Polity & Governance · GS - II

“Fundamental rights do not end at the prison gates.” Discuss this statement in the context of the Indian Constitution.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 21, human dignity, prisoners’ rights, reformative justice, rehabilitation, judicial oversight.

Model Answer

Introduction:

The Indian constitutional framework recognises that imprisonment restricts liberty but does not eliminate an individual’s entitlement to humane treatment and constitutional protection.

Constitutional Basis and Significance

1. Article 21: Protects prisoners’ right to life and personal liberty, subject to lawful restrictions.
2. Judicial oversight: Courts can intervene against arbitrary treatment and violations of prisoners’ rights.
3. Rehabilitation: Family contact and eligible prison leave can support social reintegration.
4. Reformative justice: Education, vocational training and counselling can help reduce reoffending.

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Key Challenges:

Prison overcrowding, inadequate healthcare, staff shortages and limited rehabilitation facilities continue to affect prison administration.

Way Forward:

India should strengthen prison reforms, legal aid, transparent leave procedures and rehabilitation programmes while maintaining public safety.

Conclusion:

A just prison system must uphold the rule of law and human dignity while balancing punishment, public security and the possibility of reform.

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