India post independence · GS - I

Jawaharlal Nehru’s vision of nation-building shaped India’s democratic institutions, economic planning and scientific development. Analyse the enduring significance and limitations of his approach to institution-building in post-independence India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Parliamentary democracy, constitutional institutions, Planning Commission, mixed economy, scientific temper, higher education, non-alignment, centralisation, public-sector limitations, institutional continuity.

Model Answer

Introduction

Jawaharlal Nehru played a foundational role in shaping India's post-independence political, economic and intellectual institutions. His approach sought to combine democracy, secularism, scientific temper and planned development.

Major Contributions

Nehru strengthened parliamentary democracy, electoral practices and constitutional governance. The Planning Commission and Five-Year Plans reflected his belief in state-led economic development. He promoted heavy industries, public-sector enterprises and scientific research. Institutions such as the IITs and national research laboratories helped build India's technical and scientific capabilities. His foreign policy of non-alignment preserved independent decision-making amid Cold War rivalries.

Limitations

Excessive dependence on centralised planning sometimes weakened local initiative and market responsiveness. The public sector faced inefficiencies, while industrial growth did not adequately resolve poverty and unemployment. Institutional expansion also required stronger accountability and administrative capacity.

Conclusion

Nehru's legacy lies in establishing durable democratic and developmental foundations. Contemporary India must preserve these institutions while improving decentralisation, efficiency, inclusion and accountability.

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