Polity & Governance · GS - II

Comment on the significance of legislative oversight in maintaining executive accountability in a presidential system of government.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Separation of powers, checks and balances, congressional committees, investigations, executive accountability, legislative independence

Model Answer

Meaning and Constitutional Basis

Legislative oversight refers to the authority of the legislature to examine executive decisions, monitor government agencies and ensure accountability in public administration.

Why It Matters

1. **Prevents concentration of power:** Legislative scrutiny acts as a check on executive authority and reinforces the principle of separation of powers.

2. **Ensures transparency:** Parliamentary or congressional hearings can bring administrative failures, policy shortcomings and misuse of public resources into public debate.

3. **Strengthens financial accountability:** Legislatures examine public expenditure and scrutinise government budgets and programmes.

4. **Improves policy implementation:** Committee investigations and expert consultations help identify administrative gaps and recommend corrective measures.

5. **Protects democratic institutions:** Oversight provides institutional means to question executive decisions without undermining the constitutional continuity of government.

Limitations

1. Excessive partisan conflict can turn oversight into political confrontation.
2. Weak investigative capacity and inadequate access to information can reduce effectiveness.
3. Executive resistance may obstruct scrutiny and delay accountability.

Indian Context

In India, Parliamentary Standing Committees, Question Hour, debates, and the Public Accounts Committee perform important oversight functions. Their effectiveness depends on adequate research support, regular scrutiny and government responsiveness.

Conclusion

Effective legislative oversight is not an obstacle to executive functioning; it is a democratic safeguard. Strong committees, transparency and institutional cooperation are essential for accountable government.