radical Humanism treated reason and the sovereign individual as the test of any revolutionary politics.

He recovered Marx's humanistic concern with alienation against mechanical materialism and against a permanent party-state.

The political programme was radical democracy and planned reconstruction that does not administer away individuality.

- **The statement is true:** Roy highlighted humanistic Marxism by using it to judge, and finally to leave, orthodox communist practice.

Introduction

Manabendra Nath Roy began as a founder of communist organisation in Mexico and India and as a delegate who debated Lenin on the colonial question. His later thought, named Radical Humanism or New Humanism, argued that Marxism's truth was its humanist core: the free person as the end of politics. The statement that his political thought highlighted the humanistic aspects of Marxism is accurate and needs to be specified.

Body

From communism to the person

Roy's early work accepted historical materialism, anti-imperialism, and organised class struggle. Experience of Comintern discipline, the failure of mechanical forecasts, and the record of the Soviet state pushed him to ask what had been lost. In Reason, Romanticism and Revolution and in the Radical Humanist movement after the 1940s, he treated reason and the sovereign individual as the measure of any party or plan.

Humanistic Marxism, for Roy, meant recovering Marx's concern with alienation and species-being rather than a closed dialectics of matter. Ethics is not a bourgeois luxury. A revolution that produces a new Leviathan has failed. This is close to later Western Marxism's humanist wing and distant from Lenin's smash-and-wield state as a permanent form.

Political consequences

Roy rejected both colonial liberalism that left the person formally free and hungry, and a vanguard that claimed to incarnate history. He wanted a radical democracy of local organised publics, scientific education, and economic reconstruction that does not swallow individuality. That last clause answers Gandhi's fear of the modern state, without accepting Gandhi's civilisational rejection of industry. It also answers Nehru's planning state: plans need a humanist criterion, not only growth.

Critics said Roy underestimated class organisation and caste, which Ambedkar placed at the centre. Others said Radical Humanism became a small intellectual current. The theoretical contribution remains. Roy read Marxism as a project of human emancipation and judged

communist practice by whether the person was enlarged or administered.

Discussion

To discuss the statement is to agree that Roy highlighted Marxism's humanistic aspects, and to add that he did so by breaking with orthodox party Marxism. The humanism is not a soft extra. It is a test of power, hegemony, and the state. In that sense Roy belongs with the question on Marxism as a theory of action: action is required, but not action that erases the actor.

Flow diagram

Marx humanist core N Roy -> Early communism
Marx humanist core N Roy -> Radical Humanism
Radical Humanism -> Sovereign person
Radical Humanism -> Critique of party-state
Marx humanist core -> Radical Humanism

Conclusion

M. N. Roy's thought took Marxism's emancipatory aim and made the free, reasoning person its criterion. Radical Humanism criticised mechanical materialism, Comintern tutelage, and a state that outlives its justification. The discussion therefore affirms the given statement and locates Roy as a humanist critic inside, and then beyond, orthodox Marxism.

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Q5(a) · 10 marks

Constitutional morality in the Indian Constitution.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Making of the Indian Constitution

Revision summary

Constitutional morality is respect for constitutional forms, rights, and limits beyond the will of a passing majority.

Ambedkar treated it as necessary because Indian social life still contained caste hierarchy.

Part III, judicial review, federalism, and parliamentary procedure are the institutional face of that morality.

Kesavananda's basic structure is a judicial cousin of the same idea.

The term is contested when courts apply it, but its political core remains a warning against personal and purely majoritarian rule.

Introduction

Constitutional morality is the habit of respecting the forms, limits, and spirit of a constitution even when a majority could ignore them. In India the phrase is tied to **Dr B. R. Ambedkar's** speeches in the Constituent Assembly and to later judicial use of the same idea.

Body

Ambedkar and the text

Ambedkar warned that democracy in India must not rest only on social soil that still held caste. It must rest on constitutional morality: respect for procedure, for opposition, for limits on power, and for the administration of law without personal rule. Grote's history of Greece had used the term; **Ambedkar** applied it to a new republic. The Constitution's devices - adult franchise, judicial review, federal distribution, and justiciable rights in Part III - assume that holders of office will not treat the text as a temporary inconvenience.

Contemporary meaning

Courts have invoked constitutional morality in cases on individual liberty, dignity, and institutional propriety, treating it as more than majoritarian morality. Critics say judges should not make the phrase a second constitution. The political meaning remains **Ambedkar's**: parties, legislatures, and citizens keep the basic structure that **Kesavananda Bharati** later named, including liberty and constitutional amendment within limits. Without that habit, the document is only paper.

Flow diagram

Constitutional morality -> Ambedkar
Constitutional morality -> Procedure and opposition
Constitutional morality -> Part III rights
Constitutional morality -> Basic structure

Conclusion

Constitutional morality in the Indian Constitution is the practised respect for constitutional limits, rights, and procedure. **Ambedkar** made it a condition of democracy in a hierarchical society. Courts and public argument still use the term to resist both personal rule and unrestrained majority will.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(b) · 10 marks

Objective Resolution of the Constituent Assembly.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

The Objective Resolution, moved by **Nehru** on 13 December 1946, stated the aims of the Constitution before detailed drafting.

It promised a sovereign republic, popular sovereignty, justice, equality, freedom, and safeguards for minorities, tribes, and depressed classes.

The Preamble is its condensed public form.

Parts III and IV give the aims legal and programmatic shape.

Kesavananda used the Preamble as a guide to what Parliament may not destroy.

Introduction

The Objective Resolution was the Constituent Assembly's statement of purpose for the Constitution. **Jawaharlal Nehru** moved it on 13 December 1946. It named sovereignty, republic, justice, equality, and safeguards for minorities before the detailed drafting began.

