Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of the Collegium System in safeguarding judicial independence in India. Discuss the major concerns associated with it and suggest reforms to improve transparency and accountability. (150 words)

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
Daily Practice 27/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

The Collegium protects judicial independence through judicial primacy, but opacity, limited accountability and delays remain concerns. Transparent criteria, reasoned recommendations, diversity and timely appointments can strengthen legitimacy.

Model Answer

The Collegium System is a judge-led mechanism for recommending appointments and transfers in the higher judiciary. It evolved through the Second and Third Judges Cases and is not expressly mentioned in the Constitution.

Significance: Judicial primacy reduces direct political influence over appointments, protects separation of powers and strengthens the judiciary’s ability to uphold constitutional rights. Recent recommendations for four High Court Chief Justices illustrate its continuing role in judicial administration.

Concerns: The system lacks clearly codified selection criteria and provides limited public explanation of decisions. This raises concerns about transparency, accountability, perceived favouritism, diversity and delays in filling vacancies. Executive delays in processing recommendations can also affect judicial capacity.

Reforms: The Collegium should publish clearer eligibility and assessment criteria, provide reasoned summaries of recommendations, promote gender and regional diversity, and establish transparent timelines. The executive should communicate objections promptly and process recommendations without undue delay. Any reform must

preserve judicial independence and remain consistent with the Supreme Court’s ruling on the National Judicial Appointments Commission.

Thus, balanced transparency and accountability can strengthen public confidence without compromising judicial independence.

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