



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the roles and significance of statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies in governance, with examples, highlighting their impact on public administration. **(250 Words)**

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Approach:

- Briefly introduce the need for statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies in a democracy.
- Discuss the roles and significance of statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies in governance
- Highlight their impact on public administration.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction:

Effective democracy hinges on **well-structured governance machinery**. In India, beyond the legislature, executive, and judiciary, a network of **statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies** plays a crucial role in shaping public administration, safeguarding citizens' rights, and maintaining checks and balances within the system.

Body:

Statutory Bodies:

- **Role:** They are established by an act of Parliament or state legislatures and derive their authority from the respective acts.
 - These bodies are entrusted with specific functions and responsibilities, and their powers are clearly defined within the legal framework.
- **Significance:** They bring specialised expertise to public administration, improve efficiency, and ensure adherence to legislative intent.
- **Example:**
 - **Reserve Bank of India (Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934)**
 - **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) (Cinematograph Act, 1952)**
 - **National Human Rights Commission (Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993)**

Regulatory Bodies:

- **Role:** These bodies are often subsets of statutory bodies tasked with **formulating regulations** and overseeing their implementation within a particular sector. They can impose penalties for non-compliance.
- **Significance:** Regulatory bodies ensure a level playing field, protect consumer interests, and promote sectoral growth.
- **Example:**
 - The **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** regulates the telecommunications sector, prescribing tariffs and ensuring fair competition.
 - The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** regulates food safety and quality standards.

Quasi-Judicial Bodies:

- **Role:** These bodies combine features of both **executive and judicial branches**. They adjudicate disputes arising from the application of laws and regulations, often following simplified procedures compared to regular courts.
- **Significance:** They provide faster and more accessible avenues for dispute resolution, decongesting regular courts and ensuring quicker justice.
- **Examples:**
 - The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** adjudicates environmental disputes, while the **National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission** addresses consumer grievances.

Impact on Public Administration:

- **Enhanced Expertise and Informed Decision-Making:** These bodies leverage specialised knowledge to tackle complex issues, enabling data-driven decisions within public administration.
 - For instance, the **World Bank** has kept India's growth forecast at **6.3% for FY24**. The RBI uses these data-driven strategies to regulate interest rates, aiming to control inflation and promote economic growth.
- **Streamlined Processes and Improved Service Delivery:** Statutory and regulatory bodies establish **clear guidelines and procedures**, leading to measurable improvements in service delivery by government agencies.
 - **Example:** FSSAI has recently clarified that the term '**Health Drink**' is not defined or standardised anywhere under the **FSS Act 2006**
- **Fostering Accountability and Compliance:** Regulatory bodies set standards, enforce compliance, and hold stakeholders accountable for their actions, demonstrably improving **ethical practices**.
- **Promoting Transparency and Citizen Centricity:** Quasi-judicial bodies provide accessible platforms for citizens to address grievances, leading to a more transparent and responsive public administration system.
 - Following a massive fire at Delhi's Ghazipur landfill, the National Green Tribunal took suo motu cognizance and referred to dump sites in cities as "**time bombs**."
- **Adaptability and Addressing Emerging Challenges:** These bodies can adapt and evolve regulations to address new challenges and technological advancements, demonstrably tackling emerging issues.
 - **SEBI's** recent regulations for **algorithmic trading** are a data-driven response to a new challenge.

Conclusion:

In rapidly evolving circumstances, the roles of statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies transcend mere governance; they represent the cornerstone of a progressive society. These bodies not only enforce laws but also shape the future by fostering innovation, ensuring accountability, and protecting fundamental rights.