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GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION 2026

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Governance in India

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CHAPTER

3

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

"In this period of Amrit Kaal, we have to take Reform, Perform, Transform to the next level. That is why today's India is moving ahead with the spirit of 'Sabka Prayas."

— PM Narendra Modi

3.1 Introduction

People's expectations for greater quality and standard goods and services from service providers have risen as the globalized world has changed. The corporate giants and dwarfs shaped themselves to meet people's changing requirements, attempting to exceed their expectations through greater service delivery. Globalization has an impact on government agencies and the necessity for improvements in administrative systems and practices. The governing process showed signs of change. The fundamental goal of such changes was to provide citizens with higher-quality goods and services. Concepts like accountability, openness, and involvement began to acquire traction in government.

Transparency and accountability have become even more vital in the aftermath of increased corruption and corrupt practices and citizens' mistrust of the government and the governing process. Transparency and accountability have become increasingly important and necessary for successful performance and responsible governance around the world. The building of relationships between people and their representatives is one of the two fundamental pillars in the architecture of good government

3.2 Transparency

Transparency has become one of the most important principles of our day. ***It refers to the openness in government policies and decisions***. It means that choices are made and enforced by established norms and regulations. It implies that the data is openly available and directly accessible to individuals who may be impacted by such decisions and their implementation.

Transparency International defines transparency as a principle that allows those affected by administrative decisions, business transactions, or charitable work to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes. It is founded on the free flow of information, as well as its accessibility and availability to people who are affected by the decisions made during the governing process. The information presented must be understandable and relevant to the individuals involved.

It refers to a condition in which the government's business and activities are conducted openly and without secrecy, so that citizens may trust their elected representatives to be fair and honest. ***It implies that all government actions must be thorough enough to withstand public scrutiny.*** It also implies that sufficient information is presented in a format and medium that is easily communicated. The functioning of democracy requires a vigilant citizenry. ***It makes the government more responsible, prevents arbitrary decisions, and makes the government more responsive to citizens.***

It corresponds to openness in governance concerning all choices and acts in a political and administrative sense. It covers civic rights such as ***freedom of information, open meetings, financial disclosure, budgetary review and audit*** and so on.

Transparency and Civic Engagement

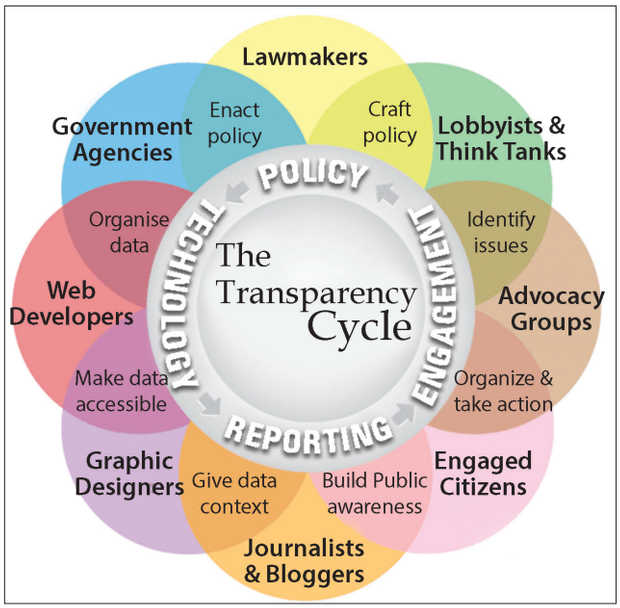
Civic engagement is understood as the active participation of citizens in public life and their contribution to the common good. The level of trust in the government and public agencies is a key factor that determines the extent and quality of civic engagement. Loss of trust can lead to disengagement of citizens and discourage participation of communities as well as the private sector in functions such as public services delivery, or even in democratic processes such as elections.

Trust in public bodies is affected by two things:

- The quality of services that individuals and their families receive; and
- How open and honest organizations are about their performance, including their willingness to admit to and learn from their mistakes.

Transparency helps not only to inform the public about development ideas and proposals, but also to convince citizens that the public agencies are interested in listening to their views and responding to their priorities and concerns. This in turn enhances the legitimacy of the decision-making process and strengthens democratic principles.