Body

Content

The Resolution declared India an independent sovereign republic. Power would be derived from the people. The Constitution would guarantee justice - social, economic, and political - equality of status and opportunity, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association, and action, subject to law and public morality. Minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed classes would have adequate safeguards. The integrity of the territory and the just rights of the people on land were affirmed. Relations with the world would rest on peace and the honour of India.

Constitutional afterlife

The Preamble's language of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity is the Resolution's child. **Ambedkar** and the **Drafting Committee** translated aims into Parts III and IV. Later, **Kesavananda Bharati** treated the Preamble as a guide to basic structure. The Resolution was not itself law. It was the political theory of the founding: popular sovereignty, a social as well as political republic, and minority protection as part of nationhood rather than as an afterthought.

Flow diagram

Objective Resolution 1946 -> Nehru
Objective Resolution 1946 -> Preamble
Objective Resolution 1946 -> Parts III and IV
Preamble -> Basic structure guidance

Conclusion

- **Nehru's Objective Resolution set the aims of the Indian Constitution:** a sovereign republic, justice in three dimensions, liberty, equality, and safeguards for the vulnerable. The Preamble and the later basic-structure cases still speak in that register.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(c) · 10 marks

Legal remedies in Part III of the Constitution of India.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

- **Part III's distinctive legal remedy is Article 32:** the right to move the Supreme Court to enforce Fundamental Rights.

The Court may issue habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto, and certiorari.

Ambedkar called **Article 32** the heart of the Constitution because rights need remedies.

Article 226 gives High Courts a broader writ power in practice.

Kesavananda treats judicial review as a basic-structure essential, which protects the remedial core of Part III.

Introduction

Part III of the Constitution of India does not only list liberties. It supplies legal remedies so that those liberties can be enforced against the state. **Ambedkar** called **Article 32** the heart and soul of the Constitution because a right without a remedy is not a legal right.

Body

Article 32 and the writs

Article 32 gives the right to move the Supreme Court for enforcement of Fundamental Rights. The Court may issue habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto, and certiorari. Habeas corpus tests illegal detention. Mandamus commands a public duty. Prohibition and certiorari control inferior courts and tribunals. Quo warranto tests usurpation of public office. This right to constitutional remedies is itself a fundamental right. Parliament cannot take it away in ordinary fashion; **Kesavananda** later protected judicial review as part of basic structure.

Related remedial structure

Article 226 gives High Courts a wider writ jurisdiction, including for purposes other than Part III, which makes the High Court the first practical forum for many citizens. During Emergency, the suspension of remedies showed what the rights are worth without courts. Public interest litigation later widened standing, so that remedies could reach those who could not personally approach the Court. The legal remedies in Part III are therefore **Article 32** at the centre, the five writs as tools, and a judicially developed practice of access.

Flow diagram

Part III -> Article 32
Article 32 -> Five writs
Article 32 -> Remedy as a fundamental right
Article 226 -> High Courts
Remedy as a fundamental right -> Judicial review / basic structure

Conclusion

Legal remedies in Part III are the right to approach the Supreme Court under **Article 32**, the writs that follow, and the status of that right as itself fundamental. **Article 226** and later public interest practice complete the working system. Without these, the rest of Part III would be a declaration.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(d) · 10 marks

Relevance of the Legislative Council.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

The Legislative Council is a state's optional second chamber under [Articles 168-171](#).

Its members come from local bodies, graduates, teachers, Assembly electors, and a nominated quota.

It can revise and delay ordinary bills but cannot finally block money bills.

Relevance lies in scrutiny and functional or local representation; the case against it is cost, delay, and patronage.

Creation and abolition follow an Assembly resolution and a parliamentary law, so the Constitution treats the Council as useful only if a state will use it as a revising house.

Introduction

A Legislative Council is the Vidhan Parishad, the optional second chamber of a state legislature under [Articles 168](#) to 171. It is not a copy of the Rajya Sabha for every state. Its relevance is the live question: whether a revising house still earns its cost in a democratic system already based on the Vidhan Sabha.

Body

Design

Parliament may create or abolish a Council if the Legislative Assembly so resolves. Membership mixes elected teachers, graduates, local-body representatives, Assembly electors, and a Governor's nominated quota of persons from literature, science, art, the cooperative movement, and social service. The Council cannot permanently block money bills. It can delay and revise ordinary legislation. This is a house of second thought and of functional representation, not a house of equal popular sovereignty.

Relevance

Supporters say a Council checks hasty bills, gives a voice to local bodies and professions, and offers a place for experienced persons who may not fight Assembly elections. In a large state, revision can improve drafting. Opponents say it is a parking place for party loyalists, a delay on majority programmes, and a colonial leftover. Several states have abolished Councils; others retain or seek them.

Relevance, then, is conditional. A Council is relevant where it actually revises and represents local government, as the **73rd Amendment**'s panchayat system might suggest a need for a local-body stream. It is not relevant as a permanent veto on the Assembly. The constitutional design already limits it. The political task is to staff it for scrutiny rather than for patronage.

Flow diagram

Legislative Council -> Mixed membership
Legislative Council -> Revise and delay
Legislative Council -> No permanent money-bill veto
Relevance -> Scrutiny
Relevance -> Patronage risk

Conclusion

The Legislative Council is an optional revising chamber with a mixed electorate and limited power over money. It remains relevant as second thought and as a channel for local and professional voice. It loses relevance when it is only patronage. The Constitution leaves that choice to states under parliamentary approval.

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Q5(e) · 10 marks

Women's role in the anti-arrack movement.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

The anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh was a rural women's campaign against cheap liquor shops and their social effects.

