

- Q: a) Define Public Policy and state its significance.
- b) Discuss the Role of Planning Commission in policy and planning.

Ans a) **Public Policy : Significance.**

Introduction:

Public Policy is a decided set of certain rules, regulations or actions. It works through different phases in a society or a country. It is of much significance as it stands at the core of a governmental workings. Public Policy is based upon resolving various socio-economic and political problems. Thus, Public Policy is a code of governmental strategies resulting in the well-being of its subjects.

Public Policy in view of Different Scholars.

Public Policy is defined by different scholars. As Thomas Dye, an Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Florida State University, defined Public Policy as, "Whatever governments choose to do or not to do." It means that Public Policy constitutes plans which favour a government.

Another American political scientist M. E. Dimock defines Public Policy as "deciding at any time or place what objectives and substantive measures should be chosen in order to deal with a particular problem." It implies that Public Policy pertains solutions to the problems.

Thus, Public Policy comprises of the rules and actions of a certain government to achieve

its goals and objectives.

Significance of Public Policy

Public Policy is important for a state and its citizens. Its significance is delineated as below:

(i) Promoting Public Welfare.

Public Policy promotes public welfare in countries. The governments design or update policy to improve access to essential services. That include, education, health, housing, transportation and communication. Thus, Public Policy enhances general well-being of citizens.

(ii) Helping Resource Management.

Public Policy is necessary for a country to manage its resources. It helps governments to utilise its

resources for problem-solving. Like Pakistan announce its first-ever "Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy in 2019" to resolve its energy problems by diversifying its energy resources. Thus, Public Policy is key to resource management in a country.

(iii) Fostering Economic Growth
Public Policy is an instrumental in the economic growth and development. The governments after identifying their economic problems design policies related to their economies. Through such policies, they enhance their taxation, industrial outputs, agricultural growth and infrastructure development. Recently, the Biden Administration has revealed the first-ever "US Strategy on Countering Corruption". The strategy is designed to hinder corruption from

disturbing economic growth in
the United States of America.
Thus, Public Policy plays a
key role in economic well-
being of a state.

(iv) Ensuring Social Security
of Citizens.

Through Public Policy,
governments formulate policies
based upon social security
of their individuals and
Citizens. They are protected
from various threats like
poverty, terrorism, inequality
and unemployment. It is
evident from "Pakistan National
Security Policy of 2022." Apart
from traditional security
threats, it focuses upon non-
traditional security threats.
It set provisions for human
security. Hence, Public Policy
ensures social security
of individuals.

(v) Leading a Nation towards Development and Prosperity with a vibrant Public Policy and its implementation a country can lead in realms of development and prosperity. It's achieved through advancements in social, economic and political aspects. "The Kerala Model of Development" is a milestone achievement in this sense. Kerala is an Indian state which has developed from a least developed state to the 9th largest state in India in economic terms. That development is possible through an effective Public Policy. Hence, Public Policy enhances development process in a Country.

b) Role of Planning Commission in Policy and Planning

Introduction.

A Planning Commission is an institution which is responsible for financial and public policy development in a country. Different countries have adopted their own models of Planning Commissions in their countries. The role of Planning Commission is diverse in its nature. The Commission is usually involved in different phases of public policy. Besides, it also takes part in socio-economic planning of a country. Hence, Planning Commission is a governmental organisation based upon an effective role in policy and planning.

Planning Commission: An Overview

Planning Commission is a state institution mandated with developing plans and implementing

policies in the country.
The idea of planning Commission dates back to 1920's when the Soviet Union introduced its planning commission, 'Gosplan' in their country. Later on, other countries followed the foot-steps of Russia and established planning Commissions in their countries. Currently, different models of planning Commission are working in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, China, India, the United Kingdom and other countries. Hence, planning Commission is a state institution having an effective role in policy and planning.

Role of Planning Commission in policy.

Throughout various phases of policy, planning Commission plays role in policy. Its role is discussed as below:

i) Advisory Role in Policy Process.
Planning Commission plays a key role of advisory at different stages of policy. It suggest a government to formulate new policies, to amend existing policies, or to terminate policies. One of the functions of Planning Commission of Pakistan is to advise on important economic policies. Hence, Planning Commission takes an advisory seat in policy making process.

ii) Basis for Consensus-based Policy.

A Consensus-based policy process is possible through a Planning Commission. The structure and composition of Planning Commission comprises of members from every state or federating units. They not only represent their territories in decision-making process but also put their concerns, advices and knowledge into policy process. Therefore, planning

Commission provides a platform to all stakeholders in policy of a country.

iii) Assisting in Research-oriented policy process.

Planning Commission provides research-based knowledge to governments. Such key findings and updated information are necessary to formulate and update policies. There is a division working under National Planning Commission of Nepal with title, "Research and Inter-Governmental Coordination". The division is mandated to carry out research for policy process. Hence, Planning Commission plays fundamental role in policy through research and scientific knowledge.

Role of Planning Commission in Planning.

Planning Commission has its basic objectives related to planning. Its key roles in planning is discussed as below:

i) Introducing Five-Year Plans:

One of basic roles of Planning Commission is its Five-Year Plans. After making required arrangements, it reveals a long-term plan. The plan includes future government strategies, infrastructure development, improving public access to basic provisions and so on. It was the initial development of the former Soviet's Gosplan. It revealed its Five-Year Plan in 1920's. Later on, countries including Pakistan followed foot-steps. Thus, Planning Commission has a key role in making Five-Year Plans.

(ii) Planning based upon resources.

Planning Commission makes plan as per available resources of a country. Its function is to make effective use of resources even in scarcity. It drives population, geography, minerals, water bodies and other national resources towards growth and development. The Planning Commission of India (although no longer active as it is replaced by the NITI Aayog) had key objectives. One of its functions included drafting a plan for the most balanced and effective usage of the country's resources. Hence, Planning Commission provides planning in line with resource management.