Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the constitutional and administrative safeguards necessary to prevent the arbitrary use of Look Out Circulars while addressing legitimate national security and law-enforcement requirements.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 26/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Article 21, personal liberty, freedom of movement, due process, proportionality, executive discretion, judicial review, immigration administration

Model Answer

Look Out Circulars (LOCs) are administrative instruments used to alert immigration authorities about individuals whose movement requires monitoring or restriction. Although they assist law-enforcement agencies, their misuse can affect fundamental rights.

Constitutional dimensions

1. **Personal liberty:** Article 21 protects life and personal liberty. Restrictions on international travel must therefore satisfy the requirements of legality, fairness and non-arbitrariness.

2. **Freedom of movement:** Article 19(1)(d) guarantees movement throughout India to citizens, while international travel has been recognised as an aspect of personal liberty under Article 21.

3. **Procedural fairness:** Authorities should have relevant grounds, follow prescribed procedures and ensure that restrictions are proportionate to the legitimate objective.

Administrative concerns

1. **Executive discretion:** Broad or poorly defined powers may lead to LOCs being issued without adequate consideration of individual circumstances.

2. **Transparency:** Lack of timely communication can prevent affected individuals from understanding or challenging restrictions.

3. **Disproportionate impact:** Unnecessary travel restrictions can affect employment, education, business and family responsibilities.

Safeguards and accountability

1. Clear eligibility criteria and documented reasons should guide the issuance and continuation of LOCs.
2. Periodic review should ensure that restrictions remain necessary and proportionate.
3. Affected persons should have access to appropriate remedies, including judicial review.
4. Coordination between investigating agencies, immigration authorities and courts should prevent conflicting or outdated instructions.

Conclusion: LOCs are legitimate administrative tools when supported by law and necessity. Their effectiveness must be balanced with constitutional liberty, procedural fairness and institutional accountability.

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