Women picketed, used literacy networks, and made domestic violence and lost wages into a public issue.

The state was both target and accomplice because excise revenue and contractors were involved.

Governments responded with bans that were later weakened, showing both agenda power and structural limits.

The movement is a clear Indian illustration that household injury can become political action.

Introduction

The anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh in the early 1990s was a mass campaign, led largely by rural women, against the sale and consumption of cheap liquor. It showed women as political actors in villages, not only as a vote bank. The household's injury became a public demand on the state.

Body

What women did

Women in Nellore and then across districts organised pickets of arrack shops, burnt packets, held night vigils, and used literacy and sangham networks that had grown around adult education. They named domestic violence, wasted wages, and indebtedness as effects of a state-linked liquor economy. The demand was prohibition or strict control, and an end to the revenue logic that treated arrack as a fiscal good.

The movement entered party competition. Governments announced bans and later diluted them, which showed both the power of women's collective action and the limits of a demand that cut state revenue and contractor interest. **Pressure-group** politics here was not an urban lobby. It was neighbourhood organisation.

Political meaning

- **The episode illustrates that the personal is political:** the kitchen and the wage packet were already organised by excise policy. It also illustrates **Gramsci's civil society: women built a counter-common-sense against official development talk. Later women's reservation in panchayats after the 73rd Amendment** gave some of the same actors an institutional forum, including the Gram Sabha. The note should not claim a permanent prohibition victory. It should claim a permanent lesson: rural women can set the agenda of the state.

Flow diagram

Anti-arrack -> Rural women organise

Rural women organise -> Shops and state revenue

Rural women organise -> Household violence and wages

Anti-arrack -> Party and prohibition politics

Anti-arrack -> Later panchayat forums

Conclusion

Women's role in the anti-arrack movement was to organise, to name liquor as a public injury, and to force parties to respond. The movement politicised the household without waiting for permission from elite feminism. Its unfinished policy result does not cancel that political fact.

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Q6(a) · 20 marks

How far do you agree that the Directive Principles of State Policy are more fundamental than the Fundamental Rights in meeting socio-economic justice as mentioned in the Preamble of the Constitution?

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Salient Features of the Indian Constitution

Revision summary

The Preamble's socio-economic justice is pursued through both justiciable Fundamental Rights and non-justiciable Directive Principles.

Article 37 calls Directives fundamental in governance while denying court enforcement, which is the original compromise.

Early property-rights litigation blocked reform; amendments, Kesavananda, and Minerva Mills rebuilt the balance.

Minerva Mills held that making Directives destroy Fundamental Rights would wreck the Constitution's conscience.

Agree that DPSPs are more fundamental as social-justice aims; disagree that they outrank rights as law. Harmony is the constitutional answer.

Introduction

The Preamble promises justice - social, economic, and political. Fundamental Rights in Part III give justiciable liberties. Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV tell the state to pursue a social order of welfare, work, education, and reduced inequality. The question is whether the Directives are more fundamental than the Rights for that Preamble aim. The honest answer is that they are more fundamental as programme, and not more fundamental as law that can silence liberty.

Body

Two founding tools

Nehru's Objective Resolution already named social and economic justice. **Ambedkar** explained that rights without a social programme would be incomplete, yet he made Part III enforceable and Part IV non-justiciable, a compromise with the Congress socialists and with liberal constitutionalism. **Article 37** says Directives are fundamental in the governance of the country, but not enforceable by any court. That sentence is the constitutional grammar of the question.

If 'more fundamental' means 'what the state must aim at to fulfil the Preamble', the Directives carry the socio-economic load: living wage, equal pay, health, environment, village panchayats, and reduction of inequality. Fundamental Rights, especially **Articles 14, 19, and 21**, also serve socio-economic justice when courts read them as capabilities against destitution and arbitrary state power. They are not only a property-owner's charter, though **Article 19** and the old **Article 31** were often used that way.

Judicial path

Early cases treated property and equality as trumps against agrarian reform. The First Amendment and later amendments tried to shield zamindari abolition and other measures.

Golaknath limited amending power. **Kesavananda Bharati** (1973) saved a basic structure that includes both liberty and the Constitution's identity, and accepted that amendment could pursue social justice within that structure. **Minerva Mills** (1980) is the decisive comment on this question. The Court struck down a clause that would have made Directive Principles immune from challenge even when they destroyed Fundamental Rights. It held that Parts III and IV together are the conscience of the Constitution. To destroy rights in the name of Directives, or to freeze Directives in the name of a rigid rights reading, would unbalance the founding design.

How far to agree

One should agree that socio-economic justice in the Preamble cannot be met by civil liberties alone. Land reform, labour protection, education, and health need Part IV and legislation. In that sense Directives are more fundamental as the charter of social transformation.

One should not agree that they are more fundamental in the hierarchy of justiciability. A state that jails the poor's speech in the name of a plan has not met justice. **Rawls's lexical priority of basic liberties is a theoretical cousin of Minerva Mills: welfare is required, but not by erasing equal citizenship.** **Habermas** would add that socio-economic aims still need public justification, not only a planning commission's decree.

Indian practice after the 1970s - expansion of **Article 21**, rights to education and information, and the basic-structure shield - treats the two parts as complementary. The **Planning Commission's** old growth-and-plan state sometimes spoke as if Directives outranked rights. The constitutional settlement after **Minerva Mills** is harmony, not a victory of Part IV over Part III.

