

NEXT IAS

GRADED ASSESSMENT TEST 2025



(To be filled by candidate)

TEST CODE : M25GAT02

TEST NO. : 02

Name of Candidate: KIRAN, KAMATE

Roll No.: MT25FLTRA015 Start Time 11:00 AM End Time 12:40 PM

Date of Examination: 29/06/25 Mobile No.

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1	10	
2	10	
3	10	
4	10	
5	10	
Total Marks : 50		

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
6	15	
7	15	
8	15	
9	15	
10	15	
Total Marks : 75		

GRAND TOTAL -/ 125

EVAL CODE: GRADED DATE:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Immediately on receipt of the QCA booklet, please check that this QCA booklet does not have any misprint or torn or missing pages or items, etc. If so, get it replaced by a fresh QCA booklet.
2. Candidates must mention all relevant details like Name, Email, Roll No, Mobile, etc. in the space allocated.
3. Candidate is expected to attempt all 10 questions within the given timeline.
4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized at the time of admission.
5. Candidates must write answers for the specific question under the respective question itself. Any answer written outside the space allotted may not be given credit.
6. Please write neatly. Avoid illegible writing.
7. Do not write/mark irrelevant matters in the QCAB.
8. Only those copies that are submitted on the date of exam till 5 pm will be graded.

REMARKS:

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MARKING SCHEME *

Marks Per Ques	Below Average	Average	Above Average
10 Marks	Below 2.50	3.00 - 3.50	4.00 and above
15 Marks	Below 4.00	4.00 - 5.50	6.00 and above

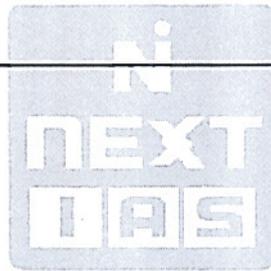
* Subject to change without prior notice.

MACRO COMMENTS

The Purpose of evaluation@nextias.com is to provide constructive suggestions on 'How to improve Answer Writing and thereby score better marks.

STRENGTHS OF THE CANDIDATE

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT



IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

1. "One of the mandates of NITI Aayog is to promote competitive and cooperative federalism among States and UTs." In this context, evaluate the role of NITI Aayog in strengthening cooperative federalism and encouraging innovation in policy making since 2015.
(Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

2025 marks the 10 years of establishing NITI Aayog, after it replaced the planning commission in 2015.

Role in Cooperative Federalism

- 1) acts the bridge between centre and states in policy making.
- 2) fostering competitive federalism via various indices.
 - eg) CWMI, SDG, FHI etc.
- 3) representation of state delegates in its regular meetings.
 - eg) CMs, secretaries.
- 4) Notion of Team India spirit
 - ⇒ tailoring national policies with state specific interventions

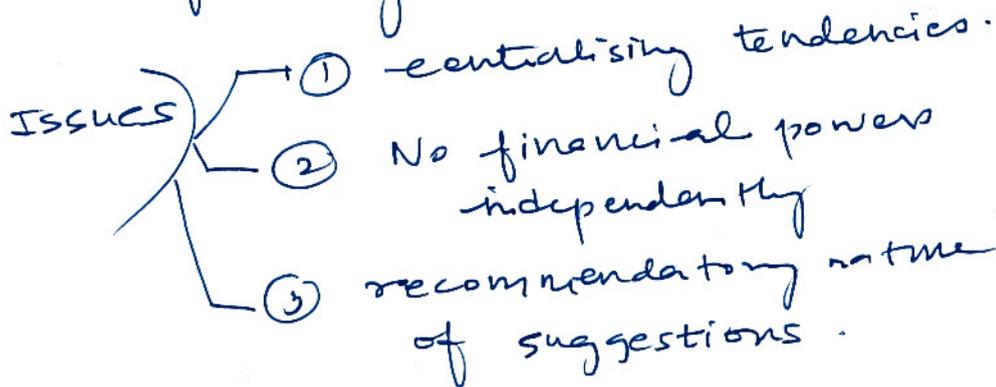
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Innovation in Policy making

- 1) use of realtime data
 - eg Aspirational districts programme
- 2) going beyond international metrics to reflect national concerns.
 - eg a Multi-dimensional poverty index
- 3) metric-based policymaking
 - eg CMWI - water policy
 - SECI - education
 - FHI - fiscal health.

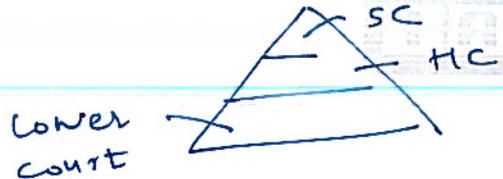
4) Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)
- fostering innovation



Reforms like increased state participation / technological leverage and greater financial powers are needed to make NIT / more effective

2. Examine the structure and jurisdiction of courts in the United States and India. How do the contempt powers of courts differ in both countries? (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

Article 129 and 219 of constitution provides for Contempt powers to the Supreme and high courts respectively, to enable them to function with independence (part of Basic structure)

India	United States
1) unified judiciary ⇒ unitary feature	1) separate courts at each level. ⇒ non-unified structure
	
2) Federal court in India is the <u>SC</u>	2) SC is not the federal court.
3) Doctrine of territorial nexus	3) IN USA, the top courts do not have jurisdiction over <u>federal states</u> .
<u>Article: 263</u>	
HC: states only	
SC: states + entire country	
4) 65 — SC judge 62 — HC judge	4) <u>No retirement age</u> .

