International Relations · GS - II

What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of the UNESCO? What is India’s position on these?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2016	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
12.5	~200 words

Answer Hint

MacBride Commission; UNESCO; New World Information and Communication Order; media inequality; communication rights; information sovereignty; press freedom; global media representation

Model Answer

Introduction

The International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by Irish diplomat and Nobel laureate Seán MacBride, was established by UNESCO in 1977. Its report, *Many Voices, One World*, was published in 1980.

Aims and Objectives

- **Address global communication inequalities:** Examine disparities between developed and developing countries in access to communication infrastructure and information.
- **Promote balanced information flows:** Reduce the concentration of international news production and dissemination in a few powerful media organisations.
- **Support communication development:** Encourage developing countries to build independent media and communication capabilities.
- **Promote wider participation:** Improve access to information and enable communities to express their perspectives.

- **Protect communication rights:** Emphasise freedom of expression, access to information and the social responsibilities of media.
- **Encourage international cooperation:** Recommend a more equitable global communication order, commonly associated with the proposed New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO).

India's Position

India broadly supported the concerns of developing countries regarding unequal international information flows and the dominance of Western news agencies. It favoured greater access to communication technologies, stronger domestic media capabilities and a more balanced representation of developing countries in global reporting.

At the same time, debates surrounding the proposed communication order raised concerns about state control of media and possible restrictions on press freedom. The challenge was to promote equitable information access without undermining independent journalism and freedom of expression.

Contemporary Relevance

Digital platforms have widened access to information but also created new inequalities involving technology, ownership, algorithmic visibility and misinformation. The commission's concerns therefore remain relevant in the digital age.

Conclusion

The MacBride Commission sought a more equitable and pluralistic international communication system. Its central challenge remains balancing global information justice with media independence and freedom of expression.