



Good Governance Day

For Prelims: Good Governance Day, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Quit India Movement

For Mains: Good Governance and related challenges, Government Policies & Interventions

Why in News?

Good Governance Day (25th December) is being celebrated on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister [Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#).

What is Good Governance?

▪ About:

- Governance is the **process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)**.
 - Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance.
- Good Governance is defined as **“the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”**
- The concept of good governance existed even during the days of Chanakya. He had mentioned it elaborately in **Arthashastra**.
- Citizens centric administration lies on the foundation of good governance.

▪ 8 Principles of Good Governance:

- **Participation:**
 - **People should be able to voice their own opinions** through legitimate immediate organizations or representatives.
 - This includes men and women, vulnerable sections of society, backward classes, minorities, etc.
 - Participation also **implies freedom of association and expression**.
- **Rule of Law:**
 - **Legal framework should be enforced impartially**, especially on human rights laws.
 - Without rule of law, politics will follow the principle of matsya nyaya i.e. the law of fish which means the strong will prevail over the weak.
- **Consensus Oriented:**
 - Consensus oriented decision-making ensures that even if everyone does not achieve what they want to the fullest, a common minimum can be achieved by everyone which will not be detrimental to anyone.
 - It mediates differing interests to meet the broad consensus on the best interests of a community.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness:**
 - Good governance assures an equitable society.
 - People should have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency:**

- Processes and institutions should be able to produce results that meet the needs of their community.
- Resources of the community should be used effectively for the maximum output.
- **Accountability:**
 - Good governance aims towards betterment of people, and this cannot take place without the [government being accountable](#) to the people.
 - Governmental institutions, private sectors, and civil society organizations should be held accountable to the public and institutional stakeholders.
- **Transparency:**
 - Information should be accessible to the public and should be understandable and monitored.
 - It also means free media and access to information.
- **Responsiveness:**
 - Institutions and processes should serve all stakeholders in a reasonable period of time.

What are the Challenges to Good Governance in India?

- **Women Empowerment:**
 - Women are not adequately represented in government institutions, and other allied sectors.
- **Corruption:**
 - The high level of corruption in India has been widely perceived as a major obstacle in improving the quality of governance.
- **Delay in Justice:**
 - A citizen has the right to avail timely justice, but there are several factors, because of which a common man doesn't get timely justice. One such factor is lack of personnel and logistics under disposal of court.
- **Centralisation of Administrative System:**
 - Governments at lower levels can only function efficiently if they are empowered to do so. This is particularly relevant for the [Panchayati Raj Institutions \(PRIs\)](#), which currently suffer from inadequate devolution of funds as well as functionaries to carry out the functions constitutionally assigned to them.
- **Criminalisation of Politics:**
 - The criminalisation of the political process and the unholy nexus between politicians, civil servants, and business houses are having a baneful influence on public policy formulation and governance.
- **Other Challenges:**
 - **Environmental security, [sustainable development](#) and challenges of [globalization](#), [liberalisation](#) and market economy.**

What are the Indian Initiatives to improve Good Governance?

- **[Good Governance Index \(GGI\):](#)**
 - GGI has been launched by the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions to determine the status of governance in the country.**
 - It assesses the impact of various interventions taken up by the State Government and UTs.
- **[National e-Governance Plan:](#)**
 - It has the vision to **"make all government services accessible to the common man in his locality**, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realise the basic needs of the common man."
- **[Right to Information Act, 2005:](#)**
 - It plays an effective role in ensuring transparency in governance.
- **Other Initiatives:** Setting up of [NITI Aayog](#), [Make in India programme](#), [Lokpal](#), etc.

Who was Atal Bihari Vajpayee?

- Atal Bihari Vajpayee was born on **25th December, 1924** in the erstwhile princely state of **Gwalior (now a part of Madhya Pradesh)**.
- He entered in national politics during the [Quit India Movement of 1942](#) which hastened the end of British colonial rule.
- In 1947, Vajpayee started working as a journalist for newspapers of Deendayal Upadhyaya — Rashtradharma (a Hindi monthly), Panchjanya (a Hindi weekly) and the dailies Swadesh and Veer Arjun. Later, influenced by Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Vajpayee joined the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1951.
- He was the **former Prime Minister of India** and was elected to the position twice in **1996 and 1999**.
- As a parliamentarian, **Vajpayee was awarded with the Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award for Best Parliamentarian in 1994**, which defines him as **"a role model par excellence for all legislators."**
- He was conferred with the country's highest civilian honour, the [Bharat Ratna](#) in 2015 and second-highest civilian honour, the [Padma Vibhushan](#) in 1994.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are inter-dependent". Discuss their relationship in the context of India. **(2016)**

Q. What do you understand by the terms 'governance', 'good governance' and 'ethical governance'? **(2016)**

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