

Worksheet-1

Ch-2 Federalism (Answers)

1. On which Amendment of the Constitution is the Panchayati Raj System in India Based? (1)

Answer: The Panchayati Raj System of India is based on the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution. It provided constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions in India.

2. How can the fundamental provisions of the Indian constitution be changed? (1)

Answer: The fundamental provisions of the constitution of India cannot be changed unilaterally ie. It can be changed only in a bilateral way wherein the consent of both the levels of government is required.

3. What are the basic objectives of a federal system? (1)

Answer: The basic objectives of a federal system are:

- To safeguard and promote the unity of the country.
- To accommodate regional diversity are the two basic objectives of a federal system.

4. What do you mean by 'coming together federation'? (1)

Answer: A federation which is formed when several independent states come together on their own to form a bigger unit, so that by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity they can increase their security. The USA is an example of such a federation.

5. How is a federal government different from the unitary form of government? Why are federations preferred these days? (3)

Answer: Difference:

- i. Unitary government has only one level of government whereas a federal government has two or more levels of government.
- ii. In a unitary government, the sub-units are subordinate to the centre, whereas, in a federation, the central government cannot encroach on the rights of state governments.
- iii. In a unitary system, the centre can order the subunits which cannot happen in the federation. Both governments are answerable to the people in a federal system.
- iv. In a unitary system, power is not shared but in a federal system governments at different levels should agree to some rules of power sharing.

A federation is preferred because:

- i. It helps in making administration effective and efficient.
- ii. It helps to accommodate all diverse groups.
- iii. The existence and authority of each tier of the government is constitutionally guaranteed.

6. How challenge of language policy was adopted by the Indian federalism? (3)

Answer:

- i. A second test for Indian federalism is the language
- ii. Our Constitution did not give the status of national language to any one language.
- iii. Hindi was identified as the official language.
- iv. But Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40 per cent of Indians. Therefore, there were many safeguards to protect other languages.

- v. Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution.
- vi. A candidate in an examination conducted for the Central Government positions may opt to take the examination in any one of these languages.
- vii. States too have their own official languages. Much of the government work takes place in the official language of the concerned state.

7. State any three differences between the local government before and after the constitutional Amendment in 1992. (3)

Answer: Local government is the best way to realise one important principle of democracy, the local self-government.

Local Government before 1992:

- i. It was directly under the control of the state Government.
- ii. Elections were not held regularly.
- iii. Local governments did not have any power or resources of their own.

Local Government after 1992:

- i. Local Governments have got some powers of their own.
- ii. Elections are held regularly.
- iii. An independent state election commission is responsible to conduct the elections.

8. What is the main difference between a federal form of government and a unitary one? Explain with an example. (3)

Answer: Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country. Federal governments have two or more tiers of government. In a federal form of government, the central government shares its powers with the various constituent units of the country. Both types of governments enjoy independent powers and are separately answerable to the people. For example, in India, power is divided between the Central Government and the various state governments. In a unitary form of government, either there is one level of government or the sub-units are subordinate to the Central government. In this, the Central government can pass orders to the provincial or the regional government. For example, in Sri Lanka, the national government has all the powers.

9. What policies strengthened the federalism of India? (5)

Answer: The features of the third tier of rural government are:

- a. Rural local government is popularly known by the name Panchayat Raj. Each Village or group of villages in some state has a Gram Panchayat.
- b. This is a council consisting of several ward members called Panchs and a president called Sarpanch. They are directly elected by the adult population living in the ward or village.
- c. The Panchayats work under the overall supervision of the Gram Sabha. All the voters of the village are the members of Gram Sabha.
- d. The local government structure goes right up to the district level. A few Gram panchayats are grouped together to form Panchayat Samiti or Block. The members of all the Block are elected by the panchayat members of the area.
- e. All the Panchayat Samitis or Mandals in a district together constitute the Zila Parishad.

10. Explain how power is shared among different organs of the government. (5)

Answer: The constitution provided distribution of legislative powers into the following organs:

- a. **Union List:** Subjects of national importance like defense, foreign affairs, atomic energy, banking, post and telegraph are included in the Union List. Only the central government can pass laws on the subjects mentioned in the union list because we need a uniform policy on important or national issues throughout the country. The union list has 97 subjects.
- b. **State List:** It comprises the important subjects on which the state government can pass laws. Subjects like police, local government, trade and commerce, agriculture are within the state included in the State list. The state list has 66 subjects.
- c. **Concurrent List:** The concurrent list comprises the subjects which are of common concern both to the centre and state government. However if there is a conflict between the central law and state law, over a subject in the Concurrent list, the central law would be effective. The concurrent list has 47 subjects.
- d. **Residuary Powers:** Matters which are not included in the division of powers are known as residuary powers. It was felt that there can be subjects which are not mentioned in either of these lists. The central government has been given the power to legislate on the residuary subjects.