Transparency also influences civic engagement in a more direct manner. Responsiveness often holds the key to successful involvement of citizens and the private sector. Governments that share their assessments and plans with citizens and seek their views on a regular basis can be far more effective in implementing development programmes with the participation of stakeholders.



Transparency in Disclosure of Information

"A popular Government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives." ***— James Madison***

Information is crucial to good governance as it reflects and captures government activities and processes. Every citizen of the state has right to access information under the control of public authorities consistent with public interest. The main objective of governments providing information to its citizens is not only to promote openness, transparency and accountability in administration, but also to ensure participation of people in all matters related to governance

3.3 Accountability

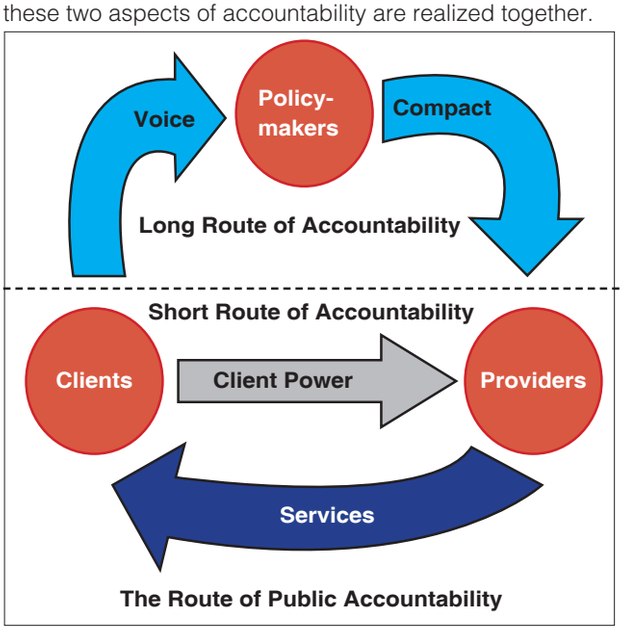
Accountability can broadly be *defined as the obligation of those holding power to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions*. This obligation might stem out of a moral and ethical need to account for one's actions, or out of a legal requirement. It is a relational concept as it concerns the relationship between those that perform an action or deliver a service, i.e., the agent, and those on whom the action or service has an effect, i.e., the principal. In this sense, accountability is the leverage that the principal has over the agent. There are various elements that come together in the notion of accountability, including answerability – the need for justification of actions, enforcement – the sanctions that could be imposed if the actions or justification for the actions are found to be unsatisfactory, and responsiveness - the ability of those held accountable to respond to the demands made.

Public accountability i.e., the need for the state to be accountable to its citizens ***stems out of the 'social contract' that the citizens share with the state.*** In a democracy, this contract is operationalized when citizens elect a government and invest the elected representatives with the power to govern them. The representatives in their turn, acting themselves and through bureaucrats and administrators are obliged to perform their duties of governance in a manner that keeps the citizens' interests at heart.

Types and Framework of Accountability

There are institutional provisions to ensure that the government respects this contract. On the one hand, there are *mechanisms for external accountability* or accountability directly to the citizens. In a democracy, elections are the chief instrument through which this is achieved. Citizen consultations, and citizen participation in the design, implementation, and monitoring of state services, are also examples of this.

Alongside that, there are also *provisions for internal accountability* - institutional checks and balances like constitutional separation of powers into the Judiciary, Executive and Legislature, a rational delegation of tasks and responsibilities, internal performance monitoring, and official oversight, including bodies like the Auditor General, Anti-Corruption Bureaus and Vigilance Commissions are some examples. Public accountability is ensured when these two aspects of accountability are realized together.



The given diagram illustrates this point using the framework of accountability proposed in World Development Report 2004. Ensuring accountability in the public sector involves a two-step process or the 'long route' of accountability. First, the state needs to have a clear understanding of what its citizens want. For this to occur, citizens must be able to draw on the political process to hold the state (policy makers and politicians) to account. This relationship is referred to as 'voice'. The state, in turn, acting as the representative of the people, must be able to transmit these demands to the actual provider of services and ensure that providers perform their functions effectively. This relationship is the 'compact'.

