

4. “Democracy Index” of the Economist Intelligence Unit

Prelims Level: Polity and Governance

Mains Level: GS-II Important aspects of Governance, Transparency and Accountability

Why in News?

- The latest edition of the “Democracy Index” was recently released by **The Economist Intelligence Unit** — the research and analysis division of The Economist Group, which is the sister company to The Economist newspaper.

About Democracy Index:

- The report records how global democracy fared, analysing 165 independent states and two territories.
- This Index is based on **Five Categories**:
 1. Electoral Process And Pluralism
 2. Civil Liberties
 3. The Functioning Of Government
 4. Political Participation
 5. Political Culture.
- Based on their scores on 60 indicators within these categories, each country is then itself classified as one of four types of regime: **Full Democracy; Flawed Democracy; Hybrid Regime; and Authoritarian Regime.**

Key Findings of the Report:

- India drops 10 ranks to 51st position in the Democracy Index in 2019.
- India was graded in electoral process and pluralism (8.67), government functioning (6.79), political participation (6.67), political culture (5.63) and civil liberties (6.76).
- India’s overall score fell from 7.23 to 6.9, on a scale of 0-10, within a year (2018-2019) — the country’s lowest since 2006.
- In the Asia and Australasia region, India ranks eighth, behind Taiwan and Timor-Leste.
- The report talks about the repeal of both Article 370 and Article 35A, deployment of large number of troops in J&K and placing local leaders under house arrest by the Government.
- The survey attributes the primary cause of “the democratic regression” to “an erosion of civil liberties in the country.
- The average global score also recorded its worst value ever, down from 5.48 in 2018 to 5.44, driven by a sharp regression in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, a lesser one in

the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and by stagnation in the remaining regions that were covered.

Categorisation of Democracy:

- The Index also categorises India under “**Flawed Democracies**”, countries that hold free and fair elections and where basic civil liberties are respected, but have significant weaknesses in aspects of democracy, such as problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation.
- According to the report, there are only 22 “full democracies” as compared to 54 “authoritarian regimes” and as many “flawed democracies,” that include the U.S.

