Polity & Governance · GS - II

Explain the constitutional composition and functions of State Legislative Councils in India. Examine their role in strengthening legislative scrutiny and democratic governance.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 28/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Articles 168, 169 and 171; bicameral state legislatures; indirect representation; legislative review; deliberative democracy; limited powers and reform

Model Answer

Introduction

India permits states to adopt a unicameral or bicameral legislature. In bicameral states, the Legislative Council functions as the upper house alongside the Legislative Assembly.

Constitutional composition

Article 169 provides the procedure for creating or abolishing a Legislative Council, while Article 171 governs its composition. Members are elected by local authorities, graduates, teachers and MLAs, while the Governor nominates members with specified expertise in fields such as literature, science, art, cooperative movement and social service.

Role in democratic governance

Legislative Councils provide a revising chamber where bills can receive additional scrutiny. Their composition offers representation to selected professional groups and local institutions. They can encourage detailed debate, improve legislative quality and provide continuity because they are permanent houses, with a portion of members retiring periodically.

Limitations and reforms

Councils cannot permanently block ordinary legislation and have limited powers over money bills. Their effectiveness depends on the quality of debate, independence of members and avoidance of purely partisan appointments. Transparent procedures and stronger committee scrutiny can improve their contribution.

Conclusion

Legislative Councils can strengthen deliberative democracy when they function as meaningful reviewing institutions rather than merely duplicating party-political contests.

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