Accountability is ensured when compact creates incentives such that the providers accurately and conscientiously follow the wishes of the policy makers, who, in turn, accurately reflect the voice of their constituents. By extension, this 'long route' of accountability fails when on the one hand, the state does not succeed in taking cognizance of its citizens' needs and demands and citizens have no mechanisms through which to articulate their voice (failure of voice), and on the other, when the state is unable to create incentives such that providers accurately and conscientiously fulfil their duties (failure of compact).

3.4. Social Accountabilty

Traditionally, it has been defined as answerability of government/administration - actions/decisions i.e. to hold account of. When, administration actions, especially omission and commission are evaluated and enforced, it resutls into accountability.

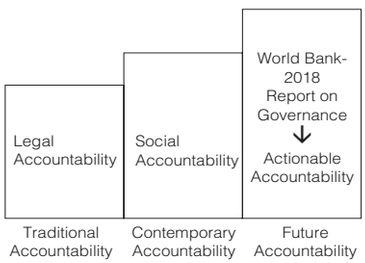
Hence, Traditionally–

Accountability = Answerability + Enforceability

Accountability comes after action – post facto which create deterrance on action through formal/legal mechanisms. For example: CAG Report

But, in contemporary times - there is emergence of concept of **"Social Accountability"** through mechanisms like RTI/ Citizen Charter/Social Audit/e-Governance/Social Media/ Active Role of NGOs / Media.

New, Accountability = Answerability + Enforceability + 2R (Responsibility and Responsivness)



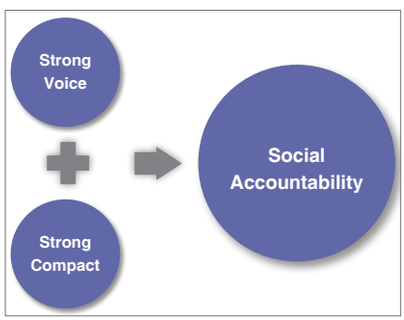
We have traced, over the years there has been an evolution of ways in which societal actors have engaged with the state indirectly and, increasingly, directly, to improve accountability in governance and service delivery - a process that has come to be known as *'Social Accountability'.*

It is an approach towards ensuring ***accountability that relies on civic engagement,*** i.e. in which ordinary citizens and citizen groups participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability. Social Accountability encompasses a broad range of actions and mechanisms that citizens, communities, independent media, and civil society organizations use to hold public officials and public servants accountable. This involves deploying ***tools like participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen report cards, community scorecards, social audits, citizen's charters,*** and so forth.

Two prominent characteristics stand out in these tools and mechanisms. ***First:*** social accountability efforts work to enhance and integrate the citizen's voice into the everyday workings and decision-making processes of the state. There has, in this sense, been a shift from 'vote' to 'voice' as the principal accountability tool in the hands of the citizens. ***Second:*** central to social accountability efforts is transparency in governance. The main channel through which citizens are empowered to demand accountability is through the creation of, and access to, more information. So the recurrent theme seems to be that more information means more empowerment, which in the context of greater participation means more voice, which means greater accountability.

Social Accountability is being increasingly recognized worldwide as a means of enhancing democratic governance, improving service delivery, and empowering citizens. Accordingly governments around the world - from US and Brazil, to Uganda and South Africa, to Sri Lanka and New Zealand - are finding ways to facilitate citizen engagement and foster social accountability.

In sum, Social Accountability in public service delivery is a product of two things working together, a system of instructions designed in a manner that makes accountability structurally possible, and an informed and mobilised citizenry that can draw upon platforms for engagement to make accountability demands on the system. That is, strong voice, in conjunction with strong compact. This framework is illustrated in the figure below.



3.5 Need for Transparency and Accountability

People elect their representatives in a democracy and give them the authority to rule and govern on their behalf. In exchange, they want elected officials to implement policies and programmes that benefit the people. In other words, it becomes the government's responsibility to act in the citizens' best interests, resulting in their wellbeing. The government spends a large amount of money delivering goods and services and performing welfare functions, the majority of which comes from tax payers.