CONTEMPT POWERS

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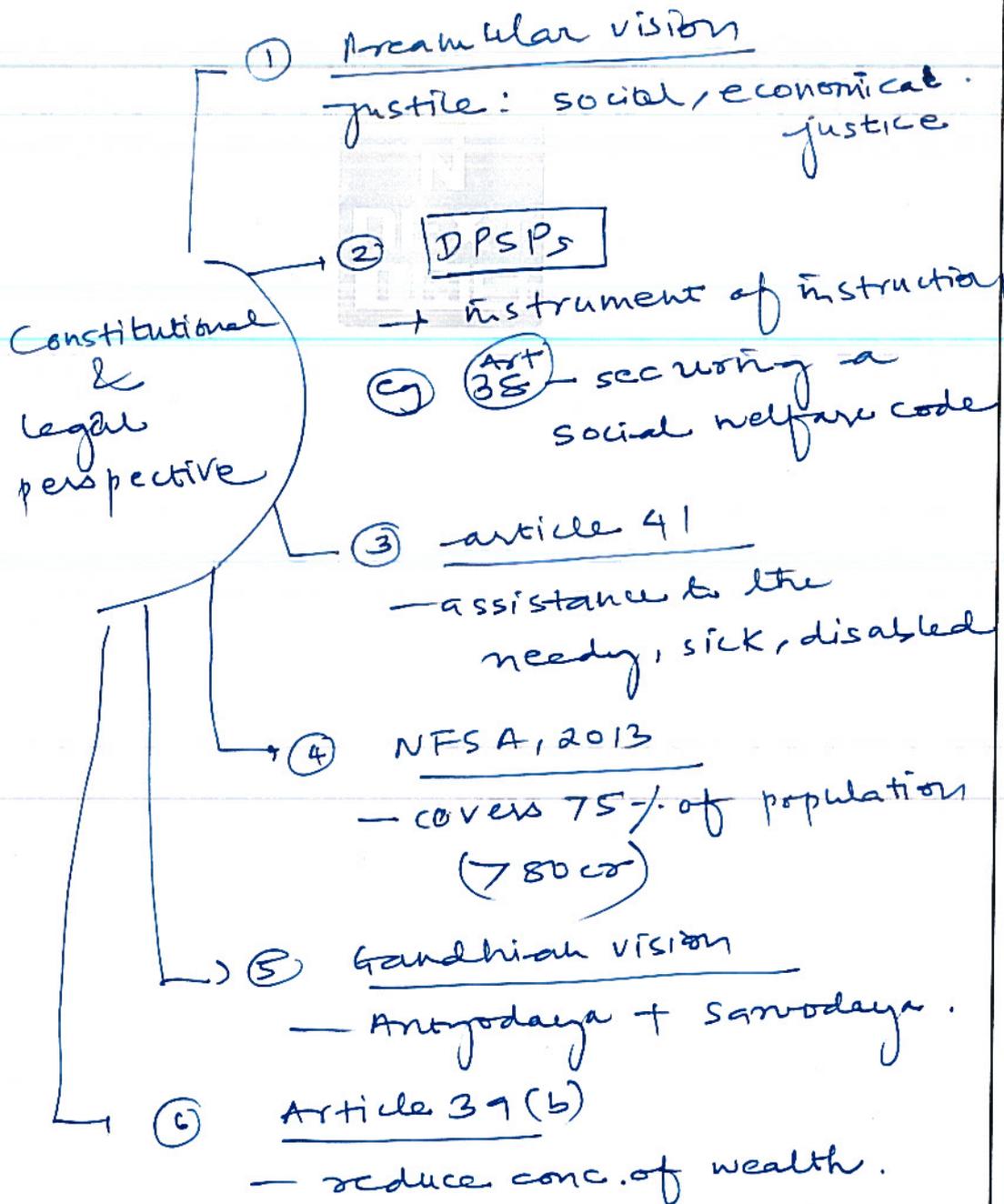
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- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) I mentioned in the constitution | 1) part of constitution & convention. |
| 2) contempt of P-Court, Act, 1971 | 2) no legislative mandate |
| 3) differentiates between civil & criminal contempt. | 3) No <u>such demarcation</u> |
| 4) definition in the Act | 4) defined in the Constitution itself |
| 5) suo-moto cognizance | 5) similar powers of suo-moto |
| 6) AG permission needed for any contempt to be brought to <u>notice</u> | 6) Directly can be approached to the SC |

The contempt powers are needed to secure the authority and its administration of justice.

3. "Universal basic services and targeted welfare are fiscally sound, but competitive populism may hinder productive investment." In this context, highlight the constitutional and legal perspectives on welfare provisioning and discuss the impacts of the rising freebie culture. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

The recent RBI report on fiscal health of states - highlighted the concern of creating mini-srilankas due to unhinged freebies culture on the rise.

