Science & Technology · GS - II

Examine the relationship between secularism, freedom of expression and environmental awareness in India. How should public authorities balance these constitutional principles when responding to objections against public-awareness campaigns?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 03/11/2026	GS - II	Science & Technology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Constitutional secularism; freedom of expression; religious freedom; equality before law; environmental awareness; public health; political interference; administrative accountability; judicial review

Model Answer

Introduction

Secularism, freedom of expression and environmental protection are important elements of India's constitutional framework. The reported Bombay High Court intervention concerning a Diwali pollution-awareness video raises questions about the responsibilities of public authorities when awareness campaigns face objections.

Constitutional Dimensions

Secularism requires the State to act consistently with constitutional principles rather than arbitrarily favouring or disadvantaging religious communities. Freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a), subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2), protects communication within constitutional limits. Article 25 safeguards religious freedom, subject to specified limitations.

Environmental awareness supports public health and responsible behaviour, particularly during festivals when pollution may increase.

Administrative Challenges

Public authorities must distinguish legitimate regulatory concerns from objections that may result in arbitrary censorship. Decisions to remove public communications should follow transparent, lawful and non-discriminatory criteria. Political pressure should not substitute for reasoned administrative decision-making.

Way Forward

Authorities should establish clear communication policies, provide reasons for removing public-awareness material and maintain accessible grievance-redressal mechanisms. Judicial review can help ensure that administrative actions comply with constitutional requirements.

Conclusion

A constitutional democracy must protect religious freedom and expression while promoting public health. Transparent, impartial and legally justified decisions are essential to maintaining public trust.

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