Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the significance of press freedom and whistleblower protection in ensuring transparency and accountability in a democracy.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 21/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Freedom of the Press, First Amendment, Freedom of Expression, Whistleblower Protection, Government Accountability, Transparency, Checks and Balances, Investigative Journalism, Democratic Institutions.

Model Answer

Introduction

A free press and effective whistleblower protection are essential pillars of democratic governance. They enable citizens to access information, expose wrongdoing and hold those in power accountable.

Main Body

Significance of Press Freedom

1. Government accountability: Independent journalism scrutinises executive decisions and exposes possible misuse of power.

2. Informed citizenship: A free media enables citizens to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in democracy.
3. Checks and balances: Media scrutiny complements institutional oversight by highlighting corruption and administrative failures.

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Role of Whistleblower Protection

1. Exposure of wrongdoing: Whistleblowers can reveal corruption, fraud and abuse of authority.
2. Protection against retaliation: Legal safeguards encourage individuals to report misconduct without fear of victimisation.
3. Transparency: Secure reporting mechanisms strengthen public trust in government institutions.

Challenges and Way Forward

Intimidation of journalists, restrictions on information and retaliation against whistleblowers can discourage legitimate scrutiny. Governments should ensure legal protection, independent investigations, transparent procedures and accountability for misuse of official power, while respecting lawful restrictions and due process.

Conclusion

Democratic accountability requires both a free press and protected channels for reporting wrongdoing. Safeguarding these mechanisms strengthens transparency, the rule of law and public confidence in democratic institutions.