

Federalism

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (3 MARKS)

SCERT Questions

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

Ans. (i) Similar Feature : Like in Belgian federalism, in Indian federalism also constitutional powers are given to the regional and local governments.
(ii) Different Feature : Unlike Belgian federalism, in Indian federalism regional and local governments are dependent on the central government for finance and other matters of national importance.

Q.2. Distinguish between the Federal form of Government and Unitary form of Government.

Or

What is the main difference between a federal form of government and a unitary one ? Explain with an example.

Ans. Distinction between Federal form and Unitary form of Governments.

Federal form of Government	Unitary form of Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature : Under the federal system there are two levels of government, one at the central level and other at the state level. Both level have their areas of jurisdiction.• Function : (i) In federal system a state government has powers of its own for which it is not answerable to the central government. (ii) Central government can not order the state government to do something.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature : But in Unitary form of government either there is only one level of government or the sub-units are subordinate to the central government.• Function : (i) On the other hand in Unitary system the state government does not have Powers of its own. (ii) The central government can pass on orders to the local government.

Additional Questions

Q.3. Give a comparative analysis between Belgian and Sri Lankan form of Power Sharing.

Ans. "Belgium and Sri Lanka" both shared more or less the same historical background of complex ethnic composition.

But in 1993 under the great Constitutional change Belgium shifted from a unitary to federal form of government. Whereas, Sri Lanka continues to be, for all practical purposes, "a unitary system" where the national government has all the powers.

Q.4. 'Federal System has two or more sets of Government'. Justify the statement.

Ans. As "federalism" is a system of government in which the power is divided between the union and provinces so, usually it has two levels of government :

- (i) One is the government for the entire country with the subjects of national importance.
- (ii) The other government is at the level of provinces or states that looks after the matters of local importance.

Q.5. 'Independence of Judiciary is the key to the success of federalism.' Examine the statement.

Ans. Independence of Judiciary is very much required in the federal system of government because;

- (i) Judiciary acts as an umpire if disputes arise between different levels of government in the exercise of their respective powers.
- (ii) Judiciary also interprets the Constitution and the powers of different levels of government.

Hence, judiciary is the key to the success of federalism.

Q.6 What is the basic nature of Indian federal system ?

Or

"Indian federal system is a quasi-federal". Examine the statement.

Ans. The process for the establishment of a federation in India has been described as one of the "movement from the Union to the units, rather than from the units to the union, i.e.. Holding Together Federation." The constitution of India says "India shall be a Union of states" which signifies that the Indian federation is not the result of an agreement by the units and the units have no freedom to secede from it.

Q.7. What do you understand by the three tiers system of Indian federation ?

Ans. Three-Tier system means three levels of government. The Indian Constitution originally provided for a two-tier system of government.

- (i) The union government or the central government and
- (ii) the state government

But, later a third-tier of federalism was added in the form of Panchayats [Rural level] and Municipalities [Urban level]. Every level enjoys separate jurisdiction.

Q.8. Define List system.

Ans. As regards the subjects for legislation among the three levels of government, the constitution clearly provided a three fold division of power between union and state government. The "three fold division" itself is known as the List System. The three lists of subjects are known as

- Union List,
- State List and
- Concurrent List.

Q.9. What do you mean by Union List.

Ans. Union List is the first fold of the three list system.

(i) It includes subjects of national importance. This list consists of 97 subjects. Most important among these are defence, atomic energy, foreign affairs, etc.

(ii) The Parliament is solely empowered to enact laws on subjects included in the Union List.

Q.10. What is State List ?

Ans. State List is the second fold of the three fold division i.e. three list. It is very much concerned with the state.

(i) State List contains subjects of state and local importance such as police, trade It has altogether 66 subjects.

(ii) The state legislature alone can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the State List.

Q.11. Give the concept of Concurrent List.

Ans. Concurrent List constitutes the third fold of the list system.

(i) It includes subjects of common interests to both the union government as well as the state government, such as, education, forests, trade unions, marriage, adoption and successions, press, etc.

