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# FEDERALISM

### CONCEPT

#### What is Federalism?

- (i) Has two sets or levels of government, one at a regional level — provinces and states. The other is at the national level — for the entire country.
- (ii) Two sets of identities — people belong to the region as well as the country. Each region has a separate system of government, distinct powers and responsibilities.
- (iii) There are different terms of government. Each has its own jurisdiction in matters of legislation, taxation and administration; central, regional and local.
- (iv) No fundamental provision of the constitution can be changed at any level arbitrarily. Changes require the consent of both levels of government.
- (v) An independent judiciary prevents conflicts between centre and states in the exercise of their powers.
- (vi) Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified to ensure stability.
- Federalism**
- 

Federal Government	Unitary Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Two or more levels of government.</li> <li>● In the federal system, the central government cannot order the state governments to do something.</li> <li>● State government has its own powers. Separately answerable to the people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Only one level. If there are sub-units, they are subordinate to the central government.</li> <li>● The central government can pass orders to the provincial or local government.</li> <li>● The national government has all the powers.</li> </ul>

## Kinds of Federations

### 'Coming together' Federations

- Independent states voluntarily form a bigger union
- They enhance their security by pooling their sovereignty and identity
- The states and the centre have equal powers
- Example : USA, Australia, Switzerland

### 'Holding together' Federations

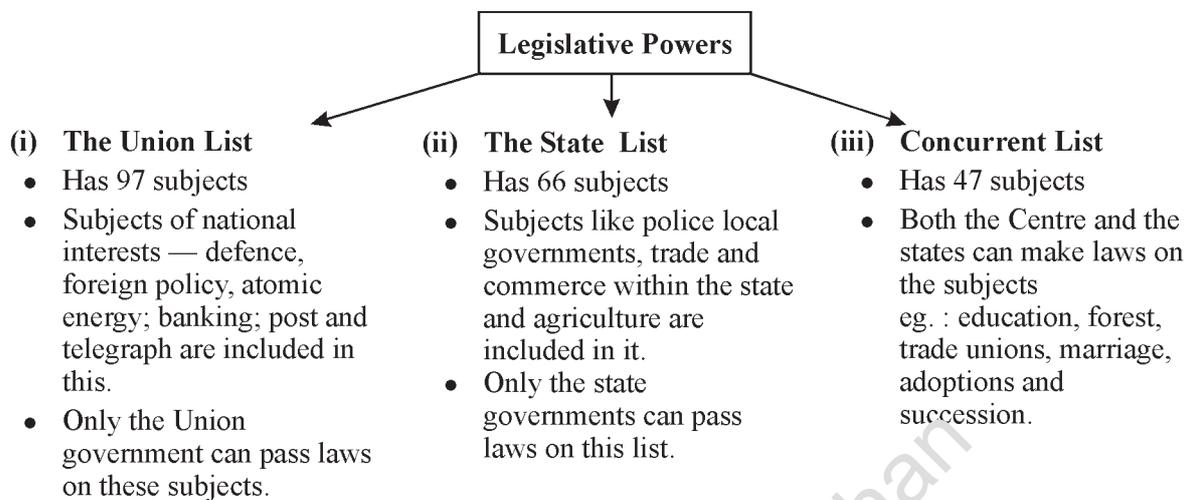
- A large country decides to divide its power between the states and the central government
- The central government is always more powerful than the regional states.
- Some units have special powers. Different constituent units have unequal powers.
- Examples : India, Spain and Belgium



**Special Note :** Only 25 countries of the world's 192 countries have the federal system. Most of the large countries of the world are federations.

### What makes India a Federal country?

- All the features of federalism are present in the Indian Constitution. The only difference is that in addition to the two-tier system, India added a third — *panchayats* and municipalities.
- The Constitution has made provisions for distribution of legislative powers between the Union government and the State governments.
- These powers come under three lists –



- There might be some subjects that do not come under any list. (For example, Computers). The Union government has the power to make laws on these ‘residual subjects.’

#### **Special Features of the Indian Federation**

- Centre is more powerful than the states. All states do not have same powers. Jammu and Kashmir has a special status.
- No dual citizenship, like the USA. Every citizen votes as an Indian.
- The Constitution provides special powers to the Centre if there is an emergency in the country.
- Chandigarh, Lakshadweep or the capital city of Delhi are too small in area to become independent states and are called **Union Territories**. The Union government has the power to run them.
- According to the Constitution the powers of the states and the Union government is specified, therefore if any change is needed, it has to be passed by both houses of the Parliament with at least 2/3 majority. Then it has to be ratified by the legislatures of at least 1/2 of the total states.
- The judiciary has the power to oversee the implementation of the Constitution.

#### **Special Note :**

**The Citizenship Amendment Act, 2003**, has a new scheme called the Overseas Indian Citizenship (OIC) scheme which allows overseas Indians (of specified countries) to hold dual citizenship. The specified countries are : (1) Australia (2) Canada (3) Finland (4) France (5) Greece (6) Ireland (7) Israel (8) Italy (9) Netherlands (10) New Zealand (11) Portugal (12) Republic of Cyprus (13) Sweden (14) Switzerland (15) United Kingdom (16) United States of America.

#### **HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED**

- New states have been created. Areas, boundaries and names of the states have been changed.
- Creation of new states was done on two bases :
  - (i) culture, ethnicity or geography, e.g., Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand.
  - (ii) on the basis of language, e.g., Andhra, Maharashtra and many others.

