

Political Science

Question Paper 2019

Maximum Marks: 80

Time allowed: Three hours

- Candidates are allowed additional 15 minutes for only reading the paper. They must NOT start writing during this time.
 - Answer Question 1 (Compulsory) from Part I and five questions from Part II, choosing two questions from Section A, two
 - questions from Section B and one question from either Section A or Section B.
 - The intended marks for questions or parts of questions are given in brackets [].
-

Part-I (20 Marks)

Answer all questions

Question 1.

Answer briefly each of the questions (i) to (x): [10 x 2]

- (i) State two features of a unitary state.
- (ii) Explain one way in which the Constitution of the United States can be amended.
- (iii) State one reason why minorities should be properly represented in legislatures.
- (iv) Explain what is meant by the constituent function of the Legislature.
- (v) State any two executive powers of the President of India.
- (vi) What is the composition of the Supreme , Court of India ?
- (vii) What is meant by single citizenship as a salient feature of the Constitution of India ?
- (viii) Cite one example of implementation of a Directive Principle.
- (ix) Which fundamental right is a remedy for the violation of other fundamental rights ?
- (x) Explain the meaning of communalism, in the Indian context.

Answer:

(i) An all powerful Single Central Government : A unitary state vests all powers in a Single Government at the center who has supreme authority over the State. It legislates for the whole State by itself. The Central government delegates certain powers to the local governments.

Local government exists due to the Central government : The local governments are directed by the Center about all the work they do. The powers and functions of the local government can change at the whims and fancies of the Central government.

(ii) The American Constitution is a very rigid constitution. The process of amendment of the constitution is a difficult one. An amendment becomes a part of the constitution only

after clearing two stages. First, the proposal for an amendment has to be initiated and passed either by a 2/3rd majority in both the Houses of the Congress or by a special constitutional convention called by the Congress when asked to do by 2/3rd of all the states legislatures. Secondly, after clearing the first stage, the amendment has to secure a ratification either by 3/4th of the several state legislatures or by special conventions in 3/4th states.

(iii) The minorities need proper representation in the legislature to help make laws that are conducive to their empowerment. Ample representation will help them put forward their issues in the legislature and find solutions accordingly.

(iv) The legislature has the power to amend the constitution. For this purpose, the legislature makes laws called amendments, which are in accordance with the rules laid down in constitution. This is the constituent function of the Legislature.

(v) Article 53 declares that the President is the head of Executive in a state/country. All Executive actions need to be taken in his name. He appoints the Prime Minister and other ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister. He also appoints the Chief Justice of India and on the CJI's advice appoints other judges of the Supreme Court.

(vi) The Constitution of India provides for a Supreme Court with a Chief Justice and not more than 30 judges who are appointed by the President of India with consultation of the Chief Justice of India. .

(vii) Despite dual polity Separate central governments, the Constitution of India adopted Single Citizenship system. This means that irrespective of which state the citizens live in, all of them are only Indian citizens. They are not the citizens of Assam, Rajasthan or Bihar, but that of India. They are all, entitled equal rights by the constitution. Federal countries like the US, Australia and Switzerland have the system of dual citizenship where all the residents are citizens of both the state they live in as well as that of the country.

(viii) Established in 1950, the .Planning Com-mission was set to take up the development of the country in an orderly and planned way. Introduction and Implementation of the Five Year plans aim at improving the socio-economic status of the citizens. These are both, examples of implementation of Directive principles

(ix) The Right to Constitutional Remedies, Article 32, provides for the enforcement and protection of Fundamental rights. This right makes all the other rights effective. It gives the citizens the power to move to the Supreme Court in case of violation of other rights.

(x) Communalism implies a strong sense of belonging to a particular religious community to the exclusion of others. The concept of communalism holds that religious distinction is the most fundamental and overriding distinction that separates a particular community from others. Communalism, as evident from the rise of politics based on religious identity, has been an important factor in the Indian political system. The relationship between communalism and Indian politics was institutionalized in 1909 by the Minto-Morley Reforms and subsequently through the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 which led to separate electorates. Though the system was abolished in 1947, the germs of communalism remained in independent India as well.

Part-II (60 Marks)

Section—A

Answer any three questions

Question 2.