In such a scenario, the government becomes accountable to the public, and it must account for money spent, whether development goals have been met and benefits have reached the masses, whether the government's various policies and programmes are leading to welfare, and whether government funds are handled according to rules and regulations. Citizens have a right to know about all of this, and they must be informed about the government's policies and activities. With all of this in mind, it is critical that the government operates transparently and is held accountable for its decisions and actions.

Transparency and accountability in governance is required because of the following reasons:

- **Expansion of Government's Role and Activities:** In India, the main aim of the State after independence was to bring about socio-economic change and speedy development. The collapse of colonialism opened an entirely new area of administration and governance which focused on developmental goals and poverty eradication. The new policies included the areas of human concern such as development of women, children and physically challenged, marginalised sections and so on. All this led to expansion of government departments with overlapping boundaries for work. In such a scenario, the need for accountability and transparency was felt so that one could keep a check on the functioning of various departments.
- **The Concept of Delegated Legislation:** As the States' functions and areas of operation expanded, we saw a simultaneous increase in delegated legislation. The legislature delegated its power of legislation to executive. As a result, the permanent executive became both the formulator and implementor of laws. This led to increase in the powers of the executive. Thus, to keep a check on the powers and functions of the executive, accountability and transparency became necessary.
- **Politics-bureaucracy Nexus:** In a democratic country like India which is committed to welfarism, we see a close collaboration and cooperation between the politicians and the bureaucrats. This sometimes forces the bureaucracy to get committed to the government. The bureaucrats instead of being committed to the policies get committed to ruling party's agenda. In such a situation, the bureaucracy becomes highly politicised and neutrality takes a back seat. This calls for suitable checks.
- **Check Corruption and Corrupt Practices:** There has always been a fear that the system may become corrupt, due to absolute power. This was very true for India as it was on the path of speedy socio-economic development and in order to achieve this goal, the government and administration were vested with vast powers. There are many instances of government indulging in corrupt practices, be it misuse of governmental machinery during elections, favouring their near and dear ones in appointments and promotions, disregarding constitutional norms, rules and procedures to serve their own interests, political patronage and so on. While A.D. Gorwala Report exposed this aspect as early as 1950s, in current times we come across several such instances. The quantum of black money, politics of opportunism, various scams and scandals are a proof that we need a mechanism to check corrupt practices.
- **Apathetic Nature of the Citizens:** In a democracy, people's participation should not only be limited to electing their representatives. They need to play a larger role. But in a country plagued with so many social evils, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, people are not active participants. As a result, the benefits and fruits of development do not reach the needy.

The citizens for long have been treated as vote-bank. The politicians used them for their own political motives. Huge amounts of money were spent on development programmes and projects, but the real development was nowhere to be seen. Had the citizens been aware and been active participants, they would have always questioned the misuse of money and power. In such a scenario, it becomes all the more important to make the system transparent and accountable. The above points make it clear that there was an urgent need for accountability and transparency in the system. It was necessary to check that laws work as they are prescribed and that too without any delay and wastage; that politicians and administrators exercise lawful and sensible administrative discretion; they recommend new policies and propose changes in existing policies; and enhance citizens' confidence in the administrative institutions of government (Bhattacharya, 2001). Apart from this, it is required for controlling abuse of bureaucratic power and discretion to ensure that policy enforcement is as per standards and quality, and that it could facilitate continuous improvement in governance.

3.6 Addressing Accountability Failures

Traditionally, efforts to improve accountability proceeded along these two axes - internal and external - largely independent of one another. ***On the external front,*** there have been electoral reforms, voter-awareness initiatives and so on, and ***on the internal front*** there have been efforts like reorganization of audit and account mechanisms. Important as they are, these efforts have had limited success in improving accountability in governance and service delivery. There are a number of reasons why.