(ii) Both the Union as well as state governments can make laws on the concurrent List subjects. But in case of a conflict between the central (Union) and state laws, Central (Union) law prevails.

Q.12. If agriculture and commerce are state subjects why do we have ministers of agriculture and commerce in the Union Cabinet ?

Ans. Although agriculture and commerce are the state subjects we have ministers of agriculture and commerce at the union because of the wider prospect of these subjects regarding inter-state trade. So a uniform policy has to be legislated.

Secondly, the agricultural and economic experts are part of the Planning Commission. So we require agricultural and commerce ministers in the Union for "policy making".

Q.13. Examine the concepts :

(i) Panchayat or Block Samiti.

(ii) Municipalities and Municipal Corporations

(iii) ZillaParishads.

Ans. Concepts : Structure of Panchayati Raj

- (i) Panchayat Samiti or Block Samiti : The representative body at block level of the Panchayati Raj is known as the Panchayat Samiti or Block Samiti. It is formed by a group of gram panchayats. The members of this representative body are elected by all the panchayat members in that area. Panchayat Samiti looks after affairs of Blocks.
- (ii) Municipalities and Municipal Corporations : Municipalities and Municipal Corporations are the government bodies in urban areas.
 - Municipalities are constituted towns and municipal corporations in big cities.
 - Both municipalities and municipal corporations are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people representatives.
 - Municipal chairperson is the political head of the municipality.
- (iii) ZillaParishad : ZillaParishad is the representative body at district level. All the Panchayat Samiti's or mandals in a district, together constitute the ZillaParishad. ZillaParishad looks after the matters or affairs of district.
 - ⇒ Most members of the ZillaParishad are elected including the members of the Lok Sabha and MLAs.
 - ⇒ ZillaParishad chairperson is the political head of the ZillaParishad.

Q.14. Who is a Mayor ? What are his functions ?

Ans. Mayor is the political head of the Municipal Corporation. The mayor is elected annually from among the members of the Corporation. He is the first citizen of the city.

- (i) He acts as the chairperson of Municipal Corporation.
- (ii) He presides over the meetings of the corporation and guides its deliberations.
- (iii) He regulates the conduct of business at such meetings.
- (iv) Mayor is also the proper channel of communication between the Commissioner and the state government.

Q.15. In what ways the local Government has deepened our democracy ?

Ans. Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy in our country. It has also increased women's representation and voice in our democracy.

Actually the new system of local government is the largest experiment in democracy conducted anywhere in the world.

All these features strengthen the very aspect of our democracy.

Q.16. List out the basic traits of federalism.

Ans. The basic traits of federalism are : Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country by the constitution.

- Two levels of government :
 - (i) Usually a federation has two levels of government. One is the government for the entire country.
 - (ii) The others are governments at the level of provinces or states.
- Separation of powers :
 - (i) Both these levels of governments enjoy their powers independently.
- Independence of Judiciary :
 - (i) In a federation, for all matters affecting the Constitution, the Supreme Court acts as the final arbiter.

Q.17. Discuss the dual objectives of federalism.

Ans. As federalism has two or more levels of governments it has dual objectives.

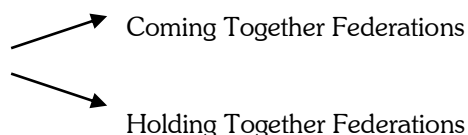
- (i) to safeguard and promote unity of the country.
 - (ii) and to accommodate regional diversity.
- ⇒ These two aspects are crucial for the institution and practice of federalism. The government at different levels should agree to some rules of power sharing.
- ⇒ They should also trust that each would abide by its part of agreement.
- Hence, an ideal federal system has both aspects i.e.,
- Mutual trust and
 - Agreement to live together.

Q.18. Examine the general nature of federalism.

Ans. The general nature of federalism varies from one country to another.

Actually the exact balance of power between the central and the state government varies from one federation to another. This balance depends mainly on the historical context in which the federation was formed.

However, there are two kinds of routes through which federations have been formed.