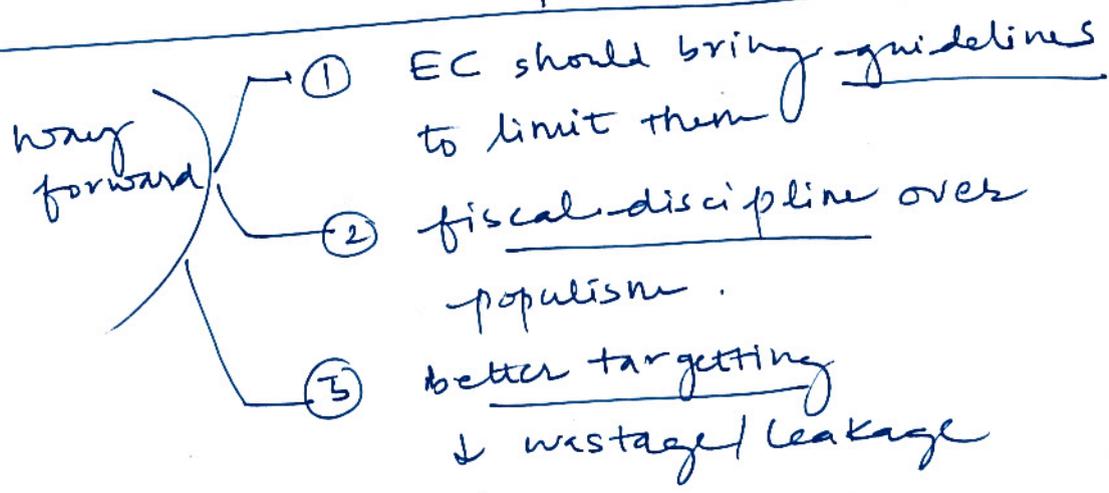


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Impacts of freebie culture

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
<p>1) financial independence (eg) 2000/- Gruhaaham Karnataka.</p> <p>2) workforce participation ↑ (eg) Free bus passes.</p> <p>3) SC in <u>Subramanian Balaji</u> ⇒ they are as per mandate of 2 PSPs.</p>	<p>1) Fiscal health deteriorating (eg) TN, Kerala, Rajasthan, Punjab</p> <p>2) <u>dependency</u> (eg) BR Gavai - CJI</p> <p>3) <u>chain-reaction</u> - leading to every party going for same.</p> <p>4) enforce/entrench patriarchal gendered role.</p>

Intro :
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Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay vs UOI is currently a petition regarding its impact. Freebies are not an end-in-themselves.

4. "The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India."
Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

Article 76 of the Indian Constitution provides for Attorney General of India

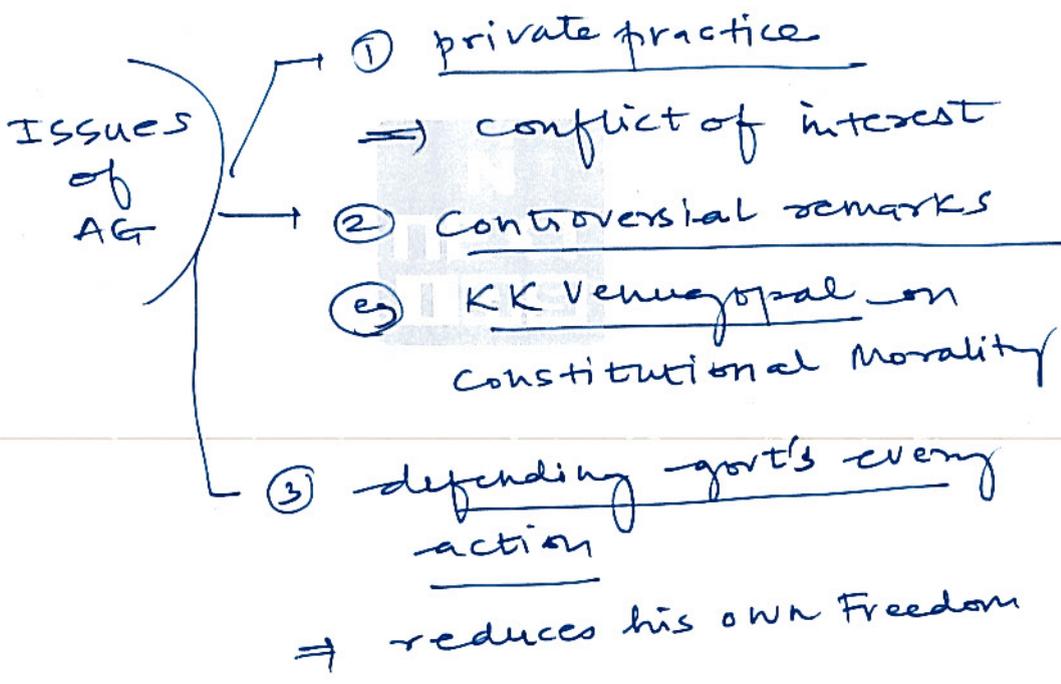
Role of AG

- ① he is not part of the executive but is entitled to its privileges under Article 105
- ② he can participate & speak in parliament & its committees
- ③ he represents the government in all the petitions against it.
- ④ He is the high law officer of the country
⇒ aids and advises the government
- ⑤ He represents the govt. in any international arbitration (or) mediation
- ⑥ The Italy mariners case (2021)

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- ⑥ He cannot advice anything against the govt.
- ⑦ His office is not under the govt. of India
⇒ thus, free to practice privately
- ⑧ He resigns alongside the executive
⇒ sink and sail together.



AG, thus, acts as the legal guardian of the central government, its protector and dependent.