- (a) Discuss any three features of a liberal democratic state. [6]
- (b) Explain any three features of a parliamentary form of government. [6]

Answer:

(a) A Liberal democratic state is based on the ideology of a representative democracy with liberal outlook that focuses special attention on minorities and weaker sections. This outlook can be seen in the Indian Constitution.

Features:

1. It is characterized by fair, free and competitive elections between multiple distinct political parties.
 2. In a liberal democracy, the role of the executive is defined and limited. Political executive undertakes policy formation and permanent executive implements these decisions.
 3. Equal protection of human rights, civil rights, civil liberties, and political freedoms for all people.
 4. Liberal democracies often draw upon a constitution, either formally written or uncoded, to delineate the powers of government.
- (b) A Parliamentary form of government is where the parliament is supreme. The government at the centre or the executive branch of the government is supported either directly or indirectly by the members of the parliament. A vote of confidence shows the support for the government's decisions.

Following are the features of a parliamentary form of government:

Nominal Head : A Parliamentary government has two heads-a titular and a real one. The nominal head is the head of state in name. The true powers reside in the real head, i.e. Prime Minister and his council of ministers.

Collective and Individual Responsibility: The cabinet has the responsibility of making decisions for the country. The roles are divided among the ministers. Portfolios are distributed for effective governance but the minister who holds the portfolio is accountable for the decisions he makes. Similarly, if the cabinet has collectively made a decision then all its members are responsible for the same. Censure motions or Cut motions/No confidence motions can be passed against the ministers if they act irresponsibly.

Centrally important position of the Prime Minister in the Indian Parliamentary System: The powers and functions of the Prime Minister clearly bring out the fact that he is the most powerful person in the Indian Political System. He exercises real and formidable powers in all spheres of govern-mental activity – Executive, Legislative and Financial. The powers that the Constitution vests in the President are exercised by the Cabinet, which is headed by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is the captain of the ship, of state, the keystone of cabinet-arch, the steering wheel of the government, and the moon against lesser stars.

Question 3.

(a) What is meant by the First Past the Post system ? Explain one advantage and one drawback of this system. [6]

(b) Explain two advantages of a bi-party system. [6]

Answer:

(a) Some countries including India use the first- past-the-post system to elect their governments or the members of the parliament. A country or its states are divided into constituencies according to their population figures. Each constituency is represented by a candidate from every political party. Amongst them, the candidate who receives the majority votes is declared the winner in the constituency and his party represents that constituency in the lower house of the Union or state legislature.

Advantages of FPTP system : First Past The Post, like other plurality/majority electoral systems, is defended primarily on the grounds of simplicity and its tendency to produce winners who are representatives beholden to defined geographic areas and governability. The most often cited advantages of FPTP system are:

It provides a clear-cut choice for voters between two main parties. The inbuilt disadvantages faced by third and fragmented minority parties under FPTP in many cases cause the party system to gravitate towards a party of the 'left' and a party of the 'right', alternating in power. Third parties often wither away and almost never reach a

level of popular support above which their national vote yields a comparable percentage of seats in the legislature.

It promotes a link between constituents and their representatives, as it produces a legislature made up of representatives of geographical areas. Elected members represent defined areas of cities, towns or regions rather than just party labels. Some analysts have argued that this 'geographic accountability' is particularly important in agrarian societies and in developing countries. (Any one)

Drawbacks:

However, FPTP is frequently criticized for a number of reasons :

It excludes smaller parties from 'fair' representation, in the sense that if a party which wins approximately, say, 10 percent of the votes should win approximately 10 percent of the legislative seats. In the 1993 federal election in Canada, the Progressive Conservatives won 16 percent of the votes but only 0.7 percent of the seats and in the 1998 general election in Lesotho, the Basotho National Party won 24 percent of the votes but only 1 percent of the seats. This is a pattern which is repeated time and time again under FPTP.

It leaves a large number of wasted votes which do not go towards the election of any candidate. This can be particularly dangerous if combined with regional freedoms, because minority party supporters in the region may begin to feel that they have no realistic hope of ever electing a candidate of their choice. It can also be dangerous where alienation from the political system increases the likelihood that extremists will be able to mobilize anti-system movements. (Any one)

(b) Advantages of bi-party system :

Stable Government : The Government is more stable in a bi-party system, because the party which has a majority in the legislature forms the Government and the other party acts as opposition.