## Language Policy

- Our Constitution has not made any language the national language of India.
- Hindi is the official language spoken by 40% of the population.
- Besides Hindi, 21 other languages are recognised by the Constitution. They are :

Assamese	Dogri	Kannada	Maithali	Marathi	Punjabi	Sindhi	Urdu
Bengali	Gujarati	Kashmiri	Malayalam	Nepali	Sanskrit	Tamil	Bodo
Hindi	Konkani	Manipuri	Oriya	Santhali	Telugu		

- English was to cease as an official language in 1965. But there were agitations in many states [specially Tamil Nadu] against this, so English is allowed to continue. English is the 22nd language.

## Some Facts

- Only 0.02 per cent Indians have English as their mother tongue.
- 11% know English as the second or third language. The **Census of 1991** recorded 1500 distinct languages claimed by people as their mother tongue.
- After grouping them under some major languages, the census found **114** major languages. Example : Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Awadhi, Braj, Bundelkhandi, Chhattisgarhi, Bhily and Rajasthani were grouped under “Hindi”.
- Even after grouping, people who knew Hindi as their second and third language, the total number of Hindi-speaking people was less than 50%.

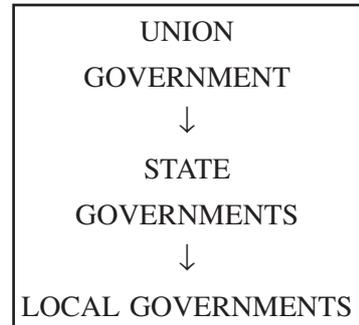
## Centre-State Relations

The way Constitution has made the Centre and the States share powers has also strengthened federalism in India.

Before 1990	After 1990
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Same party ruled the Centre and most of the states.</li><li>● This led to the state governments not exercising their rights as autonomous federal units.</li><li>● Spirit of federalism undermined by the central government as they often dismissed state governments controlled by rival parties.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Rise of regional parties after 1996 changed the situation.</li><li>● An era of ‘coalition governments’ at the centre began.</li><li>● Since no single party got a clear majority in the Parliament (Lok Sabha), the major national parties formed alliances with several regional parties to form government at the Centre.</li><li>● The state governments now cannot be dismissed by the Centre arbitrarily.</li><li>● <b>Note :</b> The result is more power-sharing in the federation than before 1990.</li></ul>

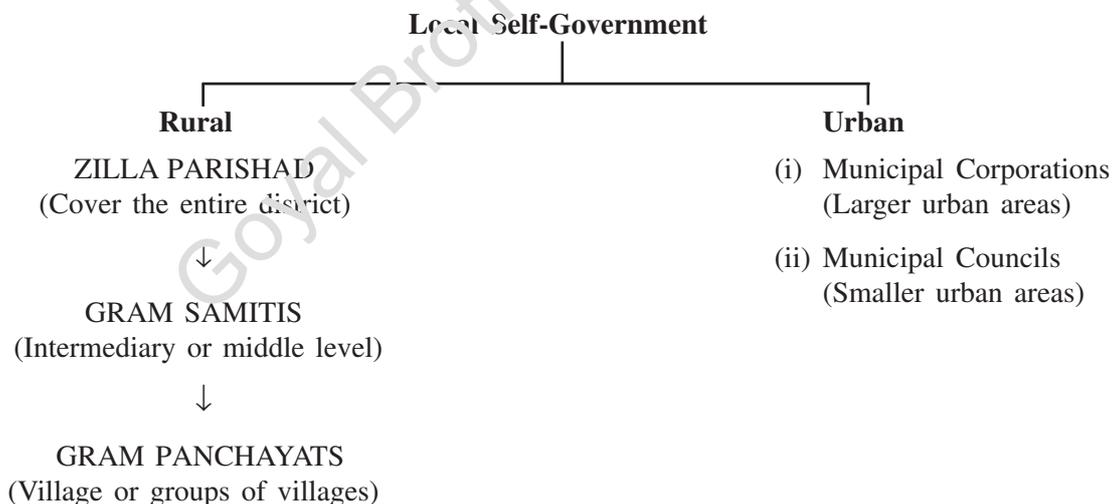
## DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA

- India has a **three-tier system** of government.
- The three-tier system was adopted because :
  - (i) India is a very big country.
  - (ii) Difficult for the union and state governments to manage big provinces and huge population.
- **Decentralisation** means that some power is taken away from the **central and state governments** and given to **local governments**.



### REASONS FOR DECENTRALISATION

- In a big country like India, it is essential to have an elected government at the local level also.
- Local people have better knowledge of local problems.
- Local people have better ideas of where to spend money and which problem to tackle first, of how to manage things more efficiently.
- Common citizens can be involved in decision-making, concerning their needs and how to plan development.
- People can approach a local government for solving their problems easily and quickly. The cost is also reduced to the minimum.
- Local governments provide training in becoming active participants in the working of a democracy. It trains one for leadership.
- Local governments at grassroot level ensure **stability, strength** and **health** of democracy.