5. "Lokpal is not a panacea, but a vital step towards ensuring accountability in public life." In this context, discuss the significance of the institution of Lokpal, along with the limitations it faces. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

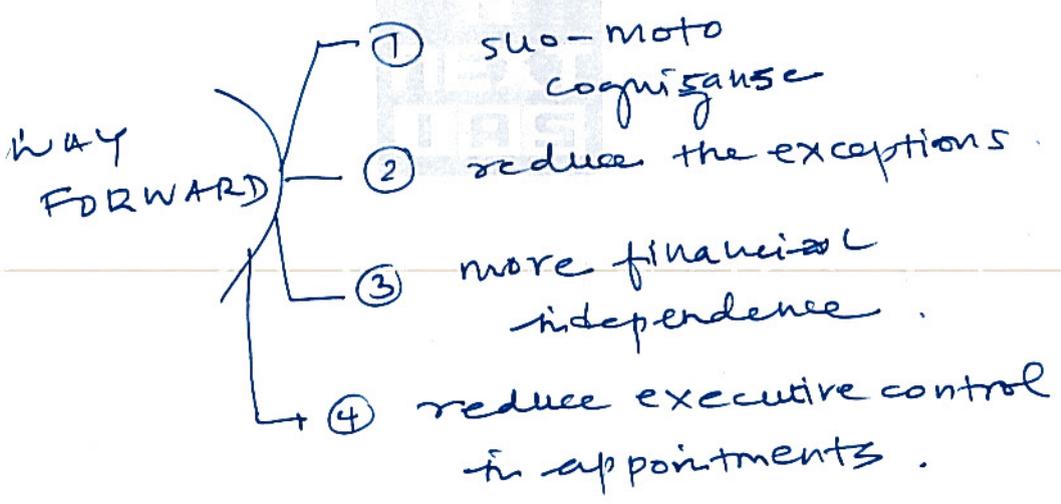
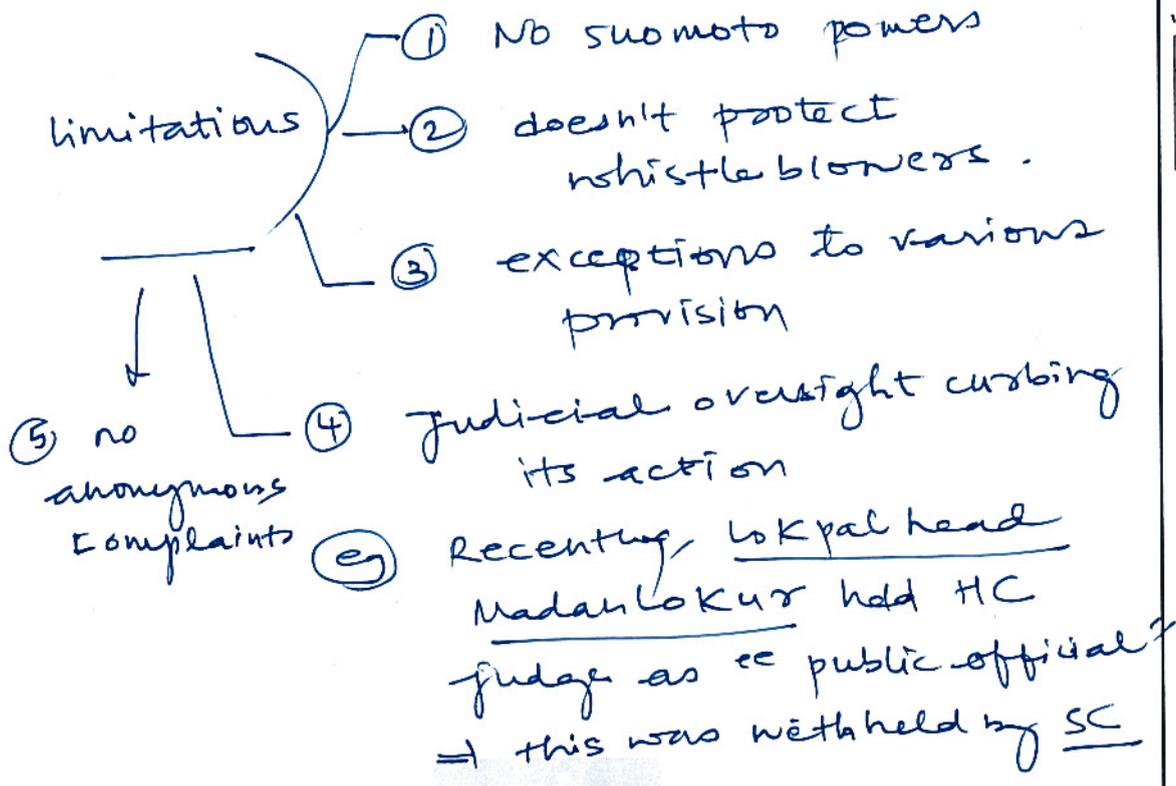
Lokpal is a quasi-judicial body which acts as the Ombudsman in creating accountability and transparency.

Significance

- ① gatekeeper of the administrative governance.
⇒ efficiency, transparency.
- ② tackle issues of graft, corruption and impropriety.
- ③ Jurisdiction includes broad meaning in public officials =
⇒ including Prime Minister.
- ④ increases the public trust in democratic institutions.
- ⑤ watchdog of financial propriety.
⇒ ensure ethical governance.

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"the strength of Lokpal lies in its ability to adjudicate fearlessly and increasing accessibility"

- Justice HL Dattu

6. "Municipal corporations are key to urban governance, yet states often show reluctance to empower them functionally and financially". In this context, examine the key challenges faced by municipal corporations and suggest measures for a paradigm shift in urban local governance. (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

A recent study by RBI, has highlighted the "hollowing out" of the urban local bodies (ULBs) financially in spite of the vision of 74th CAA, 1992 as creating them as institutions of self governance.