Flow diagram

Preamble justice -> Part III rights
Preamble justice -> Part IV DPSPs
Kesavananda -> Basic structure
Minerva Mills -> Harmony of III and IV
Harmony of III and IV -> Preamble justice

Conclusion

Directive Principles are more fundamental than Fundamental Rights as the Preamble's socio-economic programme that the state must pursue. They are not more fundamental as enforceable law that may abolish liberty. Kesavananda and Minerva Mills require harmony. The Preamble is met only when both parts work: social justice through policy, and equal rights that keep that policy from becoming unchecked power.

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Q6(b) · 15 marks

Explain the structure and functions of the National Commission for Women.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Statutory Institutions/Commissions

Revision summary

The **National Commission** for Women is a statutory body under the 1990 Act, constituted in 1992.

- **Structure:** a Chairperson, five members, and a Member-Secretary, with SC/ST representation among members, appointed by the Central Government.

Functions include examining legal safeguards, investigating complaints, studying and promoting women's rights, inspecting custodial institutions, advising on development planning, and supporting litigation.

For inquiries it can use specified civil-court powers to summon and record evidence.

It cannot replace courts or social movements; its limits are executive appointment and non-binding recommendations.

Introduction

The **National Commission** for Women is a statutory body created by the **National Commission for Women Act, 1990**, and constituted in 1992. It is the Union's principal specialised public body for investigating and advising on the constitutional and legal safeguards of women. Structure and functions must be stated together, because a commission without powers is only a name.

Body

Structure

The Commission consists of a Chairperson, five members, and a Member-Secretary, appointed by the Central Government. Members are to be drawn from ability and experience in law, trade unionism, management of industry, women's voluntary organisations, administration, economic development, health, education, or social welfare. At least one member is to belong to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. Tenure is as prescribed, ordinarily three years. The Central Government provides officers and staff. This is a nominated expert-and-activist structure, not an elected house and not a court.

Functions

Section 10 of the Act is the functional core. The Commission examines constitutional and legal safeguards for women and recommends amendments. It looks into complaints of deprivation of rights and of non-implementation of laws, and it takes up cases of violation with the appropriate authorities. It calls for special studies, undertakes promotional research, inspects jails and custodial institutions, and funds litigation in some circumstances. It advises on the planning process of socio-economic development of women and evaluates progress. For inquiry it has, in specified matters, powers of a civil court: summoning persons, requiring documents, and receiving evidence on affidavit.

The Commission therefore sits between a human-rights commission, a policy think tank, and a complaints office. It is not a substitute for the criminal courts or for the **legal remedies in Part III**. Women still use **Article 32** and **Article 226**. The Commission can aid, recommend,

and embarrass a department. It cannot finally punish.

Limits

Appointment by the executive raises questions of independence. Recommendations are not self-executing. State commissions vary in strength. The anti-arrack movement showed that women's power can come from the street and the Gram Sabha as well as from a Delhi commission. Evaluation should be sober: the NCW has given a national address to women's grievances and a statutory voice in law reform. It has not, by itself, ended violence or unequal work. Its proper measure is whether inquiries are serious and whether governments are forced to answer, not whether Indian patriarchy has disappeared.

Flow diagram

NCW Act 1990 -> Chairperson members secretary

NCW Act 1990 -> Safeguards complaints research

NCW Act 1990 -> Civil-court inquiry powers

NCW Act 1990 -> Recommend not punish

Part III courts -> Binding remedies

Conclusion

The **National Commission** for Women is a 1990 statutory commission with a chairperson, members, and a member-secretary, appointed by the Centre. Its functions are review of safeguards, complaints, studies, inspection, advice on development planning, and limited civil-court powers of inquiry. It is an important but non-final body: it supplements Part III remedies and social movements; it does not replace them.

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Q6(c) · 15 marks

The legacy of the Planning Commission still has a bearing on India's development policies. Discuss.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Planning and Economic Development

Revision summary

The **Planning Commission** was a 1950 extra-constitutional body that wrote Five-Year Plans and used plan assistance to steer states.

It embodied **Nehru's** mixed-economy development state, with public-sector industry and later poverty programmes as plan objects.

Gandhian village reconstruction remained secondary to this national industrial and fiscal centre.

After 2014, **NITI Aayog** lost grant power, but Union schemes, indices, and industrial and welfare missions continue the coordinating habit.

The legacy is a national development project under political direction, now in a more market-open form, still bounded by constitutional rights.

Introduction

The **Planning Commission** was created by a Cabinet resolution in 1950, with the Prime Minister as chair. It allocated plan funds, wrote Five-Year Plans, and stood at the centre of **Nehru's** development state. It was abolished in 2014 and replaced by **NITI Aayog**. The claim that its legacy still bears on India's development policies is true if legacy means habits of thought, centre-state fiscal politics, and the belief that the Union must steer structural change.

Body

The institution

The Commission was extra-constitutional. It used the Union's superior revenues and the mechanism of plan assistance to shape state priorities. The National Development Council brought chief ministers into a formal conversation that was often a conversation under central leadership. Mixed economy, public-sector heavy industry, and later poverty programmes were plan categories. Critics on the right charged licence-permit control. Critics on the left charged that plans did not transform agrarian class structure. **Ambedkar** had already warned that political democracy needs economic democracy; the plans were one official answer.

Gandhi's Gram Swaraj was never the Commission's operating diagram. Village industries sat at the margin of a capital-goods strategy. That tension still appears whenever local government meets a centrally designed scheme.

Legacy after 2014

NITI Aayog was presented as a think tank of cooperative federalism without the power to give plan grants. The **Finance Commission** and Union schemes now do more of the fiscal work. Yet the legacy remains. Centrally sponsored schemes, NITI indices, digital targeting of welfare, and a continuing Union claim to set a national development narrative are planning by other means. States still bargain for resources. Public capital formation, industrial policy, and social-sector missions still assume that markets alone will not meet the Preamble's justice.