Direct Election of the Government : In this system,, the Government is elected by the people directly. The voters know the party in whose favor they are casting their votes. Thus, the people vote for the party whom they wish to form a Government.

It Ensures A Strong Government and Continuity, of Policy : Because of the stability of the Government in a bi-party system, it is strong and it can pursue good policy continuously.

With only two parties working in the country, political stability is maintained. With two-party system, the confusions and constant threats of coalitions can be avoided as all the members in the party believe in the same philosophy. It is also easy to fix responsibility

for any debacle that may happen or pin any success that follows policy implementation. As the government works for the whole term, the effects of its policy are easier to track.

Question 4.

- (a) Explain three important functions of the United State Senate. [6]
- (b) What are the relative positions of the Lok Sabha and the United States House of Representatives in their respective systems ? Discuss. [6]

Answer:

(a) Legislative Powers of the Senate : In the sphere of legislation, the Senate enjoys coequal powers with the House of Representatives. Any non-money bill can originate in it. After its passage from the Senate, the bill goes to the House of Representatives. If it also passes it, the bill goes to the President for his signatures and becomes a law if signed by the President or even if the President fails to sign it and 10 days elapse. The bills first passed by the House of Representatives, likewise, come to the Senate and become laws when passed by the Senate and signed by the President. However, in case there emerges a conflict between the two houses over any bill, a joint conference committee and each house sends 3 members. The decision of this committee finally settles the fate of the bill. Usually, the Senate manages to have its way in this committee.

Financial Powers of the Senate : Senate plays a vitally important role in the passing of financial legislation by the U.S. Congress. No money bill can be introduced in the Senate. It can be introduced only in the House of Representatives. However, after its passage from the House, it comes to the Senate. The Senate has the power to make any amendment to the money bills. Thus the final shape of money bill depends on the wishes and the decisions of the state.

Senate as the Court of Impeachment : In impeachment proceedings, the House of Representatives has been given the power to frame charges and the Senate has been given "the sole power" to try impeachment. The impeachment resolution passed by the House of Representatives contains charges against the concerned official. The resolution comes before the Senate and it sits as the court of impeachment for investigating and finally deciding the case. In case, after the investigations and hearings, the Senate accepts and passes the impeachment resolution by a 2/3rd majority, the person concerned stands impeached. Conviction by the Senate in an impeachment is beyond the President's power to grant pardon. However, the Senate while convicting the person by passing the impeachment resolution cannot impose any fine or punishment. It can only remove the person from office and can permanently disqualify him from holding office under the national government.

(b) Comparison of Indian Lok Sabha and US House of Representatives : Indian Lok Sabha, (House of the People) and the US House of Representatives, each is a lower house, a democratically and directly elected house, a representative and national house

which represents the people and mirrors national public opinion. These are quite similar in their organisational structures..

Indian Lok Saba has a strength of 545 members, each member represents a territorial constituency. He is elected directly by the people of the constituency. The principles which govern his elections are : Universal Adult Franchise (voting age minimum 18 years) single member constituency, secret ballot, simple-majority-vote-victory system. Some constituencies are reserved constituencies from which only persons belonging to SC's and ST's can contest elections, but all the voters vote in these constituencies. The elections are always keenly contested. A number of candidates, both party candidates and independents contest these elections. All Indian political parties contest these elections.

Each MP is elected for a term of 5 years. All the members of the Lok Sabha together represent the sovereign people of India. Only two of its members are nominated members. The President of India can nominate 2 members of the Anglo Indian community to the Lok Sabha in case he feels that this community has not been adequately represented in the Lok Sabha. Lok Sabha can be dissolved before the expiry of its full term by the President of Indian acting on the advice of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

The US House of Representatives is the lower house of US Congress. It has a strength of 435 members. It is a national representative house whose members are directly elected by the people of the USA. The principles which govern their elections are : Universal Adult Franchise, single member constituencies (Called Electoral Districts) secret ballot and simple-majority-vote-victory system. There is no provision for reservation of any seat. House of Representatives has a short tenure of 2 years. However, it is a fixed and stable tenure before the expiry of which, it cannot be dissolved.