- Elections as an instrument of accountability have some well-known limitations, moreover, elections only hold elected officials accountable, whereas the vast majority of public officials are appointed bureaucrats and hence not subject to electoral processes. Reorganizing horizontal accountability channels on their part have limitations. It is impossible to monitor the almost infinite number of government actions (and inactions). Practices like bias and inefficient resource use lend themselves to investigation less easily than more express forms of corruption. Absence of second order accountability (who will watch the watchers?), lack of adequate funding and limited enforcement capacity all serve to further weaken these mechanisms.
- In more recent years, there has been an acknowledgement in the policy circles around the world, of these limitations in traditional accountability channels. Alongside was the recognition that citizen participation in state's activities could play an important role in strengthening accountability and responsiveness in service delivery. An increasing body of literature from around the world documented how participation of citizens in planning, implementation and monitoring of projects not only increased the effectiveness of public service delivery and made it more appropriate, but also increased accountability and reduced corruption.
- Accordingly, societal participation in state's development activities was no longer seen as a 'bother', but was instead actively encouraged as a means to ensure responsiveness and accountability. However, this participation by citizens was of a limited nature in that it was circumscribed to implementation of specific government projects. Measures for responsiveness were largely limited to citizen consultations, and those for accountability largely to monitoring of outputs. There was also a sense in which society was acting as a watchdog in ensuring government accountability. All of which underlined a certain "arm's length" relationship between the state and the society. Autonomy from the state was deemed as fundamentally important not just for legitimacy of civil society in its pro-accountability role, but also in the Weberian model of modern bureaucracies, which has been emulated in most developing countries, public-sector workers were as a principle to be insulated from citizens so as to maintain objectivity in public service – and this insulation was only sparingly conceded.
- More recently, a 'transgressive' stream of research and practice has questioned this separation between the state and the society. Moving on from the circumscribed participation in co-production of specific services, and arms-length relationship in pressuring the government from outside, this current stream of research argues that accountability is best obtained in "co-governance" spaces which confuse the boundary between the state and the society. These writings draw on experiences from around the world where citizen groups have been experimenting with inserting themselves more and more directly into the state apparatus: into its core functions and everyday workings, monitoring its hitherto opaque operations, and influencing policy from the inside. Participatory Budgeting in Porto Allegre, Brazil was one of the early experiences in this stream where instead of externally influencing the policy, ordinary citizens were inside the governmental apparatus, involved directly in the planning and supervision of public spending - activities normally under the exclusive purview of public officials.
- Some authors argue that this form of activism represents a 'new accountability agenda'. A pioneering instance of this from India was the experience of ***Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)*** – a Rajasthan based grassroots organization - where citizens (as external actors) directly engage with institutions of internal accountability. MKSS ***employed 'social audits' to empower ordinary citizens to turn into auditors,*** and obtain access to the hitherto privileged state documents such as muster rolls, in order to expose malfeasance. This form of accountability has been called ***'hybrid' accountability,*** and is remarkable in that it breaks the state's monopoly over official oversight and legitimizes citizen-inclusion into hitherto exclusive affairs of the state.

3.7 Mechanisms of Transparency and Accountability

In view of the gaps mentioned above, the demand for answerability, responsiveness and transparency gathered momentum in democracy across the world and India was no exception to this. As a result, a number of mechanisms have been initiated towards this in India from time to time.

Accountability calls for:

- Making laws work with minimum waste and delay
- Exercising appropriate administrative discretion
- Recommending new polices and proposing changes in existing policies and programmes
- Enhancing the confidence of citizens and government
- Access to information and freedom of expression
- Responsiveness of public agencies to the citizens' needs

There are various mechanisms of ensuring accountability and transparency. These encompass parliamentary control over expenditure through questions, cut motions in parliament, parliamentary committees, auditing, public interest litigation, judicial decisions and so on.

Central Vigilance Commission

The Central Vigilance Commission, ***set up in 1964***, as a follow-up of the ***recommendations of the Santhanam Committee***, by the ***executive resolution*** of the Government of India, is an ***institution*** which ***makes the public officials and administration accountable for their acts.*** It is a non-statutory body which falls within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Personnel. It is conceived as the apex vigilance institution which is free from any executive authority, monitoring all vigilance activities. The ***jurisdiction of the Commission*** covers all employees in public undertakings, corporate bodies and other institutions working under the central government, the Delhi Metropolitan Council and the New Delhi Municipal Committees.

