International Relations · GS - II

International human rights scrutiny often creates tensions between the principles of national sovereignty and international accountability. Examine how India can balance its domestic judicial autonomy with engagement in international human rights institutions.

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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

National sovereignty, international human rights, USCIRF, Universal Periodic Review, UN Human Rights Council, judicial independence, non-interference, diplomatic engagement, constitutional safeguards, international accountability.

Model Answer

Introduction

International human rights institutions monitor state practices and encourage compliance with global standards. However, their assessments may generate diplomatic disagreements concerning sovereignty, jurisdiction and domestic legal processes.

Sources of Tension

- **Sovereignty:** States retain authority over domestic judicial and constitutional processes.
- **Institutional limitations:** Advisory international bodies generally cannot overturn domestic court orders.

- **Perceived selectivity:** Differences in methodology and country-specific assessments may generate concerns about political bias.
- **International accountability:** Human rights obligations also require states to engage constructively with legitimate international scrutiny.

India's Approach

India can safeguard judicial independence and constitutional procedures while participating in mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review. Diplomatic engagement, evidence-based responses and transparent reporting can address international concerns without compromising domestic legal autonomy.

Way Forward

India should strengthen domestic human rights institutions, ensure due process, improve transparency in judicial proceedings and engage constructively with international review mechanisms.

Conclusion

Sovereignty and international accountability need not be contradictory. A credible approach combines independent domestic institutions with constructive participation in global human rights dialogue.

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