

Session4

The levels of government, Indian Federation

India is a “Union of States”, i.e. it has federal structure. There are two levels of government: a central authority looking after the major affairs of the country and the other is a local government which looks after the functioning and activities of specific regions. At center the Union government, and at State level, we have the individual State governments.

The Government at the center: *Lok Sabha* and the *Rajya Sabha*. Then come the various state governments, the *Vidhan Sabhas*, and the *Vidhan Parishad*. And finally, we have the Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, and the *Panchayats*, which are local governing bodies.

Constitution clearly demarcates legislative powers and jurisdictions of these government bodies. This is understood through following lists:

Union List: Includes subjects of national importance, like defense, finance, railways, banking etc. Only the Central Government is allowed to make laws.

State List: Includes all matters pertaining to particular state like transport, Trade, Commerce, agriculture etc. The state government is the deciding authority for framing laws for these matters.

Concurrent List: Includes topics on which both the Union and the state government can make laws: education, forests, trade unions etc. In case of conflict with respect to laws, the decision of the Union Government will prevail as it is the final authority.

Question 1: How do you think the federal system of government is essential/beneficial for the smooth governance? (5 Marks)