Polity & Governance · GS - II

The juvenile justice system must balance the rehabilitation of children in conflict with law with the rights of victims and the demands of public safety. Critically examine this balance in the context of serious offences involving minors.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 12/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Juvenile Justice Act 2015, principle of best interests of the child, preliminary assessment of heinous offences, rehabilitation versus accountability, victim's rights, bail and evidence protection, institutional capacity, child psychology, restorative justice, procedural safeguards.

Model Answer

Introduction

The juvenile justice framework recognises children as individuals requiring protection, reform and rehabilitation. However, serious offences involving minors create complex questions concerning accountability, victim justice and public safety.

Balancing Rehabilitation and Accountability

The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 treats persons below 18 years as children. However, under Section 15, the Juvenile Justice Board may conduct a preliminary assessment when a child aged 16–18 is alleged to have committed a heinous offence. This considers mental and physical capacity, understanding of consequences and circumstances of the alleged offence. It does not automatically result in adult trial.

Victim Rights and Public Safety

Victims and their families are entitled to a fair investigation and judicial process. Concerns regarding evidence tampering, intimidation or interference with witnesses must be examined while deciding bail. Child-sensitive procedures should not undermine legitimate victim protection.

Way Forward

Strengthening juvenile justice boards, counselling, rehabilitation facilities, forensic investigation and victim-support services is essential. Decisions must remain evidence-based and consistent with statutory safeguards.

Conclusion

A balanced juvenile justice system must combine child rehabilitation with meaningful accountability, victim dignity and public confidence in the rule of law.

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