The Indian Lok Sabha is presided over by the Speaker, who acts as a neutral chairman. However, he maintains his party membership and has to contest elections for securing a seat in the Lok Sabha. He is elected as the Speaker by the members of the Lok Sabha.

The Speaker, after getting elected to the office, resigns his party membership and becomes a totally neutral person both inside and outside the House. He presides over the meetings of Lok Sabha and always maintains neutrality and objectivity in his behaviour.

The Speaker of the US House of Representatives is elected by the members of the House. He always belongs to the majority party. Since the executive is not present in the House of Representatives; the US Speaker always acts as the leader of his party

(majority party). He openly favors his party in the House. He is a politician through and through, and his conduct is always a matter of political talk and controversies.

Indian Speaker follows a middle path a political neutral inside the Lok Sabha and a party member outside. Indian Lok Sabha is a powerful House. India is a federation and the Union Parliament can legislate only on the subjects of Centre List, Concurrent List and the Residuary subjects. Though, in ordinary law-making in the elections of the President and Vice President, in the amendment of the constitution and in aspects of impeachment powers, the Rajya Sabha enjoys equal powers with the Lok Sabha, yet it enjoys a superior status in other matters. Its position is decidedly better than US House of Representatives.

The US House of Representatives is relatively a weak house. With a short tenure of two years and due to a narrower representative base in comparison with US Senate, it is at a disadvantageous position. Theoretically, it has coequal powers with the Senate in respect of ordinary laws, and the money bills can originate only in it. However, in actual practice, the house of Representatives finds its position weak in comparison with the Senate, which has a longer tenure, quasi-permanent chamber, a final say in financial legislation, and a house with some special checking powers (in respect of Appointments and Treaties) over the US President.

The position of Senate in the US Congress is decidedly stronger than the House of representatives. Thus, Lok Sabha and the us House of Representatives are both Lower houses in their respective parliaments but Lok Sabha appears more powerful than its US counterpart.

Question 5.

- (a) Discuss three important functions of the Executive. [6]
- (b) Compare the positions of the President of India and the President of the United States.[6]

Answer:

- (a) The executive function of the Indian government with the President as the head along with the Prime Minister and his council of ministers comprises determining the policy and carrying out the execution, maintaining order, promoting economic and social welfare and directing the foreign policy.

The general supervision and management of the State lies with in area of expertise of the Executive. The President can exercise these powers on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. The main function of the Executive is the enforcement of law and maintenance of law and order. It is the duty of the Executive to bring violators of the law of the land to justice.

All the actions that the executive arm of the government takes, is in the name of the President. As the President is the 'head' of the nation, all the council of ministers are his subordinates and have to take his say in the matter. The Executive has the power to appoint and dismiss high officials and dignitaries. All primary appointments are undertaken by the Chief Executive, i.e. the President of India. He/She appoints the Chief Justice of India among other Supreme Court and High Court Judges. Along with those, the President also appoints the Advocate General of India, Ambassadors, Governors of State etc.

The Executive powers of the government also include taking care of the relations that the nation develops with foreign powers. The Executive is responsible for the decision to sign treaties with nations. The parliament has the power of making decisions regarding treaties with other nations. The Executive appoints the ambassadors representing India in other countries. With the provisions of the Constitution and the International Law, the Executive negotiates the treaties with other countries.

(b) Though the Presidents of the US and India share the title of the head of the country, the similarity ends there. The US President is elected directly by the citizens of the country and the Indian President is elected indirectly.

The US President is the head of the state as well as the executive of the state while the Indian President is only the head of the state or a titular head. Where the US President holds the office for 4 years and can go for re-election only once, the Indian President holds office for 5 years and can be re-elected any number of times.

The US President is not part the legislature but the Indian President and both houses together make up the Parliament in India. Both the Presidents, Indian and American, can be removed from office only through impeachment. However, in India, any of the two houses can initiate the proceedings of the impeachment against the president and impeach the President once the other house concurs. In the US, only the Senate (Upper House) has the power to impeach the President.