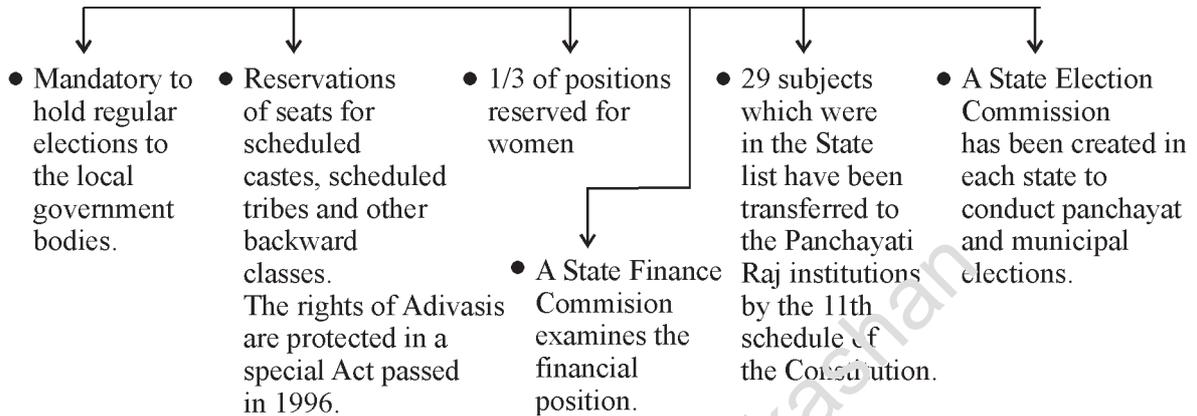


The **73rd Amendment (1992)** concerned the rural local governments (referred to as Panchayati Raj Institutions or PRIs). The **74th Amendment** made provisions for urban local governments (Nagar Palikas). They came into force in 1993.

- **1992** : Amendments to the Constitution (the 73rd and 74th amendments) made the three-tier system more powerful and effective.

- **Before 1992** : The local bodies were directly under the state governments. Regular elections were not held and the local bodies did not have any resources or powers of their own, no real decentralisation.

### Important Features of the Local Government Bodies



A. Rural Local Bodies	B. Urban Local Bodies
<p><b>A.</b> (i) All states have <b>Panchayati Raj</b> systems.</p> <p>(ii) Each village, or a group of villages, has a <b>Gram Panchyat</b>.</p> <p>(iii) It is a council, consisting of several ward members, often called a <b>Panch</b> and a <b>Sarpanch</b> as its head.</p> <p>(iv) All are directly elected by all the adult population for a term of five years. Decision-making body for the entire village.</p> <p>(v) The <b>Gram Sabha</b> is the general body with all the villagers as its members. They meet twice or thrice a year and approve the general budget of the panchayat and review its work.</p> <p><b>B.</b> ● <b>Gram panchayats</b> grouped together to form <b>Panchayat or Block or Mandal Samitis</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The members of this body are elected by all the <i>Panchayats</i> of that area.</li> </ul>	<p>Urban local bodies are divided into two major categories : <b>Municipal Corporations</b> and <b>Municipalities</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In larger urban areas, there are corporations and in smaller urban areas, there are municipal corporations.</li> <li>● They also have : (i) direct elections (ii) reservations (iii) transfer of subjects from the State List (iv) State Election Commission and (v) State Finance Commission.</li> <li>● There are about 70 Municipal Corporations in India. Head is called a Mayor.</li> </ul> <p>The Municipal Council has one of its members as the head and he or she is called the President, with a Vice President under him/her.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Other local bodies are : Town Area Committees, Cantonment Boards, Notified Area Committes.</li> </ul>

- C. ● All the Samits or Mandals in a district together form a **Zila Parishad**.
- Most members of the Zila Parishad are elected.
  - The MLAs and the Members of the Lok Sabha, and some other officials of other district level bodies are also its members. Zila Parishad head (chairperson) is its political head.

#### Some Important Facts

- In India, over 36 lakh representatives are elected for the various panchayats and municipalities.
- Reservations for women is compulsory for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes also.
- There is reservation for the position of the Chairpersons or Adhyakshas at all the three levels.

## I. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### A. NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Point out one feature of federalism practised in India that is similar to and one feature that is different from that of Belgium.**

- Ans.** (i) Like Belgium, India also has regional and cultural differences, and many languages are spoken. So no one language is made the national language and equal importance is given to different cultures and languages.
- (ii) Though in India there are central and state governments that share power, but the centre is made stronger than the states. It has more powers. In Belgium, the state governments are not subordinate to the central government.

**Q.2. What is the main difference between a Federal form of government and a Unitary one? Explain with an example.**

- Ans.** In Federal form of government, the power is divided between the central authority and various constituent units of the country, whereas in the unitary system, there is only one level of government or if states or subdivisions are there, they are subordinate to the Central government.

*Example :* Federal – USA, Switzerland. Unitary – India, Belgium

**Q.3. Mention two differences between the local governments before and after the Constitutional Amendment in 1992.**

- Ans.** The following changes took place as a result of the amendment of 1992 :
- (i) It is mandatory now to hold regular elections after every 5 years to local government bodies.
  - (ii) 1/3rd of seats are reserved for women in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions.

**Q.4. Fill in the blanks**

Since the United States is a ‘\_\_\_\_\_’ type of federation, all the constituent states have

equal powers and states are \_\_\_\_\_ vis-a-vis the federal government. But India is a \_\_\_\_\_ type of federation and some states have more powers than others. In India, the \_\_\_\_\_ government has more powers.

**Ans. coming together, strong, holding together, Union.**

**Q.5.** Here are three reactions to the language policy followed in India. Give an argument and an example to support any of these positions.

**Sangeeta :** The policy of accommodation has strengthened national unity.

**Arman :** Language based states have divided us by making everyone conscious of their languages.

**Harish :** The policy has only helped to consolidate the dominance of English over all other languages.

**Ans.** I agree with Sangeeta. If the policy of accommodation was not followed, and states were not created on linguistic basis, there would have been further partition of India. For example, imposition of Hindi as the national language would have led the South to break away from the North and Tamil Nadu would have become an independent nation.