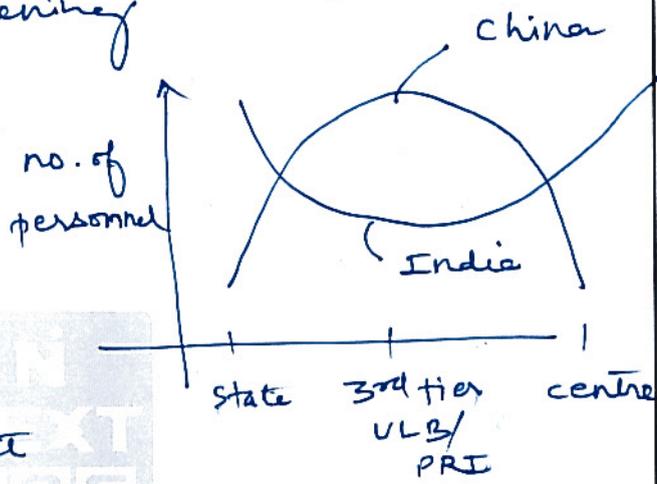
Key challenges faced by ULBS.

- ① only 10% of the states, devolved all the functions in the 12th schedule.
- ② presence of parastatal bodies
 - 2.1 \Rightarrow parallel powers.
 - 2.2 \Rightarrow reduced them to just service delivery mechanism
 - eg) BWSSB in Bangalore
 - 2.3 \Rightarrow competing interests leading to confusion and neglect.
- ③ lack of sufficient devolution of financing from FC & SFC.
 - \rightarrow under article 243(F)

④ Lack of taxing opportunities beyond property taxes.

⑤ lack of a dedicated working staff - career based force
 ⇒ leading to inefficiency & overburdening

⑥ The allocations to ULBs is very less - globally



eg china spends 2/3 of budget at tier-3 level

⑦ non-uniformity of corporations -

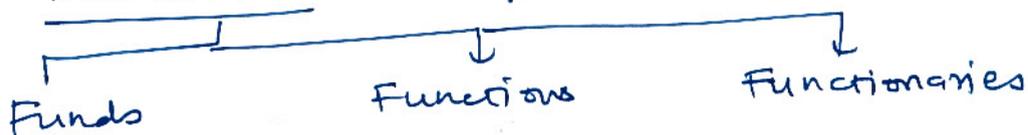
eg Corporation, Council,

⑧ Mayor is symbolic head
 ⇒ no real powers are vested.

⑨ regular elections

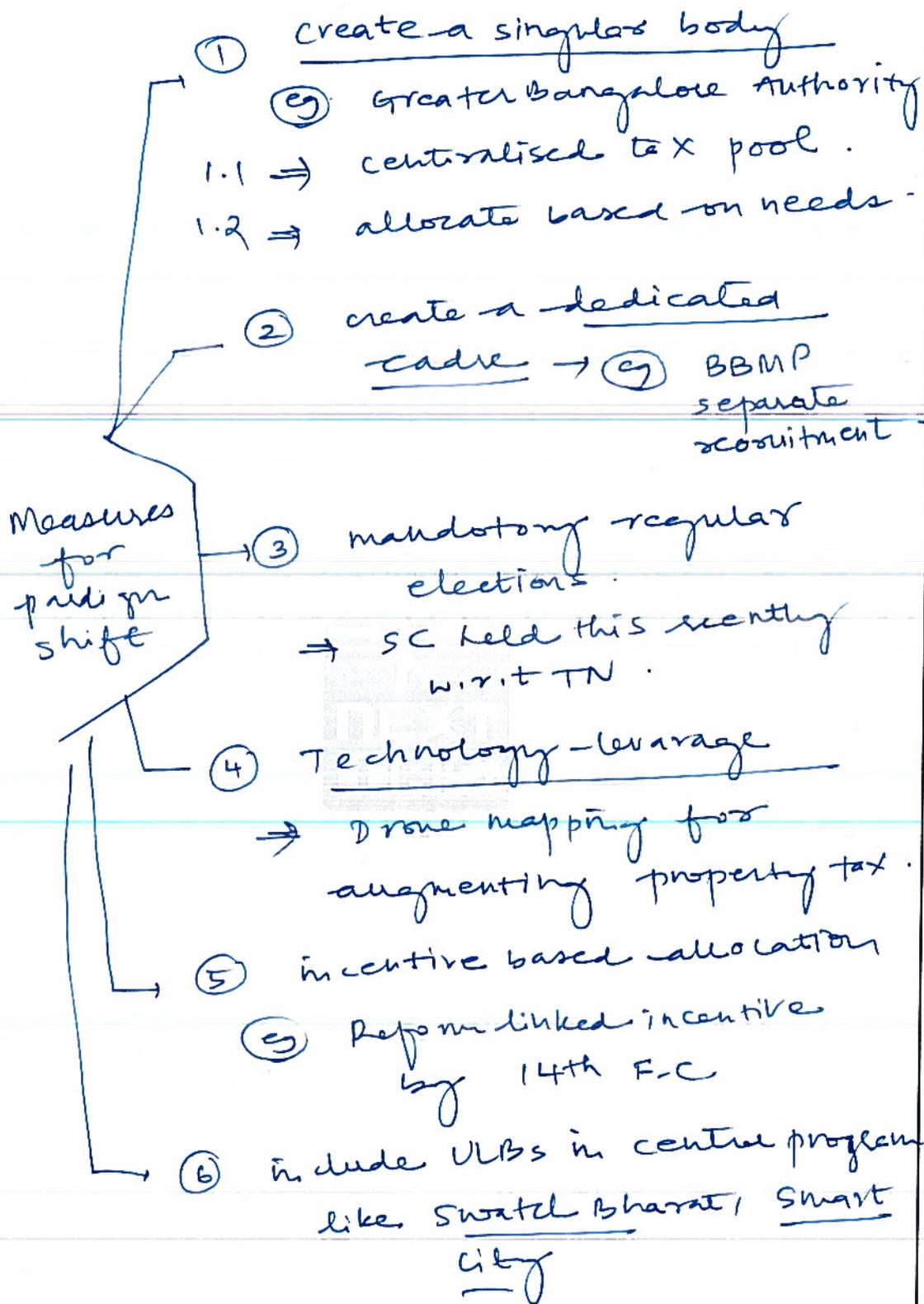
eg TN, KAR → do not conduct ULBs election recently, - due for 2 years.