Indian President has a lot of powers in the times of emergency. He can order for proclamation of both internal and external emergencies. Indian President can proclaim emergency in one state, dissolve the state legislative houses and dismiss the council of ministers of state. During financial emergency, he can reduce all the government officials' salaries including the judges of Supreme Court and High Court.

Indian President has lesser power of veto comparatively than the US President. The US President may veto a bill that was passed by the Congress. The Indian President has the authority to send the bill to the houses for reconsideration only once. The President has to sign the bill if it is passed again, even with marginal majority.

Nevertheless, as heads of their respective states, the US President and the President of India, both enjoy a sovereign states in their respective states.

Question 6.

- (a) Explain the original jurisdiction and appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India. [6]
(b) How is judicial independence ensured in the Constitution of the United States ? [6]

Answer:

(a) The Supreme Court, as a federal court, makes decisions for disputes between Various units of the Federation of India. It can directly hear several cases which cannot be heard by any other court.

For e.g.

- The Central government and one or more states;
- The Central government and any state or states Vs one or more states;
- Between two or more states.

In these federal disputes, the Supreme Court holds original jurisdiction exclusively. No other court has the right to decide on these. disputes and by original, it means that it has the right to hear these disputes at the first instance and not as an appeal.

However, even in these cases, this jurisdiction can only extend when the dispute is about a question a law or fact, on the existence of which another law depends.

This doesn't mean that any suit brought by a citizen against the government can be entertained under this power. The Article 32 of the Constitution vests the powers of protector of Fundamental Rights in the Supreme Court and any person who feels that their rights were violated can appeal in the Supreme Court. All matters connected to the Fundamental Rights of the citizens of the country come under the Original Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. It is the highest interpreter of the Constitution in the country.

Supreme Court is also the highest court of appeal in India. Whatever the decision that the Supreme Court makes, stands true all over the country. The cases that come to the Supreme Court as appeals against what the lower courts have adjudged fall under the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court succeeded the erstwhile Federal Court of India and replaced the British Privy Council to become the highest court of appeal. Supreme Court is a court of appeal primarily and it hears those appeals made against the judgement of lower courts. Its wide appellate jurisdiction can be classed under four sections:

- Appellate Jurisdiction in Civil cases.
- Appellate Jurisdiction in Criminal cases.
- Appellate Jurisdiction in Constitutional cases.
- Special leave to Appeal.

Appellate Jurisdiction in Civil cases : In civil cases, there can be appeal from the judgement, decree or the final order of the High Court, if the High Court, certifies that: (i) the case involves a substantial question of law of general importance; or

(ii) in the opinion of the High Court the said question needs to be decided by the Supreme Court. Earlier by the Thirtieth Amendment 1972, appeals could be made only on respect of those cases which involved a sum of Rs. 20,000 or more. This provision was omitted by the 30th Amendment Act.

Appellate Jurisdiction in Criminal cases : In criminal cases, an appeal lies from any judgement, final order or sentence given by the High Court if :

- the High Court has reversed an order of acquittal of an accused and sentenced him to death; or
- the High Court has withdrawn for trial, a case from any subordinate court and awarded death sentence to the accused; or
- the High Court certifies under Article 134(A) that the case is fit for appeal to the Supreme Court.

Appellate Jurisdiction in Constitutional cases : Constitutional cases involving substantive point of law, requiring the inter-pretation of the Constitution can be appealed in the Supreme Court, if the High Court certifies that the case involves a substantial question of law, as to the interpretation of the Constitution.

Special Leave to Appeal : Under Article 136, the Supreme Court can, in its discretion grant special leave to appeal against any judgment, decree, determination, sentence or order in any case or matter decided by any court or tribunal in India.

(b) Judicial independence is ensured in the Constitution of the United States of America in the following ways : The federal judges may be removed only by impeachment and conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes. Judicial impeachments are conducted by the House of Representatives and require conviction by the Senate. They are very rare. The process is deliberately difficult, to guard against judges being impeached for political reasons.

Article III of the Constitution further ensures that compensation for federal judges “shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.” Neither Congress nor public opinion can “punish” a judge for an unpopular decision by threatening his paycheck. With an assured salary and permanent tenure in a respected office, judges have no real

incentive to abuse authority so they are much more likely to discharge their duties faithfully.