**Q.6. The distinguishing feature of a federal government is :**

- (a) National government gives some powers to the provincial government.
- (b) Power is distributed among the legislature, executive and judiciary.
- (c) Elected officials exercise supreme power in the government.
- (d) Governmental power is divided between different levels of government.

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.7. A few subjects in various lists of the Indian Constitution are given here. Group them under the Union, State and Concurrent lists as provided in the table below.**

(A) Defence; (B) Police; (C) Agriculture; (D) Education (E) Banking, (F) Forests, (G) Communication; (H) Trade; (I) Marriages.

<b>Ans.</b>	<b>Union List</b>	Defence, Banking, Communication
	<b>State List</b>	Agriculture, Police, Trade
	<b>Concurrent List</b>	Education, Forest, Marriages

**Q.8. Examine the following pairs that give the level of government in India and the powers of the government at that level to make laws on the subjects mentioned against each. Which of the following pairs is not correctly matched?**

(a) State government	State List
(b) Central government	Union List
(c) Central and State governments	Concurrent List
(d) Local governments	Residuary Powers

**Ans.** (d) Residuary powers are given to central government only.

**Q.9. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists.**

List I	List II
1. Union of India	A. Prime Minister
2. State	B. Sarpanch
3. Municipal Corporation	C. Governor
4. Gram Panchayat	D. Mayor

	1	2	3	4
(a)	D	A	B	C
(b)	B	C	D	A
(c)	A	C	D	B
(d)	C	D	A	B

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.10. Consider the following statements.**

- In a federation, the powers of the federal and provincial governments are clearly demarcated.
- India is a federation because the powers of the Union and State Governments are specified in the Constitution and they have exclusive jurisdiction on their respective subjects.
- Sri Lanka is a federation because the country is divided into provinces.
- India is no longer a federation because some powers of the states have been devolved to the local government bodies.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) A, B, and C (b) A, C and D (c) A and B only (d) B and C only

**Ans.** (c)

### OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS (AS PER CCE PATTERN)

#### 2. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (1 MARK)

**Q.1. Which form of power sharing is most commonly referred to as federalism?**

- Horizontal division of power
- Vertical division of power
- Division of power among various communities
- Sharing of power among political parties

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.2. Choose the incorrect statement.**

- Usually a federation has two levels of governments
- Both the levels of governments enjoy their powers independent of one another
- In a federal system, a state government has powers of its own

(d) In a federal system, the state government is answerable to the central government

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.3. Which are the basic objectives of a federal system?**

- (a) To safeguard and promote unity of the country
- (b) To accommodate regional diversity
- (c) To share powers among different communities
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.4. There are two kinds of routes through which federations have been formed. Which are they?**

- (a) One route involves independent states coming together on their own to form a bigger unit
- (b) Second route is where a large country decides to divide its powers between the states and the national government
- (c) Both the above
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.5. Choose the incorrect statement.**

- (a) Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal form in 1993
- (b) Belgium shifted from a federal form to a unitary form of government in 1993
- (c) Sri Lanka continues to be a unitary system
- (d) Tamil leaders want Sri Lanka to become a federal system

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.6. Which of the following is incorrect regarding a unitary government?**

- (a) There is either only one level of government or the sub-units are subordinate to the central government
- (b) The central government can pass on orders to the provincial government
- (c) A state government is answerable to central government
- (d) The powers of state governments are guaranteed by the Constitution

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.7. Which of the following is not one of the key features of federalism?**

- (a) There are two or more levels of governments
- (b) Each tier has its own jurisdiction in specific matters of legislation, taxation and administration
- (c) The existence and authority of each tier of government is constitutionally guaranteed
- (d) The Constitution can be unilaterally changed by any one level of government

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.8. What is true regarding sources of revenue in a federal system?**

- (a) States have no financial powers or independent sources of revenue.
- (b) States are dependent for revenue or funds on the central government.
- (c) Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified to ensure its financial autonomy.
- (d) States have no financial autonomy.

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.9. When was the report of the States Reorganisation Commission implemented?**

- (a) 1956 (b) 1958 (c) 1960 (d) 1965

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.10. What is the third tier of government known as?**

- (a) Village Panchayats (b) State government  
(c) Local self-government (d) Zila Parishad

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.11. The Constitution of India originally provided for :**

- (a) a two-tier system of government. (b) a three-tier system of government.  
(c) a single-tier system of government. (d) a four-tier system of government.

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.12. Which level of government in India has the power to legislate on the 'residuary' subjects?**

- (a) Union government (b) State governments  
(c) Local self-government (d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.13. Which of the following is not an example of 'coming together' federations?**

- (a) India (b) USA (c) Switzerland (d) Australia

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.14. Which of the following is not an example of 'holding together' federations?**

- (a) India (b) Spain (c) Belgium (d) Switzerland

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.15. How many of the world's 192 countries have federal political systems?**

- (a) Only 50 (b) Only 25 (c) Only 60 (d) Only 100

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.16. Which of the following subjects is not included in the Union list?**

- (a) Defence (b) Foreign affairs (c) Police (d) Banking

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.17. Who makes laws on the subjects contained in the Concurrent List?**

- (a) Union government (b) State governments  
(c) Both Union and state governments (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.18. Which state of India enjoys a special status and has its own Constitution?**

- (a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh  
(c) Kerala (d) Jammu and Kashmir

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.19. Which is not true regarding changes in power-sharing arrangement between the centre and the states?**

- (a) The Parliament cannot on its own change this arrangement.  
(b) Any change to it has to be first passed by both the Houses with at least two-thirds majority.

- (c) Then, it has to be ratified by the legislatures of at least half of the total states.  
(d) The Parliament alone has the power to amend the provisions regarding power-sharing.