The **Planning Commission's** method - documents, targets, sectoral chapters, and a techno-political elite around the Prime Minister - trained a class of development administrators. That class did not vanish. What changed is the instrument: from Five-Year Plan allocations to missions, regulatory reform, and competitive federalism scores.

A discussion should therefore agree with the statement, with a specification. The legacy is not the old permit raj as such. It is the idea that development is a national political project requiring Union coordination, data, and schemes, now pursued in a more market-open and more scheme-fragmented form. **Minerva Mills** still sets a constitutional limit: development policy cannot treat rights as optional. That, too, is part of how the planning state's successor must operate.

Flow diagram

Planning Commission 1950-2014 -> Nehru mixed economy

Planning Commission 1950-2014 -> Plan funds and NDC

Legacy -> Centrally sponsored schemes

Legacy -> NITI think tank

Legacy -> National development narrative

Conclusion

The **Planning Commission** institutionalised Nehruvian national development as central plans and plan funds. Its abolition did not abolish the Union's steering role, scheme architecture, or the belief that socio-economic justice needs public strategy. That is the legacy that still bears on policy, now through **NITI Aayog**, **Finance Commission** transfers, and missions rather than through Five-Year Plan grants.

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Q7(a) · 20 marks

Discuss the contribution of the Dalit struggle to establish egalitarianism in Indian society during the freedom movement.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Equality

Revision summary

Egalitarianism in India had to mean equal personhood against caste as graded inequality, not only against colonial rule.

Dalit movements, from **Phule**'s legacy to Mahad, temple entry, and the Scheduled Castes Federation, made water, roads, worship, schools, and representation into national issues.

Ambedkar and **Gandhi** clashed over separate electorates and the Poona Pact, which is itself part of the contribution: two models of equality entered public argument.

The Constituent Assembly's abolition of untouchability and equality articles are institutional fruits of that struggle.

The contribution is the establishment of equal citizenship as a founding principle; social egalitarianism remained an unfinished task at Independence.

Introduction

Egalitarianism in modern political theory is the claim that persons are equals in status and in basic rights. In Indian society that claim had to confront caste as **Ambedkar** described it: graded inequality, not only rich and poor. During the freedom movement, Dalit struggle did not wait for Swaraj to dissolve caste. It made equality of persons a condition of the nation itself.

Body

The problem the struggle named

Nationalist talk of a united people often assumed a Hindu social order that could be reformed later. **Jyotirao Phule** had already denied that story. Dalit publicists, Adi movements, **Iyothee Thass**, Namasudra politics in Bengal, and later the Independent Labour Party and the Scheduled Castes Federation treated caste humiliation as political domination. Egalitarianism here meant the right to draw water, to enter streets and temples, to wear dignity in clothing, to have schools, and to have a share of power, not only a share of anti-British feeling.

Methods and campaigns

Mahad Satyagraha (1927) and the burning of the Manusmriti claimed public water and rejected duty-by-birth. Temple-entry movements, including Vaikom and later campaigns, forced the national movement to see worship and roads as political. The Round Table Conferences and the Communal Award raised separate electorates. **Gandhi**'s fast and the **Poona Pact (1932)** replaced separate electorates with reserved seats in a joint electorate. **Ambedkar** accepted a tactical settlement and did not accept that Congress paternalism was emancipation.

Dalit soldiers, labourers, and peasants also entered the anti-colonial story through work and through left parties. The struggle was never only **Ambedkar**'s, and it was never only Congress Harijan work. Those two, however, structured the all-India argument.

Contribution to egalitarianism

First, the struggle placed caste on the national agenda so that independence could not honestly mean only transfer of power to caste Hindus. Second, it produced a leadership and a literature of equal personhood that entered the Constituent Assembly. **Ambedkar** as chair of the **Drafting Committee**, **Article 17** abolishing untouchability, **Articles 14** to 16, and later reservations are institutional outcomes of that pressure, not gifts from a unanimous elite. Third, it forced **Gandhi**'s constructive programme to treat untouchability as a sin, even while **Gandhi** rejected a separate political body of the Depressed Classes. That disagreement itself educated the public in two models of equality: moral reform of Hinduism, and rights plus political power for the excluded.

Limits belong in a discussion. The Poona Pact is still debated as a loss of autonomous power. Congress mass movements did not abolish village hierarchy. Economic landlessness remained. Egalitarianism was established as a constitutional principle and as a public claim, not as a completed social fact in 1947. That is still a contribution: without the Dalit struggle, the freedom movement's equality would have been thinner, and the Preamble's justice would have lacked its sharpest Indian meaning.

Flow diagram

Dalit struggle -> Caste as political domination
Dalit struggle -> Mahad temple labour
Dalit struggle -> Poona Pact / representation
Dalit struggle -> Article 17 and equal citizenship
Gandhi -> Reform of Hinduism
Ambedkar -> Rights and power

Conclusion

Dalit struggle during the freedom movement made egalitarianism mean the abolition of untouchability and a share of political power, not only anti-colonial unity. Mahad, temple entry, labour organisation, and the constitutional settlement are its record. **Ambedkar** and his opponents together forced the nation to write equality into law. The social structure was not thereby equalised; the principle of equal citizenship was.

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Q7(b) · 15 marks

The blueprint of Gram Swaraj is the key to understanding the Gandhian perspective on planning. Discuss.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Gram Swaraj is village self-rule with local production, bread labour, and a panchayat public, not a miniature **Planning Commission**.

Gandhian planning ranks needs, crafts, and moral self-restraint above a central industrial big push.

