Society & Social Justice · GS - I

How do you understand disability? Substantiate the need for inclusive policy framework in India in this regard.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2026	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Social model of disability, impairment and barriers, dignity, equality, accessibility, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, education, employment, healthcare, assistive technology, reasonable accommodation, social inclusion

Model Answer

Disability should not be understood merely as an individual physical or mental impairment. The contemporary social model recognises disability as the interaction between an impairment and social, institutional and environmental barriers that restrict participation on an equal basis.

An inclusive policy framework is therefore essential in India to ensure dignity, equality and full participation of persons with disabilities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 provides a legal foundation by expanding recognised disabilities and emphasising non-discrimination, accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

Inclusive policies are needed across education, healthcare, employment, transportation and digital services. Accessible infrastructure, assistive technologies, inclusive schooling, skill development and appropriate workplace accommodation can improve participation and economic independence. Social security measures are also necessary for persons facing greater vulnerabilities.

Effective implementation requires accessible public infrastructure, disability-sensitive administration and participation of persons with disabilities in policymaking.

Thus, disability-inclusive governance should move beyond welfare-based approaches towards a rights-based framework that enables persons with disabilities to exercise citizenship, autonomy and equal opportunities.