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.20. Which language was recognised as the national language by the Constitution of India?**

- (a) Hindi (b) English (c) Tamil (d) None of these

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.21. In which Schedule of the Indian Constitution are the 22 scheduled languages included?**

- (a) Tenth schedule (b) Eighth schedule  
(c) Twelfth schedule (d) Ninth schedule

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.22. Which period saw the rise of regional political parties in many states of the country?**

- (a) Period after 1990 (b) Period after 2000  
(c) Period after 1980 (d) Period after 1970

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.23. Which body conducts the elections to panchayats and municipalities?**

- (a) Election Commission (b) State Election Commission  
(c) State High Court (d) Parliament

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.24. Rural local government is popularly known as :**

- (a) Zila Parishad (b) Panchayat Samiti  
(c) Panchayati Raj (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.25. Which of these is incorrect, based on the Constitutional Amendment, 1992?**

- (a) One-fourth of positions are reserved for women.  
(b) Regular elections should be held to the local government bodies.  
(c) Seats are reserved for SCs, STs and OBCs.  
(d) State Election Commission looks after these elections.

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.26. Who administers the whole district?**

- (a) Sarpanch (b) Mayor  
(c) District Magistrate or Collector (d) Sessions Judge

**Ans.** (c)

### PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

**Q.1. The system of Panchayat Raj involves :**

**[2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) Village, block and district levels (b) Village and state levels  
(c) Village, district and state levels (d) Village, state and union levels

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.2. Which one is not the part of 3 tier system of Panchayat Raj? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Municipalities (b) Village Panchayat  
(c) Block Samiti (d) Zila Parishad

**Ans. (a)**

**Q.3. Which one of the following countries is good examples of 'holding together federations'? [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) USA (b) Switzerland (c) Australia (d) India

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.4. Which one of the following lists includes subject of common interest to both the union government and the state government? [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) Union list (b) Concurrent list (c) State list (d) None of these

**Ans. (b)**

**Q.5. Which among the following states in India has a special status? [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) Punjab (b) Jharkhand  
(c) Jammu and Kashmir (d) Himachal Pradesh

**Ans. (c)**

**Q.6. When power is taken away from central and state governments and given to local government, it is called : [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) Distribution (b) Centralisation (c) Reorganisation (d) Decentralisation

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.7. Which of the following was not a provision of the Act of 1956 passed in Sri Lanka? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Sinhala was recognised as the only official language  
(b) Buddhism was to be protected by the state  
(c) Provinces were given autonomy  
(d) Sinhals were favoured in government jobs

**Ans. (c)**

**Q.8. Which of the following country is not an example of 'holding together' federations? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) USA (b) Spain (c) India (d) Belgium

**Ans. (a)**

**Q.9. Both the union and the state government can make laws on the subjects mentioned in the : [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) Union list (b) State list (c) Concurrent list (d) None of the above

**Ans. (c)**

**Q.10. Which of the following countries is an example of 'coming together' federation? [2010 (T-1)]**

- (a) India (b) Pakistan (c) USA (d) Sri Lanka

**Ans. (c)**

**Q.11. Which of the following is not a subject of the Union List? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Foreign affairs      (b) Currency      (c) Banking      (d) Law and order

Ans. (d)

**Q.12. Choose the correct statement regarding language policy of the Indian Government.**

[2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) English is our national language  
(b) Citizens are free to choose any language as national language  
(c) Hindi is our national language  
(d) Constitution of India did not declare any language as national language

Ans. (d)

**Q.13. As per language policy of Indian Government, which one of the following statements is true regarding the status of Hindi language?**

[2010, 2011 (T-I)]

- (a) Only Hindi is our national language      (b) Hindi is the official language  
(c) Hindi has been accepted as the mother tongue of all the Indians  
(d) None of the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.14. Which one of the following countries has the federal form of government?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Egypt      (b) Sri Lanka      (c) Australia      (d) England

Ans. (c)

**Q.15. Which of the following countries has coming a Together Federation?** [2010, 2011 (T-I)]

- (a) The U.S.A      (b) India      (c) Spain      (d) Belgium

Ans. (a)

**Q.16. Who among the following is called a head of the state at the state level?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Chief Minister      (b) Speaker of Vidhan Sabha  
(c) Governor      (d) Mayor

Ans. (a)

**Q.17. Who among the following is the head of a Municipal Corporation?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Home Minister      (b) Sarpanch      (c) Governor      (d) Mayor

Ans. (d)

**Q.18. Which one of the following subjects is included in the state list?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Agriculture      (b) Foreign affairs      (c) Banking      (d) Currency

Ans. (a)

**Q.19. Which one of the following subjects is included in the concurrent list?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Banking      (b) Trade      (c) Police      (d) Education

Ans. (d)

**Q.20. Which one of the following countries has not adopted the holding together federation?**

[2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) India      (b) Spain      (c) Belgium      (d) Japan

Ans. (d)

**Q.21. Which one of the following is not a feature of federalism?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Two or more levels of government

- (b) Different tiers of government govern the same citizens
- (c) Courts have the power to interpret the constitution
- (d) The centre government can order the state government

Ans. (d)

**Q.22. How many other languages are recognised as Scheduled Languages by the constitution, besides Hindi? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) 20
- (b) 21
- (c) 18
- (d) 19

Ans. (b)

**Q.23. Which one of the following countries is an example of holding together federation? [2010, 2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) India
- (b) U.S.A
- (c) Australia
- (d) Switzerland

Ans. (a)

**Q.24. In local self-government institutions at least one-third of all positions are reserved for [2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) men
- (b) women
- (c) children
- (d) scheduled tribes

