Polity & Governance · GS - II

Discuss the challenges involved in regulating unlawful and sexually explicit content on digital platforms in India. How can the government balance online safety with the fundamental right to freedom of expression?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Digital governance, Information Technology Act, 2000, IT Rules, 2021, Article 19(1)(a), Article 19(2), child protection, online exploitation, intermediary accountability, privacy, proportionality, due process.

Model Answer

Introduction

The expansion of digital platforms has increased access to information and online services but has also created challenges involving unlawful content, sexual exploitation and the protection of children. Effective regulation must balance public safety with constitutional freedoms.

Main Body

Major Challenges

1. Harmful content: Online platforms may be misused to circulate exploitative material, including child sexual abuse material.
2. Regulatory gaps: Rapid technological changes and cross-border platforms complicate monitoring and enforcement.
3. Fundamental rights: Excessively broad restrictions may affect legitimate expression, privacy and access to information.
4. Platform accountability: Ensuring timely removal of unlawful content while preventing arbitrary censorship remains a challenge.

Way Forward

1. Enforce the IT Act, 2000, and applicable IT Rules consistently.
2. Strengthen age-appropriate safeguards and mechanisms for reporting unlawful content.
3. Require transparent content-moderation procedures and accountability for intermediaries.
4. Ensure restrictions are lawful, proportionate and subject to due process.
5. Improve digital literacy and support victims of online exploitation.

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Conclusion

India needs a rights-based digital governance framework that protects vulnerable users while safeguarding constitutional freedoms. Clear laws, accountable platforms and proportionate enforcement are essential for a safe and open internet.

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