⑩ The 3Fs - Lacking



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Smart cities can be realised by making the ULBs more functionally & financially stronger

7. Discuss the constitutional provisions governing the imposition of President's Rule in India and its significance within the federal framework. Examine the challenges and criticisms related to its misuse. Mention key Supreme Court observations that have shaped the constitutional understanding of President's Rule. (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

"India is a federal polity with centralising tendency" - as said by I.V.R. JENNINGS and the emergency provisions are testament to it.

- Constitutional provisions.
- ① Part XX
- article 352 to 360.
 - ② Article 356
- president's rule.
 - ③ Article 355
- duty of the centre to protect states.
 - ④ Article 365
- failure of constitutional machinery.
- not working as per the direction of the central govt.

The emergency provisions were inspired by the Weimar Republic.

Significance

- 1) blend of rigidity & flexibility.
- 1.1 ⇒ Dr. Ambedkar: "The Indian federal polity will be converted to unitary one in times of constitutional crisis"
- 2) to check administrative failure and subversion of public order in the state
- 3) ensure smooth functioning w/o any interregnum.

Challenges & Criticisms

- 1) The use of Article 356, has been an avg. of twice per year in the constitutional history of India.
- 2) Ambedkar had called that it would remain a dead letter.
⇒ politicised by central govt.
- 3) The misuse of the provision to topple opposition-led govt in states
- ⊙ During the 70s & 90s...

Candidates must not
write on this marginSC Judgements

- 1) SR Bommai - detailed on the various situations where Article 356 is legitimate and not malafide.
- 2) In the same case, SC said federalism is the part of Basic structure
- 3) Sarkara Commission
- should be used sparingly only when there is imminent threat to working of state govt.
- 4) In Rameshwar Prasad, the grounds for using Art. 356 should not be arbitrary / fanciful and are subject to judicial review
- 5) in various cases, SC has ~~has~~ used its power to reinstate the state govt

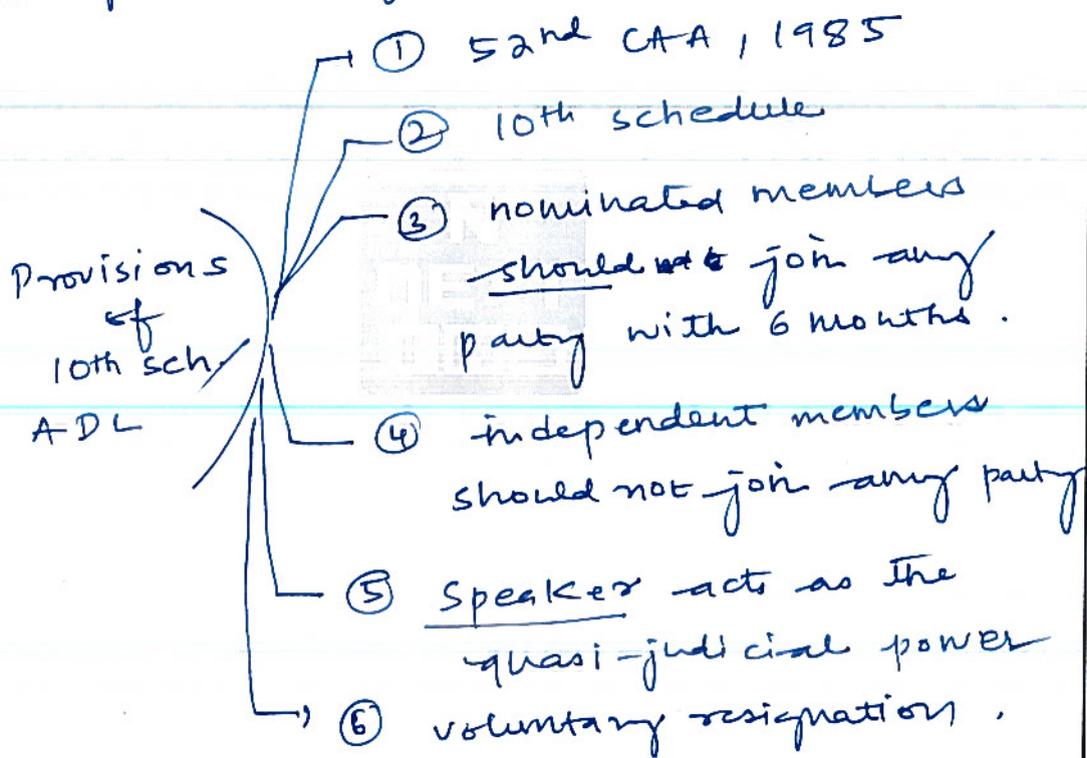
Recently, Article 356 was issued in the state of Manipur to curb the ongoing crisis, showcases the potential of President's Rule in addressing constitutional crisis.

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8. "Delay in disqualification under the Anti-Defection Law weakens governance and undermines democratic stability." Discuss the provisions of the Anti-Defection Law and the role of the Speaker in its implementation. How does the delay in disqualification affect governance? Suggest reforms needed to strengthen the law.

(Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

The 52nd Constitutional amendment provided for anti-defection law to curb the practice of horse-trading (Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram)



Role of speaker

- 1) he has to act as the quasi-judicial body in implementing it
- 2) non-partisan, neutral expert.
- 3) act on the defection quickly to maintain the electoral dignity

Delay affects the governance

- 1) As the agenda of legislators becomes only power-capture
- 2) leads to horse-trading
(eg) operation of Lotus in Karnataka
- 3) more focus on toppling/dismantling the existing power rather than act as a strong opposition
- 4) lack of informed debates as highlighted by Hameed Ansari
- 5) loss of trust by the electoral mandate → misuse to just for ministerial position ⇒ personal interests over public interests
⇒ highlighted in MANDY NARULA case
- 6) governance deficit

Reforms needed

- 1) Kihoto Holloh (1992)
— judicial review of speaker's action.

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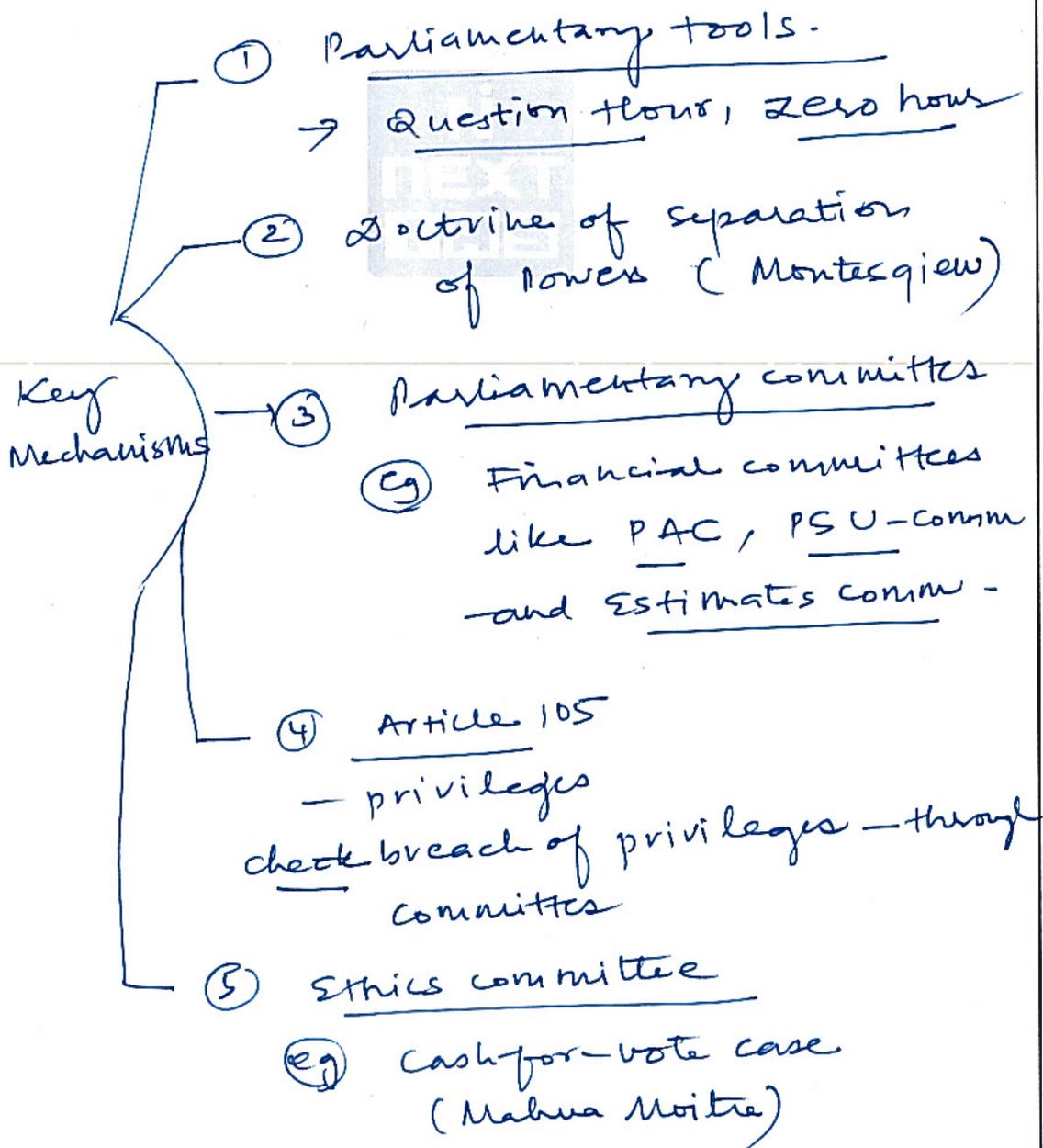
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- 2) In Keisham Meghachandra Singh
- SC said speaker should act with 30 days.
- 3) In Ravi Naik (1994)
- speaker acts as quasi-judicial body
- must act non-partisan manner
- 4) In the Karnataka Assembly case
→ SC said, the issues of anti-defection should be decided by Prez / Gov. on the advice of Election Commission
- 5) Dinesh Goswami - reduce the whips to only no-confidence motion
- 6) NCRWC (Venkatchiah) - 2002
→ define the words of voluntary resignation, more clearly, to reduce ambiguity.

Recently, CJI BR Gavai said the supreme court is not powerless in acting on delays in deciding anti-defection petitions.

9. Examine the key mechanisms available to the Indian Parliament to scrutinise the executive. What are the major gaps in these mechanisms, and how can they be strengthened to uphold the principles of transparency and accountability? (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

India has a parliamentary democracy with executive responsible collectively and individually to the parliament, enforced by various constitutional checks - (Article 78)



⑥ No confidence motion

— passed in LS.