- (i) Coming Together Federation involves independent states coming together on their own to form a bigger unit, so that by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity they can increase their security, e.g.,— U.S.A.
- (ii) The another nature Holding Together Federation is one where a large country decides to divide its power between the constituent states and the national government, e.g., India.

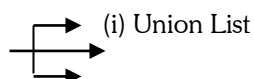
Q.19. Distinguish between coming together federations and holding together federations.

Ans. Distinction between Coming Together and Holding Together Federalism

Coming Together Federalism	Holding Together Federalism
(i) Coming Together Federalism involves independent states coming together on their own to form a bigger unit.	(i) Other way in which Federation can be formed is Holding together. In this system the large power or country decides to divide its power between the constituent states and national government.
(ii) In coming together, units try to increase their security by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity.	(ii) But in Holding Together there is the absence of pooling sovereignty and retaining identity. Infact in this federation the central government subordinates over the constituent units.
(iii) In this category of federations, all the constituent units usually have equal power and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.	(iii) Whereas, in this second category, the central government tends to be more powerful vis-a-vis the states. Sometimes constituent units of the federation have unequal powers. For example, in India
(iv) USA, Switzerland, and Australia have "Coming Together Federation."	Jammu and Kashmir was granted special status. (iv) India, Spain and Belgium are examples of this kind of Holding together federations.

Q.20. What are the power sharing arrangements in our country ?

Ans. The power sharing" arrangements in our country is mainly based on the Quasi federal nature of federation. The Constitution declared India as a Union of states and clearly provided a three fold distribution of Legislative powers between the Union Government and the state Government. It contains "three lists" which is known as the "List system".



List System (ii) State List
 (iii) Concurrent List

- (i) Union List includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communications and currency.
 - (ii) State List contains subjects of state and local importance such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture and irrigation.
 - (iii) Concurrent List has the subjects of common interest to both the union government as well as the state governments, such as education, forests, trade unions, marriages, adoption and succession.
- On the whole Indian federal system is an example of the Holding Together nature of federalism.

Q.21. Examine the Holding Together nature of Indian Federalism.

- Ans.** Indian federalism is formed by "Holding Together" nature of federalism. It does not give equal powers to its constituent units.
- Hence, all states in the Indian Union do not have identical powers.
 - Some states enjoy a special status, like Jammu and Kashmir has its own constitution.
 - Many provisions of the Indian Constitution are not applicable to this state without the approval of the state assembly.
 - There are some units of the Indian Union which enjoy very little powers like Chandigarh, Lakshadweep or the Capital City of Delhi. They are known as the Union Territories. These units do not have the powers of a state.

Q.22. "Judiciary plays an important role in Indian federation." Prove the statement.

Or

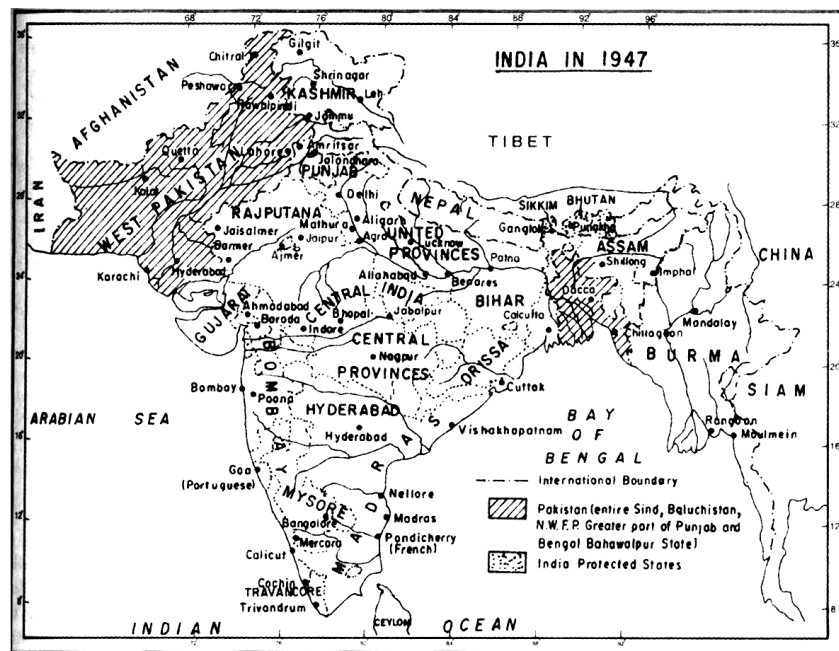
In what ways judiciary is important for Indian federalism ?