Trusteeship and a minimally violent state complete the blueprint.

Nehru's Planning Commission chose national heavy industry and central allocation, which **Gandhi** feared as a machine against individuality.

The 73rd Amendment's local government and later environmental localism show the blueprint's partial afterlife as a criterion, not as the official plan.

Introduction

- **Gram Swaraj is Gandhi's name for village self-rule:** a republic of largely self-sufficient communities, morally self-disciplined, and only lightly tied to a distant centre. The statement that this blueprint is the key to his perspective on planning is right. **Gandhi** did not reject all foresight about production. He rejected a **Planning Commission** that treats the village as a site of extraction for national industry.

Body

The blueprint

In Hind Swaraj and later constructive-programme writings, the village is the unit of swaraj. Bread labour, spinning, local crafts, and a panchayat that knows its people are the plan. Need, not multiplying wants, is the standard. **Trusteeship** asks the rich to hold surplus as a trust. The state that remains should be close to the people and low in violence. This is planning as moral economy: what to produce, for whom, and at what human cost.

Gram Swaraj is therefore a map of investment priorities. Irrigation that the village can manage, sanitation, basic education, and khadi come before a steel mill that uproots. The **73rd Amendment** and the Gram Sabha later gave a constitutional shadow of this local public, without accepting **Gandhi's** full civilisational critique.

Planning in a different key from Nehru

Nehru's Planning Commission planned from the Centre for heavy industry, dams, and a scientific state. **Gandhi** feared that this machine would destroy individuality and the village republic. The two perspectives clash on unit, on technology, and on the meaning of development. **Gandhi's** plan is federated villages; **Nehru's** is a national mixed economy. After 1947, official planning followed **Nehru** more than **Gandhi**. Khadi boards and community development were partial concessions.

A discussion should not pretend that Gram Swaraj solved capital goods or defence. It should say that Gandhian planning is the criterion by which those national plans are judged: do they enlarge self-rule in the locality, or only output statistics? Environmental movements such as **Chipko** later used a related local claim against a development state that planned forests from

elsewhere. That is the continuing key: planning, for **Gandhi**, is answerable to the village as a moral and political community.

Flow diagram

Gram Swaraj -> Village republic
Gram Swaraj -> Need-based production
Gram Swaraj -> Trusteeship
Nehru plans -> Centre industry dams
Gram Swaraj -> Criterion for any national plan

Conclusion

- **Gram Swaraj is Gandhi's plan:** local production, limited wants, panchayat self-rule, and a state that does not replace the moral person. It is the key to his perspective because it fixes the unit and the end of planning. Nehruvian plans took another unit. Indian development policy still lives in the argument between those two blueprints.

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Q7(c) · 15 marks

Critically assess the role of pressure groups in the decision-making process of the government.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Political Theory

Revision summary

Pressure groups influence policy without usually seeking office; they are central to pluralist theories of the democratic state.

They work through consultation, litigation, protest, media, and party finance, and they can improve information in complex decisions.

Lindblom, Gramsci, and resource inequality show that business and well-organised sections often outweigh unorganised citizens.

Indian illustrations include industry lobbies, unions, caste associations, Chipko, Narmada, and the anti-arrack movement.

The critical assessment is that pressure groups are constitutionally protected and democratically ambivalent: they must be transparent and balanced by rights of those not yet organised.

Introduction

Pressure groups are organised interests that seek to influence public decisions without themselves normally seeking to form the government. They are part of the pluralist map associated with **Dahl**, and they are also sites of **Gramsci**'s civil society. A critical assessment of their role in governmental decision-making must hold both the democratic case and the capture case.

Body

How they enter decisions

Groups supply information, draft, protest, litigate, fund campaigns, and occupy consultations. Business associations comment on industrial policy that still carries the **Planning Commission**'s successor habits. Trade unions press labour codes. Caste and farmer organisations bargain over reservations and support prices. Professional bodies shape education and health rules. Social movements - **Chipko**, **Narmada**, anti-arrack - force issues onto the agenda that ministries would prefer to treat as closed files. In a polyarchy, this is how 'who governs' varies by issue.

The **National Commission for Women** and similar bodies institutionalise some group claims inside the state. Parliamentary committees hear them. This can improve decisions by adding knowledge that a closed bureaucracy lacks.

Critical assessment

The democratic claim is incomplete. Resources are unequal. Organised capital often has a privileged position, as **Lindblom** argued, because investment strikes. Unorganised labour and unpaid women have less continuous access, except when they become movements. Opacity of lobbying weakens **Habermas's public reason: deals in corridors are not deliberation in the Gram Sabha**. Groups may freeze a veto against a wider public good. Caste associations can deepen representation and can also deepen sectional bargaining that **Ambedkar** feared would not dissolve graded inequality.

Pressure groups are therefore necessary in a free society - **Article 19** protects association - and they are a systematic bias in decision-making unless transparency, party programmes, and rights of the unorganised correct them. The critical assessment is not abolition. It is to judge each channel by whether it opens decision-making to those affected or only to those already organised.

Flow diagram

Pressure groups -> Information and protest

Pressure groups -> Government decisions

Good -> Voice of affected

Bad -> Capture and inequality

Government decisions -> Good

Government decisions -> Bad

Conclusion

Pressure groups inform and press government, which pluralism treats as the life of a polyarchy. They also skew decisions toward the organised and the funded. Indian business, unions, caste bodies, and environmental and women's movements show both faces. The task of democratic decision-making is to keep the first face and to discipline the second.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-1/2024/critically-assess-the-role-of-pressure-groups-in-the-decision-making-process-of-the-government/>

Q8(a) · 20 marks

Discuss the role of environmental movements in shaping environmental governance in India.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

Environmental governance in India is the official system for allocating forests, water, land, and pollution costs.

