Good Governance

Core Principles/Characteristics of Good Governance

(Source- United Nations, International Economic Organisations and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2nd ARC) reports)

- **Participation:** Ensuring all citizens, including vulnerable sections, have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through representatives. (Example: Panchayati Raj Institutions, MyGov.in portal).
- **Rule of Law:** Fair legal frameworks that are impartially enforced, especially concerning human rights, requiring an independent judiciary and impartial police force.
- **Transparency:** Decisions are made and implemented according to rules, and information is freely available and directly accessible to those affected. (Example: Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005).
- **Responsiveness:** Institutions and processes serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe, addressing their needs and grievances promptly. (Example: Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), Chief Minister's Helplines).
- **Consensus Oriented:** Mediating different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness:** Ensuring all members feel they have a stake in society and are not excluded from the mainstream, with special empathy for weaker sections. (Example: various reservation policies, National Food Security Act, 2013).
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Processes and institutions produce results that meet societal needs while making the best use of resources, including the sustainable use of natural resources. (Example: Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme reduces leakages).
- **Accountability:** Governmental institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations are answerable for their actions, which is enforceable through transparency and the rule of law. (Example: Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, social audits).

Key Initiatives of Good Governance in India

- **Transparency and accountability**
  - **Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005:** Empowers citizens to question government actions by accessing official information.
  - **Citizen's Charters:** Publicly declare the commitments and standards of various government organizations to the citizen.
  - **Social Audits:** Community-based audits to ensure accountability in the implementation of government programs.
  - **CPGRAMS:** A platform for citizens to register grievances with government departments, which are then tracked and monitored.

- **Efficiency and effectiveness**
  - **Digital India Program:** Promotes e-governance by digitizing government services and records, such as e-tendering and digitized land records.
  - **Minimum Government, Maximum Governance:** Aims to streamline bureaucracy and reduce red tape to make administration more efficient.
  - **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016:** Expedites the resolution of bad debt, aiding the revival of businesses.
  - **Sevottam Model:** The Sevottam model is a framework for improving public service delivery in India, developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). Its name combines the Hindi words "Seva" (Service) and "Uttam" (Excellent) and focuses on three main components: the **Citizen's Charter**, which informs citizens of their entitlements; the **Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism**, which handles citizen complaints; and **Service Delivery Capability**, which builds the organization's capacity to provide excellent service.

- **Participation and inclusiveness**
  - **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments:** Decentralized power to local self-governments (Panchayats and Municipalities), increasing citizen participation at the grassroots level.
  - **Aspirational Districts Programme:** Targets districts with low socio-economic performance to accelerate development and bridge regional disparities.

- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** Transfers subsidies directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries, reducing leakages and corruption.
- **Jan Dhan Yojana:** Provides access to financial services like banking, insurance, and pensions to the unbanked population.

Space for Class Discussion