# Polity & Governance · GS - II

**“Citizen participation in monitoring public infrastructure can improve service delivery and administrative accountability, but its effectiveness depends on institutional responsiveness.” Discuss with reference to NHAI’s Clean Toilet Picture Challenge.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
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| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
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| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Citizen reporting improves transparency, responsiveness and accountability. Discuss digital monitoring, incentives and verification, while addressing false reports, exclusion, privacy and institutional follow-up. Recommend measurable service standards and regular audits.**

## Model Answer

Citizen participation is an important instrument of accountable and responsive governance. NHAI’s Clean Toilet Picture Challenge encourages highway users to report unclean toll-plaza toilets through the Rajmargyatra app, offering an eligible reporter a ₹1,000 FASTag recharge.

The initiative uses geo-tagged photographs, digital reporting and verification to identify sanitation deficiencies. It can improve transparency, encourage public vigilance and create pressure on agencies responsible for maintaining public amenities. It also demonstrates how technology can supplement conventional inspections.

However, financial incentives may encourage duplicate or misleading complaints. Digital exclusion, inadequate follow-up and weak enforcement can reduce effectiveness. Citizen reporting cannot replace regular inspections, contractual supervision or accountability for repeated failures.

To strengthen the initiative, NHAI should establish measurable cleanliness standards, time-bound complaint resolution, periodic independent audits and transparent reporting of outcomes. Privacy safeguards and accessible complaint channels should also be ensured.

Thus, citizen participation is most effective when supported by reliable verification, responsive institutions and enforceable service-delivery standards.

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