Chipko politicised forest felling as a livelihood and women's issue and weakened a purely contractor-and-department model.

Narmada contested large dams, displacement, and rehabilitation, forcing public justification even when the project proceeded.

Laws, EIA hearings, the NGT, constitutional environmental duties, and Gram Sabha-related rights are institutional responses to movement pressure.

The development state was not replaced; it was compelled to add procedures and to argue in public, which is the movements' principal shaping effect.

Introduction

Environmental governance is the set of rules, agencies, and practices that decide who may use land, forest, water, and air, and who bears the cost. In India that governance was long a development-state affair: dams, mines, and forest departments in the lineage of colonial reservation and **Nehru's** plans. Environmental movements forced that affair into public argument. They did not replace the state. They changed what the state had to justify.

Body

Chipko and the forest public

The Chipko movement in the Uttarakhand Himalaya in the 1970s made forest policy a question of local livelihood, not only of timber contracts. Villagers, including women, hugged trees and demanded a say in felling. The movement linked **Gandhi's** local swaraj to ecology. It influenced later forest law debates, joint forest management talk, and the idea that hill women are environmental actors. Governance shifted from a purely departmental file to a recognised local claim, even when implementation remained uneven.

Narmada and the large-dam state

The Narmada Bachao Andolan contested displacement, the meaning of public purpose, and the quality of rehabilitation in the Sardar Sarovar and related projects. It used satyagraha, research, international advocacy, and the Supreme Court. The Court in 2000 allowed the dam to proceed under conditions, which showed both the reach and the limit of movement litigation. Environmental governance absorbed new rituals: environmental impact assessment, public hearings, and rehabilitation policies. It did not abandon the large-project model. The movement still changed the decision process. A dam now has to answer in public, which is a **Habermas-like** demand inserted into a planning state.

Other pressures and institutional response

Silent Valley, anti-mining struggles, urban clean-air litigation, and coastal protests similarly pulled ministries and courts. The 42nd Amendment's environmental duties, **Articles 48A and**

51A(g), the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the **Forest Conservation Act**, the National Green Tribunal, and EIA notifications are the legal sediment of crisis and mobilisation, not only of expert design. **Pressure groups and scientists entered clearance committees. Federal tension appeared: states want projects; local communities want veto or voice. The Gram Sabha under the 73rd Amendment** and later forest-rights legislation gave a statutory hook for local environmental will, which the question on Gram Sabha also names.

How far

Movements shaped governance by agenda-setting, by producing knowledge that official plans omitted, and by forcing procedures of hearing and clearance. They did not produce a consistently ecological state. Clearances can be ritual. Violence against activists continues. Growth politics still ranks high. The honest discussion is that environmental governance in India is a contested field that movements opened. Chipko and Narmada are the type-cases. The **Planning Commission's** successor still thinks in projects; it must now do so under a louder local and judicial check.

Flow diagram

Environmental movements -> Chipko forests
Environmental movements -> Narmada dams
Environmental movements -> EPA EIA NGT
Environmental movements -> Gram Sabha / local voice
Development state -> EPA EIA NGT

Conclusion

Environmental movements made forests, rivers, and displacement into national political issues and pushed the state toward assessment, hearings, tribunals, and local statutory voice. Chipko and Narmada show the pattern. Governance was reshaped as procedure and as argument, not as a complete change of development model. That partial reshaping is still a major political fact.

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Q8(b) · 15 marks

"Relative deprivation is a major source of ethnic conflict." Elaborate the statement with relevant examples.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

Relative deprivation is the perceived gap between a group's entitlement and its actual share, relative to others or to its past.

Gurr linked that gap to political violence; ethnicity supplies a ready we-they organisation of the grievance.

Conflict often follows blocked mobility or lost rank more than shared absolute poverty.

Indian language and job conflicts, some insurgencies, and cases such as Sri Lanka illustrate the pattern.

Elite strategy, state bias, and security dilemmas also matter; relative deprivation is a major source, not the only one.

Introduction

Relative deprivation is the gap between what a group believes it is entitled to and what it actually receives, measured against another group or against its own past. **Ted Gurr** made the idea central to the study of rebellion. The statement that it is a major source of ethnic conflict is strong and largely right, provided it is not treated as the only source.

Body

From comparison to conflict

- **Ethnic identity supplies a we-they map. Relative deprivation supplies the grievance:** we have less office, less land, less respect, or less security than they do, or less than we had. Political entrepreneurs then organise fear and hope. **Dahl's** polyarchy can absorb some of this through bargains. If the state is seen as captured by one ethnic bloc, **legitimacy** fails and obligation to a common authority weakens.

Absolute poverty alone does not always produce ethnic war. Groups that are poor together may not mobilise as ethnic enemies. Groups that are rising but blocked, or falling after privilege, often do. That is the relative in the term.

Examples

In India, language and job competition in states, the demand for reorganisation, and later caste-and-community conflicts over reservations show relative deprivation among groups who compare educational and public-employment shares. Kashmiri and some North-Eastern insurgencies mixed secessionist nationalism with the sense of political and economic slight. Hindu-Muslim violence has often followed rumours of displacement in towns where one community's market position seemed to threaten another's. Sri Lanka's Tamil-Sinhala conflict followed competitive claims over language, university places, and the state. Northern Ireland and the former Yugoslavia showed similar comparison of status after political change.

Ambedkar's account of caste is related but not identical: graded inequality can produce deprivation that is absolute as well as relative. Ethnic conflict in the North-East also involves land, insurgency networks, and Centre-state militarisation, which are not only feelings of gap.