Ans. (b)

**Q.25. Which of the following governments has two or more levels? [2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Community Government
- (b) Coalition Government
- (c) Federal Government
- (d) Unitary Government

Ans. (c)

**Q.26. Which of the following subjects falls under the Concurrent list? [2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Defence
- (b) Agriculture
- (c) Marriage
- (d) Currency

Ans. (c)

**Q.27. Rural local government is popularly known as : [2011 (T-1)]**

- (a) Panchayati Raj
- (b) Zila Parishad
- (c) State Government
- (d) Gram Panchayat

Ans. (a)

### C. SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (3 MARKS)

**Q.1. Some Nepalese students were discussing the proposals on adoption of federalism in their new Constitution. This is what some of them said.**

**Khag Raj** : *I don't like federalism. It would lead to reservation of seats for different caste groups as in India.*

**Sarita** : *Ours is not a very big country. We don't need federalism.*

**Babulal** : *I am hopeful that the Terai areas will get more autonomy if they get their own state government.*

**Ram Ganesh** : *I like federalism because it will mean that powers that were earlier enjoyed by the king will now be exercised by our elected representatives.*

**What would be your response to each of these? Which of these reflect a wrong understanding of what federalism is? What makes India a federal country?**

Ans. I would agree with Ram Ganesh. He understands that federalism means power-sharing and not

dictatorship. Sarita has a wrong perspective of Federalism. Federalism does not depend on size. Belgium is an example of a small country following federalism. Federalism accommodates all divisions and differences. Khag Raj does not realise that if there are social divisions, they have to be accommodated and minority divisions are to be protected as in India.

India is a land of diversity with so many languages, religions and regions. So the powers had to be shared to avoid conflict. No group can be allowed to dominate.

**Q.2. Give three reasons for decentralisation of power.**

**Ans.** (i) Several states of India are bigger than independent countries of Europe. Decentralisation is necessary for their efficient administration.

(ii) Issues of local level are best understood by the local people.

(iii) Strengthens democracy at grassroot level as local people directly participate in the process of governance.

**Q.3. List the main features of the 73rd Amendment Act.**

**Ans.** (i) All the three levels of the Panchayati Raj are elected directly by the people.

(ii) The term is 5 years.

(iii) 1/3rd seats are reserved for women.

(iv) Reservations for Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs are also provided at all the three levels.

**Q.4. Seats are reserved for women in the local self-government. Seeing the position of women in India as well as the corruption in politics, how far do you think this reservation will help? (HOTS)**

**Ans.** Reservation of seats for women is a major step towards enhancement of democracy in India. But seeing the power politics and corruption in India, participation of women in election is still very difficult. However, now when the seats are reserved for them, at least some women would come forward to participate in the elections.

**Q.5. What is the dual objective of the federal system? What is required to fulfil them?**

**Ans.** (i) To safeguard and promote unity of the country

(ii) To accommodate regional diversity

Two aspects are crucial for the institutions and practice of Federalism. Governments at different levels must agree to some power-sharing rules. They should also trust that each would abide by the agreement.

**Q.6. What is the role of judiciary in implementing federalism?**

**Ans.** In case there is a dispute about the division of powers, the Supreme Court and High Courts settle it. For example, the union and the state governments have the power to raise resources by levying taxes. If there is any dispute related to it, the matter is solved by the courts.

**Q.7. What are the steps taken by our Constitution to safeguard the different languages?**

**Ans.** Our Constitution identified Hindi as the official language but took many steps to safeguard the other languages. Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognised as scheduled languages by the Constitution. A candidate in an examination conducted for the central government positions may take the examination in any of the languages. States also have their own official languages, and most of the government work takes place in the official language of the concerned state.

**Q.8. Why was third-tier of the government created?**

**Ans.** A vast country like India cannot be governed properly by two-tiers only. Some states in India are as large as independent countries of Europe. In terms of population, Uttar Pradesh is bigger than Russia, and Maharashtra is about as big as Germany. There is lot of internal diversity in these states. Thus there is a need of power sharing within these states, for which third-tier of government is created.

**Q.9. Write a note on the local government bodies in urban areas.**

**Ans.** Municipalities and Municipal Corporations are a part of urban local self-government. Municipalities are set up in towns, whereas Municipal Corporations are constituted in big cities. Both of them consist of the representatives elected by the people. The head of Municipality is called 'Chairperson' whereas the head of Municipal Corporation is called the 'Mayor'.

**Q.10. How can you say that the new system of local government is the largest experiment in democracy conducted anywhere in the world?**

**Ans.** There are about 36 lakh elected representatives in the panchayats and municipalities all over the country. This number is bigger than the population of many countries of the world. Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy in our country. By providing reservation for women, it has also increased women's representation in our country.

**PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS**

**Q.1. Why is it very difficult to make changes in the power-sharing arrangement between the Union Government and State Governments? Explain with examples. (2008)**

**Ans.** It is difficult to make changes in power sharing arrangement between the Union government and the State government. The Parliament alone cannot make the changes. Any proposal has to be first approved by both houses of the Parliament, the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha. Any decision has to be approved by at least two-thirds of the majority. Then the proposed change has to be approved by the legislatures of at least half of the total states.

**Q.2. Explain the threefold distribution of legislative powers between the union government and the state governments. (2010)**

**Ans.** For the purpose of making laws, the subjects are divided into three lists :

- (i) **Union List** : It includes subjects over which only the union government can make laws, e.g.—defence, foreign affairs, currency etc.
- (ii) **State List** : It contains those subjects over which the state governments have the powers to make the laws, e.g. police, trade, irrigation, agriculture etc.
- (iii) **Concurrent List** : It contains those subjects over which both the central and the state governments can make the laws but in case of a clash, it is the laws made by the Central government which will prevail. These subjects include education, forest, trade union, etc.

