International Relations · GS - II

The authority of international judicial institutions depends not merely on the legal validity of their judgments but also on State compliance. Critically examine the enforcement challenges faced by the International Court of Justice in cases involving allegations of genocide.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

ICJ Statute, Article 94 UN Charter, Genocide Convention, State responsibility, binding judgments, provisional measures, Security Council, veto power, State sovereignty, international cooperation, diplomatic pressure, accountability.

Model Answer

Introduction

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its judgments provide authoritative interpretations of international law, including obligations under the Genocide Convention. However, implementation depends substantially on State cooperation.

Legal Authority of the ICJ

- Under Article 59 of its Statute, judgments are binding on the parties to a particular dispute.
- Article 94(1) of the UN Charter requires UN members to comply with ICJ decisions in cases to which they are parties.

- The ICJ can determine State responsibility and prescribe provisional measures to prevent irreparable harm.

Major Enforcement Challenges

1. **Absence of independent enforcement machinery:** The ICJ does not possess its own police or executive authority to enforce judgments.
2. **Security Council limitations:** Under Article 94(2), a party may approach the Security Council when another party fails to comply. However, political divisions and veto powers can obstruct effective action.
3. **State sovereignty:** International judicial enforcement operates within a system where States retain significant control over domestic implementation.
4. **Geopolitical interests:** Strategic alliances and regional power considerations may weaken collective pressure.
5. **Implementation gap:** Legal findings do not automatically ensure protection of vulnerable populations or prosecution of responsible individuals.

Way Forward

Strengthening international monitoring, preserving evidence, supporting independent investigations and coordinating diplomatic pressure can improve compliance. States should also strengthen domestic mechanisms for implementing international obligations.

Conclusion

The ICJ provides an essential legal framework for accountability, but its effectiveness depends on political will and international cooperation. Bridging the gap between judicial decisions and actual implementation remains crucial to preventing genocide and protecting vulnerable communities.