Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of curfews in maintaining public order during periods of unrest. How can democratic governments balance security requirements with civil liberties?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Public order, preventive restrictions, state responsibility, freedom of movement, civil liberties, proportionality, legality, judicial oversight, accountability, time-bound measures.

Model Answer

Introduction

Maintaining public order and protecting citizens are essential responsibilities of the state. During serious unrest, governments may impose curfews to prevent violence and restore normalcy.

Role of Curfews

- **Preventing violence:** Temporary restrictions can limit violent gatherings and reduce the risk of confrontation.
- **Protecting citizens:** Curfews may help safeguard residents and facilitate emergency operations.
- **Restoring normalcy:** They can provide authorities with time to stabilise disturbed areas.

Concerns and Challenges

Indiscriminate or prolonged curfews can restrict movement, affect livelihoods, disrupt education and impede access to healthcare. Excessive restrictions may also undermine public trust and disproportionately affect vulnerable communities.

Balancing Security and Liberty

Governments should impose restrictions under clear legal authority and on the basis of credible security concerns. Measures should be necessary, proportionate and geographically limited. Essential services, emergency medical assistance and access to legal remedies must be protected. Independent judicial scrutiny, transparent communication and periodic review can strengthen accountability.

Conclusion

Curfews may be necessary in exceptional circumstances, but their legitimacy depends on lawful implementation, proportionality and respect for democratic rights.