Over the years, there has emerged a web of vigilance agencies in the country. These agencies are responsible for ensuring accountability of public servants through the vigilance mechanism. ***It is a body for reviewing and keeping vigilance over all organisations but it does not take any action against them.*** The advisory role of the commission extends to all matters of vigilance administration referred to it by the departments/organisations of the government.

Comptroller and Auditor General

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), a ***constitutional authority***, is another accountability mechanism in India. It is the ***guardian of the public purse*** and it is the duty of CAG to see that only authorised expenditure in made out of the Consolidated Fund of India. The office of CAG ***carries out its duties in an autonomous manner and is independent of any kind of executive control. The CAG presents its report to the Parliament through the Public Accounts Committee***. It ensures that the money shown in accounts is utilised for the prescribed purpose and the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it. Some of the major scams in India such as Bofors, 2G spectrum, Coalgate and Commonwealth Games, have been exposed by the CAG.

Social Audit

Social audit is an innovative mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability. ***It came into prominence in the wake of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act,*** which gave Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions. It scrutinises the efficacy of any public utility within a social relevance framework. It is an effort undertaken to ensure that the work done by the government is actually benefitting the citizens. It is a process that enables an organisation to assess and demonstrate the social, economic and environmental benefits of its programmes and their impact on various stakeholders including the public. ***It assesses whether the expenditure has made any difference to the well-being of the community*** and whether it has led to development and welfarism.

Social audit evaluates the performance of the organisation on the basis of its core community values and how far it has impacted the different social groups prevailing in the society. Social audit is a very effective tool for strengthening grassroots democracy. It provides an opportunity to the citizens to scrutinise the development initiatives which ultimately benefit the citizens. It is a continuous process which ensures that all the decisions and their rationale are made public as soon as they are made. It has to be integrated into public service delivery.

3.8 Operationalisation of Transparency and Accountability

The consideration of various systems for transparency and accountability in the preceding sections shows that there have undoubtedly been numerous initiatives in this area from time to time. What matters is how they are put into practise. We need to know whether the actions taken are indeed effective in enhancing system and governance accountability and openness. Citizens have become a critical component in accountability enforcement. A transparent structure that allows for accountability to public conduct becomes necessary as a result.

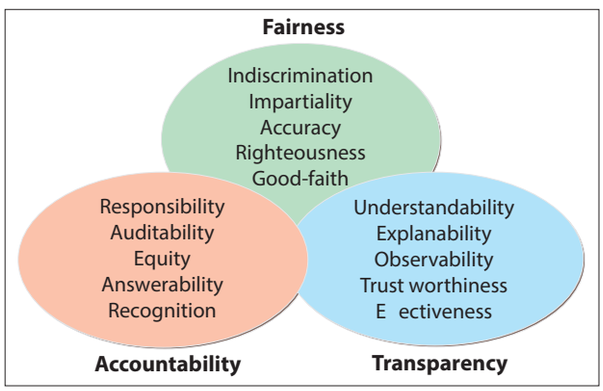
When we refer to the operationalisation of the transparency and accountability mechanisms, we see that ***Right to Information (RTI)*** is a very potent tool and its positive role has been witnessed especially at the grassroots levels in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The MGNREGA guidelines stipulate that all information be displayed to the public through display boards and paintings on the walls of the panchayat offices.

Apart from this, a ***voluntary organisation*** called Parivartan is also in Delhi which has been quite successful in facilitating the use of Right to Information in addressing their grievances,

getting the pending works done by the government departments and also inspecting the government works. It is helping the poor people in getting ration cards or receiving their ration quota on Antyodaya card under the public distribution system by exercising the RTI.

There are some *glaring examples when the Lokayukta has come forward and tried to weed out corruption prevailing in the various state institutions*. In 2010 in Karnataka, major irregularities in mines in Bellary, including those owned by Obulapuram Mining Company and by the prominent politicians, who were then ministers in the Government of Karnataka had been exposed by Lokayukta. The Lokayukta's Report uncovered major violations and systemic corruption in iron-ore mining in Bellary. It recommended banning all exports of iron ore and limiting iron ore production for captive production of iron and steel. Lokayuktas, if given a free hand, can definitely function towards building a transparent and accountable system.

The emergence and use of e-governance or digital governance, in the governance process has further ensured transparency and accountability. The main idea behind e-governance is to bring government services to the beneficiaries in a transparent, speedy, easy and efficient way. The ICT-based governance opened new economic opportunities, brought transparency in public-private transactions, insights into outsourcing processes and accountable administration. It introduced a minimum guarantee against arbitrary exchanges and government procurements and some form of standardisation of procedures.



The *state level e-governance projects* such as Akshaya in Kerala, Gyandoot in Madhya Pradesh, Digital Saksharta Abhiyan in Haryana, SWAGAT in Gujarat, APSWAN and TWINS in Andhra Pradesh, Bhoomi in Karnataka, E-mitra in Rajasthan, Lokvani Project in Uttar Pradesh etc., are a proof that ICT is extensively being used in the various government departments for enhancing efficiency, transparency, accountability and providing better services to the people. The application of electronic means in the interaction between government and citizens (G2C) and government and business (G2B) as well as in internal government operations (G2G) has simplified and improved democratic government and business aspects of governance.

By providing online access and information to the citizens with regard to land records, caste and income certificates and various other government services, things have become very simple and easy for the citizens. Just by a click of the mouse, they get things readily available at their doorsteps. E-governance and digitalisation is changing the way governments are addressing the problems of the citizens and delivering them. Digitalisation will go a long way in making the system accountable and transparency.

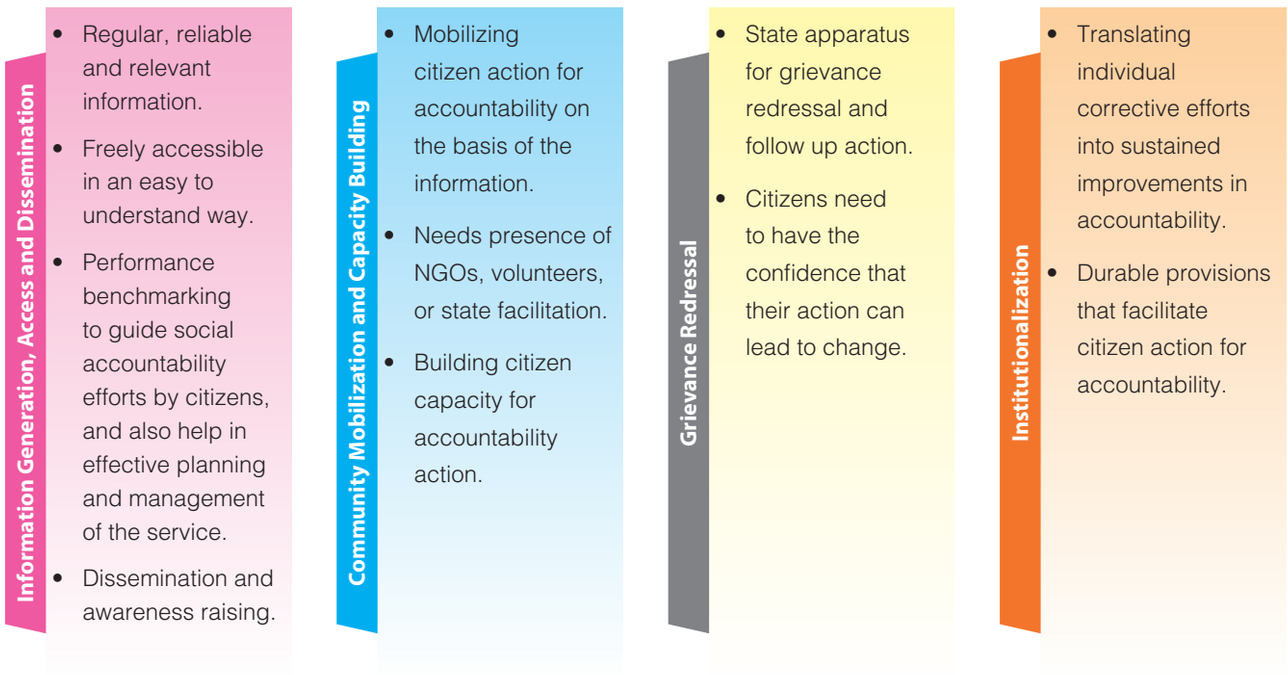
There are *challenges in the operationalisation process*. There is need for strong political will, bureaucratic commitment, and awareness on part of citizens that can bring the desired change