⑦ privilege motion, censure motion

⑧ GAG

Major Gaps

① The recommendations of the parliamentary committee are not binding.

② CAG report tabled are not discussed at length → only 60%.
[CAG Report: 2024]

③ use of ordinance route

→ (eg) highlighted in Krishna Kumar Singh (2016)

④ Question hour

— disruption frequently → (56% productivity)

⑤ The speaker's non-partisan role
→ erosion of control over executive

→ expulsion of RS members.

⑥ lack of informed debates

(eg) only < 30 mins per discussion

⑦ vacancies in committees.

→ leading to sound debates

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8) PAC, Estimates

- post-modern analysis
- cannot make policy changes.

How to strengthen them?

- 1) binding powers to PAC, Estimate
- 2) mandatory tabling of Parliament
- committee reports
⇒ and discussion

- 3) CAF Reports - need to be answered.

- 4) minimum no. of sittings / year
⊙ 120 for LS ; 100 for RS.

5) Shashi Tharoor

- ⇒ fixed allocation of time for opposition

- 6) Judicial oversight over ordinance mechanism

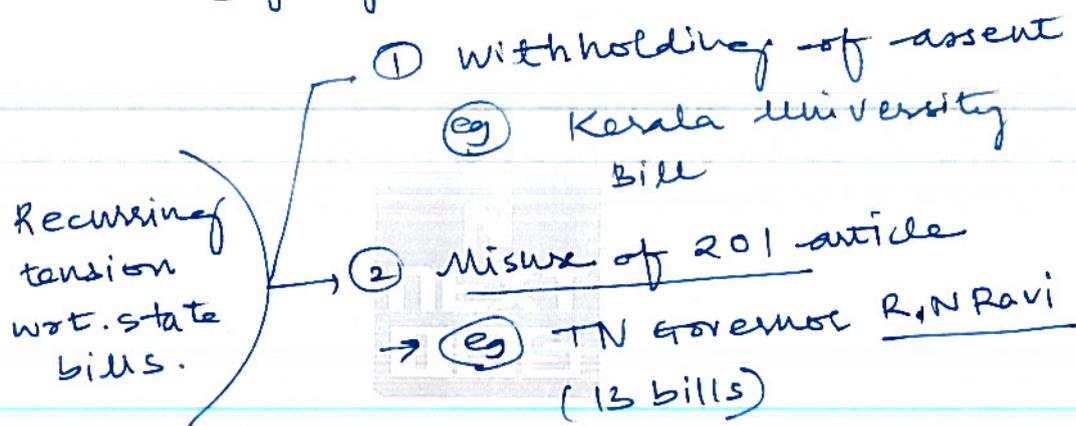
- 7) issue of whips only in serious matter

⇒ leading to healthy / informed debate.

The parliamentary check on executive is needed to curb arbitrary exercise of power ⇒ RULE OF LAW

10. "The powers of the Governor, particularly with respect to state bills, have sparked recurring tensions between the Centre and the States." Discuss the constitutional powers of the Governor in this regard. Highlight the key concerns arising out of the Governor's role in the legislative process. What reforms can help address the Governor-State disputes? Refer to the case laws. (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

The 2nd ARC calls Governor as the lynchpin of cooperative federalism. Further, R. Venkataram calls governor as the emergency lamp.



Constitutional powers of Governor

- 1) Article 153:
There shall be a governor to each state
- 2) He is the de jure executive head of the state
- 3) Article 163:
- discretionary powers of the governor.
- 4) Article 161:
- pardoning powers.
- 5) Article 133:
- ordinance making power of GUV.

6) Article 355/365

- send a report to the central govt.
regarding call for President's Rule
under A-356.

Key
concerns

① Misuse of assent powers.
under article 200 & 201

eg) TN Governor withheld 13
bills

② misuse of discretionary
powers.

eg) Nehru Rautia - highlighted
he has to act within limited
powers acc. to CoM advice

③ acts as the agent of the centre
govt.

eg) Shamsher Singh - Governor is
not a post under GoI

④ BP singhal

- arbitrary removal of Gov.
by the President.

⑤ misuse of pardoning powers.

eg) AQ Perarivelan case.

Reforms needed

- 1) Puanchi Commission : relieve Governor of extra duties (e.g.) Chancellor of Universities
- 2) Sarkara Commission
- consult the state govt in appointment process
- 3) Nebam Rabia - his discretionary powers should be used carefully. His actions should not be arbitrary, fanciful or capricious.
- 4) Similarly, in SR Bommai (1994)
→ Floor test is mandatory
- 5) Rameshwar Prasad
→ he is not subordinate to central govt.
- 6) 2nd ARC/NCRWC
→ he should be non-political person who looked state govt & centre from a detached position.

Governor position thus is a bridge between the states and union for realising cooperative federalism
- Ram Nath Kovind
(former President)

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NEXT IAS

Space for Rough Work

NEXT IAS

Space for Rough Work

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4. Do not leave behind your QCA Booklet on your table unattended, it should be handed over to the invigilator after conclusion of the exam.

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1. Read the Instructions on the cover page and strictly follow them.
2. Write your registration number and other particulars, in the space provided on the cover of QCA Booklet.
3. Write legibly and neatly. Do not write in bad/illegible handwritings.
4. For rough notes or calculation, the last two blank pages of this booklet should be used. The rough notes should be crossed through afterwards.
5. If you wish to cancel any work, draw your pen through it or write "Cancelled" across it, otherwise it may be evaluated.
6. Handover your QCA Booklet personally to the invigilator before leaving the examination hall.

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