- Ans.** Judiciary with the Supreme Court at the apex is the sole interpreter of Indian federalism.
- It plays an important role in overseeing the implementation of Constitutional provisions and procedures.
 - Judiciary administers both the Union and state laws which are applicable to the cases coming up for adjudication,
 - In case of any dispute about the division of powers, the High Courts and Supreme Court make a decision.
- Hence, judiciary is the guardian of Indian federalism.

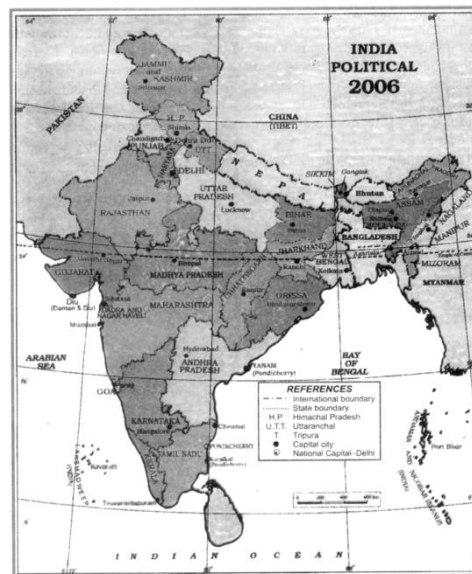
Q.23. Give comparative analysis of 1947 and 2006 India with the help of map.

- Ans.** Comparative analysis of 1947 and 2006 India and its journey of federalism.

Map 1947 India



Map 2006 India



If we look at the political map of India when it began its journey as a democracy in 1947 and that of 2006 we are surprised by the extent of the changes.

- (i) Many old states have vanished and many new states have emerged. Areas, boundaries and names of the states have been changed.
- (ii) In 1947, the boundaries of several old states of India were changed in order to create new states. This was done to ensure cultural unity and linguistic identity, e.g., Tamil Nadu.
- (iii) Some states were created to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography. These states include Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand.

Q.24. Examine the controversy over Hindi and English as the official language.

Ans. The controversy over the Hindi and English as the official language started when our Constitution made the provision that the use of English for official purposes was to stop in 1965.

(i) However, many non-Hindi speaking states demanded that the use of English should continue. In Tamil Nadu, this movement took a violent form.

(ii) So the central government responded by agreeing to continue the use of English along with Hindi for official purposes.

Thus, the flexibility shown by Indian political leaders helped our country to avoid the situation like civil war that Sri Lanka finds itself in.

Q.25. Discuss the centre-state relations in Indian federalism.

Ans. "Centre-State relations" of Indian Federalism constitute the core of federalism and they are regulated by the provisions of the Constitution.

(i) The division of powers between the Union and the States, as given in the Indian Constitution has a strong bias in favour of the Centre. Various kinds of restrictions imposed upon the states.

(ii) Administrative relations. The Indian Constitution is based on the principle that the executive power is co-extensive with the Legislative power i.e., Union and state executives can deal with all matters on which legislature legislates.

(iii) In the administrative affairs also the centre acquires control over states through All India Services, Grant-in-Aid etc. Hence, restructuring of the centre-state relations is one more way in which federalism has been strengthened in practice.

Q.26. What was the new culture of power-sharing developed after 1990 ?

Or

When was the beginning of Coalition Era and Why ?

Ans. The new culture of power-sharing developed after 1990 was the Rise of regional political parties in many states and the era of Coalition Government.

The coalition era started when no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, then the major national parties had to enter into an alliance with many parties including regional parties to form a government at the centre.

(i) This trend was further supported by a major judgement of the Supreme Court that made it difficult for the Central Government to dismiss state government in an arbitrary manner.

