Mains Practice Question

You are posted as the District Magistrate of a metropolitan city. The State Government has recently rolled out an Artificial Intelligence based Predictive Policing System aimed at preventing crime by analyzing large amounts of citizen data such as CCTV feeds, mobile records, and online activity patterns.

While the system has shown early success in reducing street crimes and improving response times, several concerns have emerged. Civil society groups and digital rights activists allege that the technology disproportionately targets marginalized communities, leading to bias and profiling. Citizens have also raised objections over the lack of consent in data collection and the possibility of mass surveillance.

Meanwhile, the Home Department is pressuring you to expand the use of AI tools across all police stations, citing efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and better law enforcement outcomes. At the same time, a section of police officers informally confide that blind reliance on AI tools may undermine their professional judgment and discretion.

You are expected to prepare a report for the State Government balancing the twin imperatives of public safety and protection of fundamental rights.

a). What would be your immediate response to the concerns raised regarding predictive policing?
b). Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
c). If asked to justify the use of AI for public safety, what logical and ethical arguments would you present?
d). As a public servant, what measures would you recommend to ensure accountability, fairness, and respect for citizens' rights while using AI in governance?
(250 words)

05 Sep, 2025   GS Paper 4 Case Studies

Answer will be published shortly.