Elaborate, do not reduce

- **Relative deprivation is major because it explains timing:** conflict often rises when expectations rise faster than delivery, or when a previously dominant group loses rank. It does not erase elite manipulation, colonial classifications, or security dilemmas. **Gramsci** would add that hegemony can keep deprivation from becoming conflict until a crisis of authority. A full elaboration therefore uses Gurr's mechanism, illustrates it, and keeps a residual list of other causes.

Flow diagram

Relative deprivation -> Comparison of shares

Comparison of shares -> Ethnic grievance

Ethnic grievance -> Political entrepreneurs

Political entrepreneurs -> Ethnic conflict

Other causes -> Ethnic conflict

Conclusion

Relative deprivation is a major source of ethnic conflict because groups act on comparisons of entitlement and share, not only on absolute misery. Indian and comparative cases show the mechanism. Other causes remain. The statement should be accepted as a leading explanation, not as a complete one.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-1/2024/relative-deprivation-is-a-major-source-of-ethnic-conflict-elaborate-the-statement-with-relevant-examples/>

Q8(c) · 15 marks

Gram Sabha in the Panchayati Raj system is a forum which gives expression to the collective wisdom, aspirations, and the will of the people. Comment.

PSIR GS 1 · 2024 · Indian Nationalism

Revision summary

The Gram Sabha is the constitutional village assembly of voters under **Article 243A** and state panchayati raj laws.

It is meant to approve plans, review the panchayat, and express local will, which is deliberative democracy at village scale.

Gandhi's Gram Swaraj is the moral ancestor; the 73rd Amendment is the legal form inside a still-centralised scheme state.

Capture, quorum failure, caste and gender silencing, and weak devolution often prevent the assembly from being the people's wisdom in fact.

The statement is true as the institution's purpose and as a standard of criticism, not as a uniform empirical description.

Introduction

The Gram Sabha is the assembly of registered voters of a village panchayat. The **73rd Amendment** gave it constitutional status and required states to endow it with powers in law. The statement that it expresses the collective wisdom, aspirations, and will of the people is the official theory of this forum. A comment must test that theory against **Gandhi's** Gram Swaraj and against how meetings actually run.

Body

Constitutional design

Article 243A says a Gram Sabha may exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as the legislature of a state provides. State panchayati raj Acts typically give it a role in approving plans, identifying beneficiaries, reviewing accounts, and, in some states, controlling local resources, including in scheduled areas under the PESA logic. This is **deliberative democracy at the smallest territorial public: not Schumpeter's** distant elite competition only, but citizens speaking on common affairs.

The Amendment's **Eleventh Schedule** lists subjects that may be devolved. The Sabha is the people's moment; the panchayat is the committee. In theory, will is formed in the assembly and executed by the elected body.

Comment on the claim

The claim is right as a norm. A well-attended Sabha that debates a road, a school, or a liquor shop - as anti-arrack politics and later women's ward members illustrate - can express aspiration and local knowledge that a district office lacks. **Habermas's** conditions are partly met when talk is public and officials must answer.

The claim is overstated as a description of all India. Quorum failures, male capture, contractor lists, and party faction turn many meetings into a signature exercise. Caste can silence Dalit speech, which is why **Ambedkar** distrusted village republics that were not first equal. Funds

and functionaries often remain with line departments, so the Sabha wills what it cannot fund. **Gandhi** wanted the village to be the plan's unit; the 73rd Amendment made it a constitutional forum inside a still-centralised development state, including the legacy of the **Planning Commission's** scheme world.

A fair comment therefore affirms the statement as the purpose of the institution and adds that expression of collective will requires social equality, real devolution, and protection of dissent. The Gram Sabha is the republic's local public. It becomes the people's wisdom only when those conditions are worked for, not when the statute is merely cited.

Flow diagram

Gram Sabha -> Article 243A

Gram Sabha -> Deliberate plans and beneficiaries

Gram Sabha -> Collective will as norm

Limits -> Capture and quorum

Limits -> Caste and gender silence

Gram Sabha -> Limits

Conclusion

The Gram Sabha is the 73rd Amendment's village public, meant to gather will, aspiration, and local knowledge. That is its democratic meaning. Practice often falls short because of capture, thin devolution, and social hierarchy. The comment is that the statement names the standard by which panchayati raj should be judged, not an automatic fact in every village.

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Compiled answer key

Last pages of this pack. Each question links to the WRAP model answer on wrapexams.com.

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Q1(a) 10 marks	Q1(b) 10 marks	Q1(c) 10 marks	Q1(d) 10 marks
Q1(e) 10 marks	Q2(a) 20 marks	Q2(b) 15 marks	Q2(c) 15 marks
Q3(a) 20 marks	Q3(b) 15 marks	Q3(c) 15 marks	Q4(a) 20 marks
Q4(b) 15 marks	Q4(c) 15 marks	Q5(a) 10 marks	Q5(b) 10 marks
Q5(c) 10 marks	Q5(d) 10 marks	Q5(e) 10 marks	Q6(a) 20 marks
Q6(b) 15 marks	Q6(c) 15 marks	Q7(a) 20 marks	Q7(b) 15 marks
Q7(c) 15 marks	Q8(a) 20 marks	Q8(b) 15 marks	Q8(c) 15 marks

Question-wise key

Q1(a) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(b) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(c) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(d) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(e) · 10 marks Solution

Q2(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q2(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q2(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q3(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q3(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q3(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q4(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q4(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q4(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q5(a) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(b) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(c) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(d) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(e) · 10 marks Solution

Q6(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q6(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q6(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q7(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q7(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q7(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q8(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q8(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q8(c) · 15 marks Solution

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