Q.27. Analyse the figure and data given on the scheduled languages of India under census 1991.

- Ans.** The latest information that we have regarding linguistic diversity of India is from the Census of India held in 1991.
- (i) The Census recorded 1500 distinct languages which people mentioned as their mother tongues. These languages were grouped together under some major languages like Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Chattisgarhi, Rajasthani etc.
 - (ii) Even after this grouping the Census found 114 major languages, of these 22 languages are now included in the weight schedule of the Indian Constitution known as the "Scheduled Languages" and rest languages are called "non-scheduled languages."

Q.28. Examine the significance of Decentralisation.

- Ans.** "Decentralisation" is a major step to modify the concept of democracy and federalism. It is very significant for all practical aspects.
- (i) It helps in the settlement of a large number of problems and issues at the local level.
 - (ii) It provides a platform for the direct participation of people in decision making. Hence, inculcates a habit of "democratic participation."
 - (iii) In another way decentralisation in the form of "local self government" is the best way to realise principles of Democracy, i.e., "Democracy at the grassroots level."

Q.29. Discuss the structure and composition of Rural local self government.

- Ans.** Rural local self government is popularly known by the name Panchayati Raj. It has a three tier system.
- Structure of Panchayati Raj

Zilla Parishad	• District Level
Block and Panchayat Samiti	• Block Level
Gram Panchayat	• Village Level

- (i) The Gram Sabha : The Gram Sabha which is not a tier of Panchayati Raj is the general body consisting of all the voters residing in the jurisdiction of a Gram Panchayat. The Gram Sabha is supposed to work as the watchdog of the Gram Panchayat which is its executive body.
- (ii) Gram Panchayat : The Gram Panchayat is the first tier in the Panchayat Raj System. It is constituted for one village or group of villages.
 - It is a decision-making body for the entire village. It has to meet at least twice or thrice in a year to approve the annual budget.
 - This is a council consisting of several ward members often called panchs, and a President or Sarpanch.
 - They are directly elected by all the adult population living in that ward or village by secret ballot system.
- (iii) Panchayat Samiti : The intermediate tier in the Panchayati Raj System is known as the Panchayat Samiti. It is constituted for two or more Gram Panchayats at the block level.
 - The members of this representative body are elected by all the Panchayat members in that area.

- The elected head of the Samiti is known as "President, chairman or pradhan.
 - Panchayat Samiti are the executive bodies for the state government and the ZillaParishad. They execute transferred schemes, which were previously implemented by the different departments of state governments.
- (iv) ZillaParishad. This is the top tier of Panchayati Raj constituted at the district level by the Panchayat Samitis or mandals. Most members of the ZillaParishad are elected.
- It comprises following categories of members.
- Presidents of Panchayat Samitis. Local MPs, MLAs and MLCs.
 - Persons representing women and scheduled castes and tribes.
- ZillaParishad chairperson is the political head of the ZilaParishad.

Q.30. Examine the composition and structure of Urban local self government.

Ans. Like Panchayati Raj at rural areas, local bodies exist for urban areas structure is like.

→ Municipal Corporations	In Big cities
→ Municipalities	In towns

- (i) Municipal Corporations. Big cities have municipal corporations, It is the top most urban local government.
- ⇒ The corporation comprises members called councillors. These councillors are on adult franchise.
- ⇒ The political head of the municipal corporation is known as Mayor.
- Its main functions are :
- ⇒ Supply of wholesome water
- ⇒ Supply of electricity
- ⇒ Road transport services,
- ⇒ Establishment of hospitals maternity and Child welfare centres etc.
- ⇒ It has also the discretionary functions like • Construction of public parks, • Gardens • Libraries • Public housing, • Registration of marriages, • Surveys of buildings and lands etc.
- (ii) Municipalities. Municipalities are set up in towns. They are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people's representatives. Municipal Chairperson is the political head of the municipality.
- ⇒ The functions of a municipality and of a municipal corporation are more or less identical.
- The urban local bodies get various type of grants from the state and central governments.