Polity & Governance · GS - II

“Transparency and accountability in governance are not about controlling corruption but about creating the trust of stakeholders in the policy process by following the Rule of Law and Participatory Governance.” Comment.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Transparency, accountability, Rule of Law, participatory governance, RTI, social audit, stakeholder trust, institutional legitimacy, citizen participation, grievance redressal

Model Answer

Transparency and accountability are broader than anti-corruption mechanisms. They constitute the institutional foundations through which citizens, businesses and civil society can understand, scrutinise and participate in public decision-making.

Transparency enables stakeholders to access information about policies, budgets, procedures and outcomes. The Right to Information framework has strengthened citizens’ ability to scrutinise public authorities. Accountability complements transparency by ensuring that decision-makers can be questioned and that failures invite corrective action.

Their larger significance lies in building trust through the Rule of Law. When policies are implemented according to publicly known rules, applied consistently and subjected to institutional review, arbitrary exercise of power is reduced. This enhances predictability and legitimacy.

Participatory governance further deepens this process. Gram Sabhas, social audits, public consultations, citizen charters and grievance-redressal mechanisms enable stakeholders to become participants rather than passive

beneficiaries. The formulation of NEP 2020, for example, involved extensive consultations with States, institutions and citizens, demonstrating how participation can inform policy design.

Technology can reinforce these principles through open-data platforms, digital service delivery, DBT and online grievance systems. However, transparency without accessibility, accountability without independent institutions, or participation without meaningful consideration of stakeholder inputs can become procedural rather than substantive.

Therefore, governance should move from secrecy and discretion towards reasoned decision-making, disclosure, consultation and answerability. Transparency and accountability are consequently not merely instruments for detecting corruption; they are mechanisms for ensuring procedural fairness, institutional legitimacy and sustained public trust.