Q5. (b) 'Probity is essential for an effective system of governance and socio-economic development.' Discuss.

Introduction

Probity, often defined as the adherence to the highest principles of integrity and honesty, is an indispensable cornerstone of an effective system of governance and socio-economic development. It serves as the bedrock upon which trust is built, institutions are strengthened, and societal progress is realized.

Body

Probity in Governance

1. **Trust and Credibility:** Trust in government institutions is built when public officials demonstrate integrity. For instance, India's successful implementation of the Aadhaar project, which secured sensitive biometric data with high integrity, earned trust among citizens.
2. **Transparency and Accountability:** Transparency in decision-making, as seen in the Right to Information Act, 2005, enhance probity. It empowers citizens to demand accountability from public officials, reducing corruption.
3. **Rule of Law:** Probity reinforces the rule of law. India's independent judiciary, exemplified by landmark judgments, upholds the principle of probity by ensuring justice prevails over influence.
4. **Ethical Leadership:** Ethical leadership, exemplified by leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, who led the nation through non-violent, morally grounded means, sets the tone for a probity-driven governance culture.
5. **Citizen Participation:** Probity in governance encourages citizen participation. Initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which engaged citizens in a nationwide cleanliness campaign, exemplify this, enhancing probity by involving the public in governance.
6. **Strengthening Democratic Values:** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's vision of governance deeply relied on uprightness and ethical governance.

Probity in Socio-Economic Development

1. **Investor Confidence:** Probity attracts foreign investments. India's economic reforms and the ease of doing business initiatives have garnered trust, resulting in investments like the FDI in retail, contributing to economic development.
2. **Social Capital Formation:** Building social capital, as witnessed in India's SHGs (Self-Help Groups), showcases probity. These groups, based on trust and cooperation, foster economic progress in rural areas.
3. **Resource Allocation:** Efficient allocation of resources is vital. Programs like Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) ensure subsidies reach intended beneficiaries, curbing leakage and enhancing socio-economic development.

4. **Inclusivity:** Probity ensures inclusive development. Schemes like MGNREGA provide equal opportunities, reducing disparities and promoting socio-economic equity.
5. **Environmental Sustainability:** Sustainable development, exemplified by India's commitment to renewable energy, represents probity in socio-economic endeavors, balancing growth with environmental integrity.
6. **Healthcare Access:** Initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, ensuring access to quality healthcare for all, uphold probity by addressing a critical socio-economic need equitably.

Conclusion

In conclusion, probity is not merely a desirable virtue; it is **an essential prerequisite for effective governance and socio-economic development.** To achieve comprehensive progress, nations must prioritize and cultivate probity at all levels of society and governance. Without probity, any system of governance and development is susceptible to corruption, inefficiency, and ultimately, failure.

Q.6 (B) Explain the term social capital. How does it enhance good governance?

Introduction

Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and social connections within a community or society that enable individuals and groups to work together, cooperate, and achieve common goals. It encompasses trust, shared norms and values, social cohesion, and the sense of belonging within a community.

Body
Enhancement of Good Governance through Social Capital
Voter Awareness and Participation

- **Election Turnout:** High levels of social capital contribute to increased voter turnout and political engagement, reflecting social cohesion and awareness.
- **Example: The 2019 Lok Sabha elections** witnessed a voter turnout of over **67%,** reflecting active civic participation.

Inclusive Development

- Social capital promotes inclusive policies, such as women's self-help groups and **microfinance initiatives**, fostering economic development.
- **Kerala's Kudumbashree program** exemplifies how SHGs enhance economic governance.

Accountability

- **Community Oversight**: Strong social networks hold public officials accountable for their actions.

- **Example:** In Haryana, public hearings or **"Jan Sunwais"** involve community members in decision-making

Citizen Engagement

- **Participation in Decision-Making:** Social capital encourages citizens to engage in governance processes.
- **Example: Jan Bhagidari - Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** (Clean India Mission) involved community participation, leveraging social capital to improve sanitation.

Information Flow

- **Communication Channels:** Social networks facilitate information dissemination.
- **Example: During the COVID-19 pandemic,** community networks and WhatsApp groups played a crucial role in disseminating health guidelines and updates,

Reducing Corruption

- **Ethical Norms:** High social capital discourages corrupt practices.
- **Example:** Citizen-led anti-corruption movements like the **Lokpal Bill** advocate for transparent governance.

Resilience

- **Crisis Response:** Socially connected communities respond better to crises.
- **Example: Kerala's response to floods in 2018**, relying on community networks and volunteerism

Digital Social Capital

- **Online Activism:** Digital platforms facilitate the creation of social capital for advocacy.
- **Example:** Social media campaigns like **#MeTooIndia and #FarmersProtest** demonstrate how online communities drive social change.

Conclusion

According to Stephen Harper "You can't have a developed society unless you have social capital." It contributes to more accountable and effective governance systems, ultimately leading to better outcomes for citizens. Building and nurturing social capital is, therefore, a crucial aspect of promoting good governance worldwide.