Polity & Governance · GS - II

Analyse how infrequent sittings of State Legislative Assemblies affect legislative oversight, executive accountability and representative democracy. What institutional measures can strengthen the functioning of State Legislatures?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 23/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Legislative productivity, Article 174, executive accountability, legislative scrutiny, committee system, opposition participation, parliamentary conventions

Model Answer

Introduction

State Legislatures are central to India's federal parliamentary system. They enact laws, approve public expenditure and hold the executive accountable. Reports of the 18th Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly sitting for fewer than 90 days have renewed concerns about legislative functioning.

Implications of Infrequent Legislative Sittings

1. **Weak legislative scrutiny:** Limited time for debates and discussions reduces the examination of bills, amendments and government policies.

2. **Reduced executive accountability:** Question Hour, calling-attention motions and other oversight mechanisms provide fewer opportunities to question ministers and examine administrative decisions.

3. **Financial oversight concerns:** Inadequate discussion of budgets and demands for grants can weaken scrutiny of public expenditure and fiscal priorities.

4. **Marginalisation of representation:** Members receive fewer opportunities to raise constituency-level concerns, discuss public grievances and represent diverse social interests.

5. **Concentration of executive influence:** When legislative scrutiny is limited, policy-making and implementation may face fewer institutional checks, although the extent of this effect depends on other accountability mechanisms.

Measures to Strengthen Legislative Functioning

1. **Predictable legislative calendar:** State Legislatures should adopt annual calendars with adequate sitting days, beyond the constitutional minimum requirement of Article 174.

2. **Stronger committees:** Department-related standing committees should receive sufficient time and resources to examine bills, budgets and government programmes.

3. **Meaningful deliberation:** Adequate notice periods, effective Question Hour and opportunities for opposition participation should be protected.

4. **Legislative research support:** Independent research services can help legislators evaluate complex bills and policy proposals.

5. **Performance transparency:** Regular publication of data on sitting days, attendance, questions and committee reports can strengthen public accountability.

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Conclusion

The effectiveness of a legislature depends not merely on its formal constitutional existence but also on the time and institutional capacity available for deliberation. Strengthening legislative schedules, committee scrutiny and opposition participation can reinforce executive accountability and representative democracy.