Polity & Governance · GS - II

Democratic governments must protect peaceful protest while preventing politically motivated violence. Discuss the challenges involved in maintaining this balance.

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

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Freedom of assembly; democratic dissent; public order; political violence; rule of law; proportionality; protection of property; policing; human rights; accountability.

Model Answer

Introduction

Peaceful protest enables citizens to express grievances and influence public debate. However, violence, intimidation and attacks on individuals or property pose challenges to public order and the rule of law.

Major Challenges

1. Protecting Democratic Freedoms: Excessive restrictions on peaceful demonstrations can weaken democratic participation and public trust.

2. Preventing Violence: Authorities must identify and address credible threats without treating all protesters as potential offenders.

3. Proportionate Policing: Dispersal, arrests and other coercive measures should comply with law and be proportionate to the situation.

4. Political Polarisation: International conflicts may intensify domestic tensions, making impartial law enforcement particularly important.

Measures

Authorities should distinguish peaceful assembly from criminal conduct, assess threats on evidence and protect vulnerable individuals. Clear operational guidelines, trained police personnel, dialogue with organisers and independent investigation of alleged abuses can improve accountability.

Public communication and timely legal action against violence can help prevent escalation without unnecessarily restricting dissent.

Conclusion

Protecting peaceful protest and maintaining public order are compatible democratic objectives. Impartial enforcement, proportionality and accountability are essential to achieving both.