**D. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (4 MARKS)**

**Q.1. Mention three policies that have strengthened federalism in India.**

**Ans.** The real success of federalism in India can be attributed to the nature of democratic politics in our country. This ensured that the spirit of federalism, respect for diversity and desire for

living together became a shared ideal in our country. The policies that have strengthened federalism in India are :

- (i) Some new states have been created on the basis of either language, culture, ethnicity or geography. This has made administration easier.
- (ii) Even though Hindi was identified as the official language by our Constitution, other languages have also been protected. Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognized as scheduled languages by the Constitution. States too have their own official languages. Thus, not declaring Hindi a national language or imposing it on all the states has strengthened federalism.
- (iii) By restructuring the centre-state relations, federalism has got strengthened. Earlier, the central government could easily dismiss the state governments which were controlled by the rival parties. But after 1990, there was a rise of regional political parties in many states of the country. The era of coalition governments which needs an alliance with many parties including several regional parties to form a government at the centre, has led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of the states.

**Q.2. In which way does the language policy in India help our country avoid the situation that Sri Lanka is in today? (HOTS)**

**Ans.** Our Constitution did not give the status of national language to any one language. Although Hindi was identified as the official language but there were many safeguards to protect other languages.

According to the Constitution, the use of English for official purpose was to stop in 1965. However, many non-Hindi speaking states demanded that the use of English should continue. The Central government decided to continue the use of English alongwith Hindi for official purposes. Hindi is not imposed on states where people speak a different language. The flexibility shown by Indian political leaders helped our country avoid the kind of situation that Sri Lanka finds itself in.

In Sri Lanka, the major social groups are the Sinhala-speakers (74%) and the Tamil-speakers (18%). In 1956, an Act was passed to recognize Sinhala as the only official language, thus disregarding Tamil. Due to this, and other reasons, the relations between the Sinhala and the Tamil communities got strained over time.

**Q.3. How can you say that power-sharing is more effective today than it was in the early years after the Constitution came into force? (HOTS)**

**Ans.** In the early years, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most of the States. But in the states where the rival parties ruled, the central government often misused its power to dismiss the state governments. This undermined the spirit of federalism.

But after 1990, there was a rise of regional parties in many states of the country. It was at this time that since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the major national parties had to enter into an alliance with many parties, including several regional parties to form a government at the Centre. This led to the era of coalition government – a new culture of power-sharing and respect for the autonomy of state governments.

## PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Describe any four features of federalism. [2008, 2011 (T-1)]**

- Ans.** (i) In a federation, there are two or more levels (or tiers) of government.  
(ii) Different levels of government govern the same citizens, but the subjects over which they can make laws are clearly specified in the three lists—Union, State and Concurrent.  
(iii) The fundamental provisions of the Constitution cannot be amended unilaterally by any one level of government. They have to be approved by both the levels of the government.  
(iv) In case of a dispute between the different levels of government in the exercise of their powers, the courts interpret the Constitution to decide upon the dispute.

**Q.2. What makes India a federation? (2008, 2009)**

**OR**

**Explain the factors which make India a federal state. [2011 (T-1)]**

- Ans.** The Constitution declared India as a Union of states. The following points clearly show that the Indian Union is based on the principles of federalism –
- (i) The Constitution clearly provided a three-fold distribution of legislative powers between the Union government and the State governments in the three lists—Union, State and Concurrent lists.
  - (ii) This sharing of power is basic to the structure of the Constitution, and it cannot be changed by Parliament; it has to be ratified by at least half of the state legislatures.
  - (iii) In a federation, judiciary solves the disputes between different levels of government. In any such case of a dispute, the High Courts and the Supreme Court make a decision.

**Q.3. Explain any four features of the third tier of the government. (2009)**

- Ans.** (i) It is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies after five years.  
(ii) Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled tribes and OBCs.  
(iii) At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.  
(iv) An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each state to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.

**Q.4. Why does the exact balance of power between the central and the state governments vary from one federation to another? Explain with two examples. (2008)**

- Ans.** The exact balance of power between the central and the state governments varies from one federation to another. There are two kinds or two ways in which federations have been formed :
- (i) The first example is where independent states come together on their own to form a bigger unit. They, by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity, can increase their security. This type of **coming together** federations include USA, Switzerland and Australia. In this first category, all the constituent states usually have equal powers and are strong vis-a-vis the federal government.
  - (ii) The second category is where a large country decides to divide its powers between the

constituent states and the national government. India, Spain and Belgium are examples of this kind of **holding together** federations. In this second category, the central government is more powerful vis-a-vis the states. Very often different constituted units of the federation have unequal powers. Some units may be granted special powers.

**Q.5. Explain two achievements and two difficulties of Local Self Government in India.**

[2008, 2011 (T-1)]

**Ans. Achievements**

- (i) At the local level, it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation.
- (ii) Constitutional states for local government has also increased women's representation and voice in our democracy.

**Difficulties**

- (i) While elections are held regularly and enthusiastically, Gram Sabhas are not held regularly.
- (ii) Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to the local governments. They do not give adequate resources also to them.

**Q.6. Analyse the advantages of decentralisation.**

[2011 (T-1)]

- Ans.** (i) There are a large number of problem and issues which are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.
- (ii) Local people have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage thing move efficiently.

