



## Decoding Good Governance

**For Prelims:** [Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#) and [Good Governance Day](#), [World Bank](#), Corruption Perception Index 2022, [Central Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System](#), [Right to Information Act](#), [73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments](#), [Unified Payments Interface](#), [Aspirational Districts Program](#), Citizen Charters.

**For Mains:** Major Issues Related to Governance in India, Major Initiatives Related to Good Governance in India.

**Source:** [IE](#)

### Why in News?

On **25<sup>th</sup> December**, India commemorated [Good Governance Day](#), coinciding with the birth anniversary of **former Prime Minister** [Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#).

- This yearly event strives to enhance citizen awareness concerning **accountability in governance and governmental procedures**.
- Three new features on the **iGOT (integrated government online training) Karmayogi** platform: **My iGOT, blended programmes, and curated programmes**, were launched on this occasion.

### What is Good Governance?

- **About:**
  - **Governance** refers to the **processes, systems, and structures** through which organizations, societies, or groups are **directed, controlled, and managed**.
    - **Good governance** is defined as a set of values through which **a public institution conduct public affairs and manages public resources** in a way that respects human rights, the rule of law, and the needs of society.
  - The [World Bank](#) defines good governance in terms of the **traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised**. This includes:
    - the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced
    - the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies
    - the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.
- **Basic Principles of Good Governance:**

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## What is Worldwide Governance Indicators ?

- The **World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators** project evaluates over 200 countries based on six fundamental measures of governance.
- The six indicators are:
  - **Voice and Accountability**
  - **Political Stability and Absence of Violence**
  - **Government Effectiveness**
  - **Regulatory Quality**
  - **Rule of Law**
  - **Control of Corruption**

## What are the Major Issues Related to Governance in India?

- **Corruption and Bureaucratic Inefficiency:** In [Corruption Perception Index 2022](#), India was ranked **85<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries**, highlighting concerns about bribery and misuse of public funds.
- **Inequality and Social Exclusion:** Despite economic growth, the gap between rich and poor persists. A 2022 Oxfam report revealed that the **richest 1% in India held more than 40% of the country's wealth**, while the bottom 50% had just 3%. This widens disparities in access to healthcare, education, and opportunities.
- **Ineffective Implementation of Policies and Schemes:** Many well-intentioned government programs suffer from poor execution, leading to limited impact.
  - In 2023, the [CAG found irregularities in the Ayushman Bharat Scheme](#). Also another

CAG report highlights transfer of **widow pensions to males in Jharkhand**.

- **Inadequate Judicial Infrastructure:** India's courts are overburdened with a massive backlog of cases, leading to delays in dispute resolution and access to justice, particularly for the marginalized.
  - In 2023, the [Supreme Court](#) had a pending docket of over 80,000 cases, raising concerns about timely access to legal recourse.
- **Environmental Degradation and Climate Change:** India faces major challenges like air pollution, water scarcity, and deforestation. The [2023 World Air Quality Report](#) ranked several Indian cities among the most polluted globally, highlighting the weak enforcement of environmental regulations.
- **Political Polarization and Weakening Accountability:** Increasing partisanship and a focus on electoral gains sometimes overshadow long-term policy planning and public welfare in India.

## What are the Major Initiatives Related to Good Governance in India?

- **Transparency and Accountability:**
  - [Right to Information Act \(2005\)](#): Empowers citizens to access government information, promoting transparency and reducing corruption.
  - [Central Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System \(CPGRAMS\)](#): Online platform for registering and tracking grievances against government departments.
  - **E-Governance Initiatives:** Digitization of government services (e.g., **online tax filing, property registration**) for increased efficiency and reduced human interaction.
  - [Citizen Charters](#): Commitment to service standards and timelines by government agencies, enhancing accountability.
- **Citizen Participation and Empowerment:**
  - **MyGov platform**: Enables citizens to participate in policy discussions, submit ideas, and provide feedback to the government.
  - **Gram Sabhas**: Village-level meetings for participatory decision-making in rural areas.
  - [Right to Education Act \(2009\)](#): Ensures free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14, empowering communities.
- **Decentralization and Local Governance:**
  - [73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments](#): Empower Panchayats (village councils) and Municipalities with financial and administrative powers, promoting local democracy.
  - [Aspirational Districts Program](#): Focuses on improving socio-economic indicators in **112 geographically disadvantaged districts**.
  - [Smart Cities Mission](#): Development of 100 cities with infrastructure and technology solutions for better living.
- **Other Initiatives:**
  - **Digital India Programme**: Aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society with widespread access to technology.
  - **Direct Benefit Transfers**: Transfer of subsidies and benefits directly to beneficiaries through bank accounts, reducing leakages and corruption.
  - [Aadhaar card](#): Unique identification system for citizens, promoting financial inclusion and service delivery.
  - [Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code \(2016\)](#): Streamlines the process of resolving bad debt and facilitating business revival.
  - [Unified Payments Interface \(UPI\)](#): Instant real-time mobile payment system developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**.
    - Enables seamless inter-bank transactions using a single mobile app.

## Way Forward

- **JanData Platform:** Create a **secure data platform backed by blockchain technology** for personalized services and direct participation of citizens in policy decisions.
  - It should include **Smart Governance Dashboards**, displaying key performance initiatives for various government departments, promoting transparency and accessibility.

- **Reforming Bureaucracy:** Streamlining **administrative processes, reducing red tape, and enhancing professionalism** and accountability within the public service is also crucial. **VIKAS (Variable and Immersive Karmayogi Advanced Support)** will be a crucial step in this direction.
- **Fast-track Judicial Reforms:** Address the **backlog of cases, improve infrastructure and efficiency within the court system**, and ensure speedy access to justice for all. **E-courts and live streaming of court proceedings** is a significant step in this direction.
- **AI-powered Grievance Redressal:** Developing an AI-driven system that analyzes **public complaints, identifies patterns, and automatically directs them to the relevant authorities** for swift resolution.
- **Reimagining Citizen Engagement:** Establish **community-based innovation labs** across rural and urban areas in supervision of **Urban Local Bodies and Panchayats**, empowering citizens to create local solutions to local problems in collaboration with government agencies.
- **Futuristic Education Curriculum:** Integrate skills like **critical thinking, digital literacy, and data analysis into the education system**, preparing future generations for active participation in a technology-driven governance landscape.

Therefore, India must follow the principle of "**Minimum Government, Maximum Governance**" aligning with [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions](#).

## Atal Bihari Vajpayee



- Born on **25<sup>th</sup> December, 1924, in Gwalior, now part of Madhya Pradesh**, Atal Bihari Vajpayee entered politics during the **Quit India Movement of 1942**.
- Served as **Prime Minister in 1996 and 1999**, becoming the first since Jawaharlal Nehru to achieve successive mandates.
  - Won **9 Lok Sabha and 2 Rajya Sabha elections**, earning the title of **India's 'Best Parliamentarian' in 1994**.
- Received **Padma Vibhushan in 1994** and awarded the **Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, in 2015**.

**UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)**

**Q.** Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are interdependent". Discuss their relationship in the context of India. **(2016)**

**Q.** What do you understand by the terms 'governance', 'good governance' and 'ethical governance'? **(2016)**

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