Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the importance of peaceful dissent in a democracy. How can constitutional freedoms be balanced with the need to maintain public order and institutional credibility?

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

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 19, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, democratic accountability, public order, reasonable restrictions, independent institutions, rule of law.

Model Answer

Introduction

Peaceful dissent is an essential feature of democracy. It allows citizens to question public decisions, raise grievances and demand accountability from constitutional institutions.

Importance of Peaceful Dissent

1. **Accountability:** Public criticism encourages transparency and scrutiny of institutional decisions.
2. **Representation:** Protests and public debate bring diverse concerns into democratic decision-making.
3. **Corrective mechanism:** Dissent can draw attention to administrative failures and strengthen public trust when grievances are addressed.

Balancing Freedoms and Public Order

Articles 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(b) protect freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, subject to constitutional restrictions. Authorities must distinguish peaceful criticism from unlawful conduct. Restrictions should have a lawful basis, be proportionate to the identified risk and remain open to judicial scrutiny.

Institutional credibility is best protected through transparent procedures, impartial enforcement and accessible grievance-redress mechanisms rather than by treating all criticism as illegitimate.

Conclusion

A resilient democracy protects peaceful dissent while enforcing the law fairly. Constitutional freedoms and institutional credibility reinforce each other when accountability, proportionality and rule of law guide public action.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP