



Question 1:

What is Federalism?

Solution:

Federalism is the advocacy of federal political orders, where the final authority is divided between sub-units and a centre. Unlike a unitary state, sovereignty is constitutionally split between at least two territorial levels so that units at each level have final authority and can act independently of the others in some area. In such a case citizens have political obligations to two authorities. The allocation of authority between the sub-unit and centre may vary. The federal system thus has dual objectives that is to safeguard and promote unity of the country and accommodate regional diversity.

Governments at different levels should agree to some rules of power sharing. An ideal federal system has both aspects; mutual trust and agreement to live together.

Question 2:

What makes India a Federal Country?

Solution:

India is a nation with many languages, religions and regions. It emerged as an independent nation after a long and painful partition. Several princely states became a part of the country soon after independence. India was declared as a Union of States, by the Constitution.

The Indian Union is based on the principles of federalism. The Constitution earlier provided a two-tier system of government, the Union Government (Central Government), representing the Union of India and the State governments. Later, Panchayats and Municipalities were added as a third tier of federalism. All these different forms of government enjoy separate jurisdiction.

Question 3:

Write a brief note on the language policy adopted in India.

Solution:

The 'Language policy' was the second test for Indian federation. No language was given the status of national language by our Constitution. Hindi was identified as the official language. But only about 40 per cent of Indians have Hindi as their mother tongue. Therefore, 21 other languages besides Hindi, are recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution. A candidate in an examination conducted for the Central Government positions may opt to take the examination in any of these languages. States too have their own official languages. Much of the government work takes place in the official language of the concerned State.

The flexibility shown by Indian political leaders helped our country avoid any conflict based on languages.

Question 4:

Write a brief note on village councils.

Solution:

Village Councils looked after the affairs of the village, had police and judicial powers and were the lines of contact with higher authorities on matters affecting the villages. Custom and religion elevated them to a sacred position of authority.

These Councils were the pivot of administration, the centre of social life, and, above all, a focus of social solidarity.

Question 5:

What are the dual objectives of Federalism?

Solution:

The dual objectives of Federalism are to safeguard and promote unity of the country and to accommodate regional diversity.

Question 6:

What are the duties of a Central and State governments?

Solution:

The duties of the Union or Central Government include subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communications and currency. This is because, a uniform policy on these matters will be maintained throughout the country. All the laws pertaining to the above duties must be given only by the Union Government.

The duties of the State Governments include subjects of the State and local importance such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture and irrigation. All the laws pertaining to the above duties must be given only by the State Governments.

Some aspects have to be taken care of, by both, the Union Government as well as the State Governments. They are education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption and succession. Both governments can make laws on these subjects. If their laws conflict with each other, the law made by the Union Government will prevail.

Question 7:

What is the special status the state of Jammu and Kashmir enjoys?

Solution:

Jammu and Kashmir enjoys a special status. It has its own Constitution. Many provisions of the Indian Constitution are not applicable to this State without the approval of the State Assembly. Indians who are not permanent residents of this State cannot buy land or house here. Similar special provisions exist for some other States of India as well.

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