Polity & Governance · GS - II

“Freedom of speech and expression must be balanced with the protection of reputation and the prevention of misinformation in the digital age.” Discuss.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 19(1)(a), Article 19(2), Freedom of Speech, Defamation, Right to Reputation, Article 21, Social Media Regulation, Digital Misinformation, Due Process of Law, Police Accountability.

Model Answer

Introduction

Freedom of speech and expression is a fundamental right under Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution. However, this freedom is subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2), including those relating to defamation.

Main Body

Social media platforms enable rapid information sharing and public debate. However, false or defamatory content can damage an individual's reputation and spread misleading narratives. Complaints concerning online posts, such as those reported in the Mumbai Police notice case, highlight the challenges of regulating digital communication.

Authorities may investigate alleged unlawful content, but their actions must follow due process and applicable law. A police notice does not establish guilt. At the same time, restrictions should not unnecessarily suppress legitimate

criticism, investigative journalism or public discussion.

Effective measures include digital literacy, transparent investigations, timely legal remedies and greater accountability of online platforms, while safeguarding constitutional freedoms.

Conclusion

India must maintain a balance between freedom of expression and protection of individual rights. Fair enforcement of the law, judicial oversight and responsible digital participation are essential for a democratic and accountable online environment.

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