3.9 Suggested Course of Action

We have seen that Transparency and Accountability are keystones for the Good Governance, amidst the existing challenges and failure of the enforcement mechanism, the need for the reforms is urgent for successful deployment of Good Governance tools to the citizens. The following steps can help in transforming the operationalisation of Accountability and Transparency mechanism:

- **Information Generation, Access and Dissemination:** Information lies at the heart of accountability and transparency. For citizen groups to effectively perform their functions, they need to know what to expect from the government as well as what service quality levels are in practise, so that they can analyse the performance and apply pressure in targeted manner. In this regard, the *information dissemination must follow 3R principle which are Regular, Reliable and Relevant.*
- **Community Mobilization:** Citizen mobilization lies at the heart of all Good Governance initiatives. In essence, it is about citizens demanding and directly participating in exacting accountability. Significant time and effort is required to facilitate mobilization. It requires intensive work by NGOs and local organizations that work with communities. Alternatively, the presence of local level organization such as community based organizations (CBOs) could be mobilized to catalyse collective action.
- **Capacity Building:** Capacity building is crucial. This can be achieved through scaling up the role of state level training institutions such as SIRDs and NGOs by: (i) improving current training modules to focus on the issue of GS participation, (ii) raising awareness both at the Panchayat and citizen level on the need and importance of Gram Sabhas, and (iii) mobilizing CBOs around the issue of holding.

- **Grievance Redressal:** One of the more crucial preconditions for accountability and transparency is the presence of state apparatus for redressal of grievances. For collective action to emerge and sustain, citizens need to have the confidence in the state that the misdoings exposed, or the grievances emerging from their use of the accountability tool will be followed up and acted upon by the state in the form of corrective action being taken, perpetrators being punished, or policy being amended, as the case maybe. To inspire such confidence, it is imperative that the state invests in an effective grievance redressal apparatus to ensure citizen grievances are redressed in a timely and effective manner.
- **Feedback and Institutionalization:** For the individual corrective actions, and sustainable improvements in accountability, there needs to be some form of institutional support that guarantees the deployment, and facilitates the process of the accountability and transparency tools at regular intervals. Such institutional support, apart from signalling the state's real commitment to citizen engagement, also bodes well for the long-term sustainability of the accountability efforts, which are otherwise based solely on voluntary collective action by concerned citizens.



Accountability and transparency are critical to democracy's functioning, particularly in India. They keep the people informed and help to keep a check on the government's use and misuse of power. Complex situations necessitate the participation of various people in order to be addressed. To further strengthen it and question the government's arbitrary actions and choices, active engagement from all segments of society is essential.

The role of civic society becomes increasingly crucial. We saw how Anna Hazare and his colleagues forced the government to pass the Lokpal Bill, which had been long delayed.

The media must also play an important role in promoting information flow, authenticity, and quality. It must become a responsible and active participant in raising public awareness, giving voice to the voiceless, sparking debate on the use and misuse of RTI, and exposing the government's corrupt activities without fear or favour. The knowledge acquired thus far indicates that we are on our way to a more transparent and accountable system. These efforts must be bolstered by increasing the use of digitisation in the administration and delivery of fundamental services to citizens, ensuring effective accountability and transparency.

TRY SOME MAINS PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

1. To what extent, in your view, the Parliament is able to ensure accountability of the executive in India? **(2021)**
2. Do Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees keep the administration on its toes and inspire reverence for parliamentary control? Evaluate the working of such committees with suitable examples. **(2021)**
3. On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the representation of people act, 1951? Also, mention the remedies available to such a person against his disqualification. **(2019)**
4. "Policy contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate protection and prevention of degradation to the environment." Comment with relevant illustrations. **(2018)**
5. 'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people'. Discuss. **(2017)**
6. In the light of the Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in corporate governance to ensure transparency and accountability. **(2015)**