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**Q.5. Explain two achievements and two difficulties of Local Self Government in India. [2008, 2011 (T-1)]**

**Ans. Achievements**

- (i) At the local level, it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation.  
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**Q.6. Analyse the advantages of decentralisation. [2011 (T-1)]**

- Ans.** (i) There are a large number of problems and issues which are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.  
(ii) Local people have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently.  
(iii) At the local level it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation.

(iv) Local government is the best way to realise one important principle of democracy, namely local self-government.

**Q.7. “The creation of linguistic states was the first and major test for democratic politics in our country.” Justify this statement. [2011 (T-1)]**

**Ans.** In 1947, the boundaries of several old states of India were changed in order to create new states. This was done to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same state. Some states were created to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography. These include states like Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand. Some national leaders feared that formation of states on the basis of language would lead to the disintegration of the country. So the Central Government resisted linguistic states for some time. But the experiences have shown that the formation of linguistic states has actually made the country more united. It has also led to the much-needed administrative efficiency.

**Q.8. Distinguish between ‘coming together’ and ‘holding together’ type of federations. [2011 (T-1)]**

**Ans.** Some newly independent states come together on their own to form bigger unit, so that by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity they can increase their security. This type of ‘coming together federations’ included the USA, Switzerland and Australia. In such type of federation, all the constituent states usually have equal power and are strong vis-a-vis the federal government.

In ‘holding together federation’ a large country decides to divide its power between the constituent states and the national government. India, Spain and Belgium are examples of this kind of ‘holding together’ federations. In such type of federation, the central government tends to be more powerful vis-a-vis the states. Very often different constituent units of the federation have unequal powers. Some units are granted special powers such as Jammu and Kashmir in India.

## II. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### A. PROJECT

- Topic covered** : Working of Indian federalism
- Objective** : To understand the mechanism of federalism in India
- Skills developed** : Analytical understanding of how federalism is practised in India, the nature of an unitary and a federal polity.
- Time required** : 1-2 days
- Method** : (a) Explain the basic concept and nature of an unitary and a federal state.  
(b) Compare and contrast the two systems of polity giving examples of Belgium, U.S.A., Sri Lanka and India.  
(c) Explain the working of Indian federalism.  
(d) Focus on (i) Linguistic states (ii) Language policy (iii) Centre-State relations (iv) Decentralisation in India (v) Coalition governments  
(e) In conclusion, give your personal opinion about Indian federalism.

## **B. ACTIVITIES**

1. Watch the proceedings of a meeting of a Gram Panchayat / Municipal Corporation / Municipal Council of your locality. Also, talk to the Sarpanch / Mayor and prepare a report on the following points : (a) people / office-bearers who attended the meeting (b) Agenda of the meeting (c) Main arguments (d) Consensus arrived at (e) Steps taken to implement the decision.
2. Talk to a woman sarpanch / ward councillor / panch of your area. Prepare a report on the difference in their power / status after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992. Has the third tier of democracy become more powerful and effective or the situation is more or less the same? Has it really altered the socio-economic position of women? Describe the success story of a woman sarpanch.
3. If you live in a village, find the names of the following : your panch or ward member, your Sarpanch, your Panchayat Samiti, the Chairperson of your Zila Parishad.  
If you live in urban areas, find out the name of your Municipal Councillor, Mayor or the Municipal Chairperson. Also, find out about the budget of your Municipal Corporation, Municipality and the major items on which money was spent.

## **C. ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Given here are three different reactions to the language policy followed in India. Give an argument against or in favour of these arguments :
  - (a) The language policy have strengthened national unity.
  - (b) Language-based states have led to divisive tendencies by making everyone conscious of their language.
  - (c) This policy has only helped to consolidate the dominance of English over all other languages.
2. Listen to one national and one regional news bulletin broadcast by All India Radio (A.I.R.) for one week. Make a list of news items related to government policies or decisions by classifying these into the following categories :
  - (a) News items that relate only to the central government.
  - (b) News items that relate only to your or any other state government.
  - (c) News items about the relationship between the central and state governments.
3.
  - (a) Find out if your village or town has remained under the same state since 1947? If not, what was the name of the earlier state?
  - (b) Identify three states' names in 1947 that have changed later.
  - (c) Identify any three states which have been carved out of a bigger state.
  - (d) Mention three states which were created to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography.
4. Study the following typical situations and explain what would be legal / constitutional remedy.
  - (a) Suppose the Government of Rajasthan was opposed to the central government's nuclear policy and it tried to prevent the Union government from conducting nuclear explosion in Pokhran.

- (b) There is a conflict between the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over sharing of water of the river Kaveri.
  - (c) The Government of Bihar introduces new textbooks whose style and content is not liked by the Union government.
  - (d) If the chief ministers of Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa and Chhattisgarh pursue different and opposing policies to deal with Maoist or Naxalite insurgencies.
5. In light of the theme expressed in the cartoon given below, comment on Centre-State relations.



### **D. GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. Divide the class in groups of five students. Organise a group discussion on the topic “The Indian Constitution confers upon a federal system the strength of a unitary government.”
2. Organise a group discussion in the class. The topic is “The formation of linguistic states has actually made India more united.”

[**Note :** The teacher should at first highlight the main features of the topic throwing ample light on the subject.]

### **E. MAKING POSTER / CHART**

1. There are 22 languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, known as ‘Scheduled Languages’.  
Make a bar or pie chart showing the proportion of speakers (%) of the scheduled languages. Also prepare a map of linguistic diversity of India by shading the region where each of these languages is spoken on the map of India.
2. Make a large poster showing collage of newspaper clippings, saying about positive and negative effects of decentralisation in India.