

Mains PYQs - GS-II (2025) (Q. 13 - 15)

13. Discuss the evolution of the collegium system in India. Critically examine the advantages and disadvantages of the system of appointment of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India and that of the USA. (250 words, 15 marks)

Direction: Intro----Evolution + advantages & disadvantages of appointment (India & USA)-----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Describe the collegium system in India.

Main Body

Evolution of the collegium system in India

- Discuss the 4 judges cases.

- North-West Frontier:

Kandahar (Afghanistan) and
Shahbazgarhi (Pakistan).

- Southern Limits:

Maski, Brahmagiri, and
Yerragudi.

- Eastern Border:

The Dhauli and Jaugada rock
edicts in Odisha.

Advantages of the system of appointment to the SC

India	USA
Ensure judicial independence - No executive interference.	President appoints, with the confirmation of senate.
Merit-based appointment - no reservation.	Highly transparent.
Protects separation of powers & Basic Structure Doctrine.	No retirement for judges (lifelong job)
Seniority-based appointment.	Clear checks and balances.
Strict removal procedures.	Democratic accountability through elected representatives.

Disadvantages of the system of appointment to the SC

India	USA
Non-transparent appointment - no accountability.	Extreme political influence.

Not having diverse representation.	Ideological polarization.
Delayed appointments.	Not having more chances for youth appointments due to lifelong service.
Gender inequality.	Lack of diversity due to presidential appointments.
Allegations of nepotism and favouritism ("Uncle Judge Syndrome").	Risk of compromising judicial independence.

Conclusion:

Conclude with balanced views - Even though both countries have different systems of appointments, both act as a custodian and guardian of the constitution and ensure democracy.

14. Examine the evolving pattern of Centre-State financial relations in the context of planned development in India. How far have the recent reforms impacted fiscal federalism in India? (250 words, 15 marks)

Direction: Intro----Evolving pattern + Recent reform impacts----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Describe briefly about Centre-State financial relations.

Main Body

Evolving pattern of Centre-State financial relations

- Describe/discuss briefly about each era -
 - Planning Commission Era (1950-2014) - Centralised Fiscal Federalism
 - Post-Planning Commission Era (2015 onwards) - Rule-based Transfers
 - GST Era (2017 onwards) - Cooperative Fiscal Federalism.

Recent reforms impact on fiscal federalism

Positive impact

- Higher tax devolution & strengthen decentralized developments
- Promotes cooperative federalism - NITI Aayog & GST Council.
- Performance-based transfers by Finance Commission.
- Greater fiscal transparency - FRBM framework.

Negative impact

- Growing of cess & surcharges
- GST Compensation issue

- Vertical fiscal imbalances – More revenue source to centre, but states are burdened with responsibilities.
- Increased in number of centrally sponsored schemes – burden to states.

Conclusion:

Conclude with the way forwards (or) balanced form of conclusion.

Though these reforms have some inconveniences, it helps improve India's GDP, increase tax collections, promote ease of doing business, etc. and promote cooperative federalism.

15. What are environmental pressure groups? Discuss their role in raising awareness, influencing policies and advocating for environmental protection in India. (250 words, 15 marks)

Direction: Intro---Their role in awareness, policies, environmental protection---Conclusion.

Introduction:

Describe environmental pressure groups with some examples.

Movements includes Chipko movement, Narmada Bachao Andolan, recent protests for the Aravalli ranges, etc.

Main Body

Role in raising awareness

- Conduct public campaigns
- Engage youths and local public
- Promotes environmental literacy.

Role in influencing policies

- Advocating stronger legislative framework
- Provides technical expertise – policy research
- Environment impact Assessment

Role in environmental protection

- Legal interventions – Green litigation (PIL), RTI, etc.
- Conduct conservation campaigns
- Declaring an eco-sensitive zone.

Conclusion:

Give a positive and balanced conclusion with some way forwards.