Judicial independence is also enhanced by the selection process for federal judges. Federal judges are appointed by the President when vacancies occur. They must be confirmed by a majority vote in the Senate before taking office. Presidential appointments of judges leave a visible and important legacy, so presidents carefully consider those whom they select based on certain criteria like their reputation, judicial record, experience, ideology, loyalty etc.

Section — B
Answer any two questions.

Question 7.

- (a) With reference to the Constitution of India, discuss the importance of the Preamble. [6]
- (b) Explain the rights conferred under the Right to Freedom in Article 19 of the Constitution of India. [6]

Answer:

- (a) The Preamble to a Constitution embodies the fundamental values and the philosophy, on which the Constitution is based. The philosophy of the Indian Constitution is reflected in the Preamble.

The term 'Sovereign' states that India is an independent State and it is not subject to control by any external power or authority though it is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The word 'Republic' means India is neither a monarchy nor an oligarchy. We have an elected President instead of a king at the head of our State. The Preamble declares that India is a Republic and shall be a democratic in the representative form. The ultimate power remains in the electorate comprising the entire adult population. To emphasise these values, the Constitution framers have resorted to the use of the concepts like Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Justice-social, economic and political to be secured through the provisions of Fundamental Rights. The Directive Principles of State Policy ensure that Liberty is guaranteed to the individuals through the provision of Fundamental Rights, which are enforceable in the court of law. The Preamble secures to all citizens, equality of States and opportunity in civic, political. The unity and integrity of the nation is sought to be secured by the use of the word 'Fraternity' in the Preamble and by the provisions of fundamental duties and single citizenship in the Constitution. The use of these words in the Preamble shows, it embodies the basic philosophy and fundamental values on which the Constitution is based. It very well reflects the dreams and aspirations of the founding fathers of the Constitution.

(b) Article 19 of the Constitution specifically guarantees to the citizens of India six basic freedoms, they are :

Freedom of Speech and Expression, Freedom of peaceful assembly without arms, Freedom to form associations, Freedom of movement throughout the territory of India, of residing and settling in any part and Freedom of practicing any profession and carrying on any occupation, trade or business. These freedoms are recognized as the natural rights inherent in the status of a citizen.

Article 19(1)A guarantees to every citizen the right to freedom of speech and expression. This means that every citizen is free to express his views, beliefs and convictions freely and without inhibitions by word of mouth, through writing, printing, picturing or in any other manner.

Article 19(1)B secures to all citizens of India the right to assemble peacefully and without arms. This consequentially leads to the conferment of the right to hold public meetings and demonstrations and take out processions peacefully.

Article 19(1)C guarantees to all citizens the right to form associations and unions for pursuing lawful purposes subjected to reasonable restrictions.

Article 19(1)D guarantees all citizens the freedom to reside and settle in any part of the country except for those where the interest of the public are being hindered.

Article 19(1)E guarantees all citizens the freedom to move freely throughout the territory of India, with restriction on the basis of interest of general public.

Article 19(1)G says that every citizen of India has the right to practice any profession or to carry on any profession, occupation, trade or business. The right to carry on a business includes the right to close it any time the owner likes.

Question 8.

(a) Explain the main features of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India relating to rural local self-government institutions. [6]

(b) Suggest three ways to address the challenges faced by Panchayati Raj institutions in India. [6]

Answer:

(a) This amendment implements the article 40 of the Directive Principles of State Policy which says that 'State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government'. The Act gives a Constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions. The State Governments are under the Constitutional obligation to adopt the new Panchayati Raj System in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Features Of The Rural Local Self-Government:

The Act provides for a three-tier system of the Panchayati Raj in the States, Panchayat means an institution of local self-Government for rural areas.

Gram Sabha : The Act provides for a Gram Sabha as the foundation of the Rural local self government system. It is a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls of the village comprised within the area of the Panchayat at the village level. It is a Village Assembly consisting of all the registered voters in the area of a Panchayat. It shall exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as determined by the State Legislature .

Duration of Panchayats : The Act provided for a five-year term of office to the Panchayat at every level. The Act provided for the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat. The Act provides for the reservation of not less than one-third of the total number of seats for women.

The State Legislature endows the Panchayats with such powers and authority with respect to preparation of plans for economic development and social justice. The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of all elections to the Panchayats shall be vested in the State Election Commission.

(b) Despite the Constitution providing the details of the functions and powers of the Panchayati Raj institutions, there are glaring loopholes that must be plugged as soon as possible.

Adequate devolution of powers: States should take proper steps to decentralise funds, functions and functionaries to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) to empower them in the discharge of functions. Furthermore, it is important to make available, enough resources to the PRIs to complete the responsibilities. Many Gram Panchayats even lack a permanent Secretary for handling the paperwork. Thus, man power and infrastructure both have to be upgraded for monitoring and planning the schemes. Although there is a provision of computing facilities being provided to the PRIs, only 20-per cent of Gram Panchayats actually have computers and even fewer have the know-how to operate them.

Proper Bureaucratic control : Sarpanchs of Gram Panchayats have to spend a lot of time in the Block Offices to ask for funds and approval. Thus, these checks and balance, that make the Sarpanchs insubordinate to the other officials and waste time and efforts, should be controlled to make the process smoother and faster. At times, due to loose bureaucratic control many parallel offices are created for certain schemes that lead to more corruption and evil malpractices. Thus, this control has to be given to the PRIs who know their villages far better than other individuals.

Making funds available : Social audits are less likely to be organised as the PRIs depend on the governments for funding. Resources should be made available to the Panchayats and audits must be done to ensure proper usage of funds and quicker implementation of schemes. A considerable amount of funds should also be spent on educating the PRI personnel about their duties, roles and responsibilities. If they do not know the schemes and programmes of the government properly then, they would not be able to implement them as well.

Question 9.

(a) Explain three important causes of regionalism in Indian politics. [6]

(b) Critically examine three ways in which the prevalence of political violence affects the functioning of the Indian democracy. [6]

Answer:

(a) The geographical factors : Indian has great diversity in terms of its relief features. The resources Industries, soil, irrigation etc., are not similar and therefore they also cause differences among the people.

Political factors : The administrative policies and decisions as well as the developmental plans taken at the national level may not satisfy all people of the country and these people, who remain dissatisfied, may feel that their interest are not properly safeguarded and may result in feeling of alienation thus leading to regionalism.

Economic Factors : In the present times, uneven developments in different parts of the country is a prime reason for regionalism. There are certain regions in the country where industrial development, educational and health facilities, communication network and agricultural development has made sufficient progress as compared to others. Thus the feeling of regionalism develops due to negligence of the backward areas. Language, culture, customs : These factors have played major role in creating the feelings of regionalism, especially among illiterates or less educated people.

(b) Democracy in India is now facing some serious challenges. These are issues that the framers of the Indian Constitution thought of too. To address these issues, they did make some provisions but there are still some challenges that even this draft cannot handle.

Violence has existed for long, but political violence is dangerous for any system to function. India has been witness to many such instances. Political violence has acquired grave proportion in general. Communal riots are caused to fulfill motives related religious, political and economic factors.

Caste violence in all its forms and types has been rising everywhere in India. In fact, this type of violence has now taken a political form where political parties are coaxing the flames of caste violence amongst the different caste and classes. Despite agricultural

progress, abolishment of the medieval zamindari system, and developments of the nature of green and white revolution, powerful feudal fundamentals still exist in the society. A grim conflict of interests emerges between high and lower castes which causes competition for political power which takes on a violent turn.

Another facet of political violence is the murder of political leaders and opponents which has been a sad reality. Two Prime Ministers of India had to face deaths inflicted because of political violence. It has been indeed very unfortunate that in the land of Buddha, Nanak and Gandhi, violence continues to live. The criminalisation of politics resulting from the entry of criminals in politics as well as due to the adoption of violence as a means by some unscrupulous political leaders, have been major reasons behind the increasing presence of violence in politics.

Violence is adopted during elections to either rally the voters or to stop them from exercising of their rights to vote. Moreover, demands of a separate state, the reorganization of provinces or adjusting the boundaries of state has also resulted in riots, murders, and various other disasters affecting the everyday life of the citizens. Violence has been associated to industrial strikes, and movements of farmers, and agitations of students.