



LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Question 1. Give a detailed descriptions of the features of the Indian Constitution.

Answer: We have a written Constitution which was adopted on 26 January 1950.

Features:

- (a) One feature of the Indian Constitution was that it adopted universal adult franchise. All Indians above the age of 21 (now 18) would be allowed to vote in state and national elections.
- (b) Our Constitution guaranteed equality before the law to all citizens, regardless of their caste or religious affiliation.
- (c) The Constitution offered special privileges for the poorest and most disadvantaged Indians. The evil practice of untouchability was abolished. Hindu temples were thrown open to all, including the former untouchables. After a long debate, the Constituent Assembly also recommended that a certain percentage of seats in legislatures as well as jobs in government be reserved for members of the lowest castes, including the adivasis.
- (d) Our Constitution clearly defined the powers and functions of the central and the state governments. It gave division of power in the form of three lists—a Union List with subjects such as taxes, defence and foreign affairs, which would be the exclusive responsibility of the Centre, a State List of subjects such as education and health, which would be taken care of mainly by the States, a Concurrent List under which would come subjects such as forests and agriculture in which the Centre and the States would have joint responsibility.

Question 2. Write in brief the process of state formation.

Answer: The Congress leaders were in no mood to further divide the country on linguistic lines. This created great disappointment among the Kannada speakers, Malayalam speakers, and the Marathi speakers, and the Telugu speakers, because they had all looked forward to having their own state. The Telugu speakers, however, showed the strongest protests. Their leader Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger fast demanding the formation of Andhra state to protect the interests of Telugu speakers. As the fast went on, it attracted much Hartals and bandhs began to be observed. Meanwhile, Potti Sriramulu died. This incidence intensified the situation. The protests took intense form. This forced the Central Government to give in to the demand and the new state of Andhra Pradesh came into existence on 1 October, 1953.

After the formation of Andhra Pradesh, other linguistic communities also demanded their own separate states. Hence, a State Reorganisation Commission was set up, which submitted its report in 1956. It recommended the redrawing of district and provincial boundaries to form compact provinces of Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu speakers respectively. The large Hindi-speaking region of north India was broken up into several states. Then in 1960, the bilingual state of Bombay was divided into separate states for Marathi and Gujarati speakers. In the year 1960, the state of Punjab was also divided into Punjab and Haryana, Punjab for the Punjabi speakers and Haryana for the rest

who spoke Haryanvi or Hindi.

Question 3. Give an account of the successes and failures of the country during sixty-two years of its independence.

Answer: Sixty-two years of independence have passed. This duration covers a long journey. A lot have been achieved during this time. But at the same time there have been a number of failures.

Successes:

(a) India is still united and it is still democratic. These achievements definitely make us proud. Many foreign observers had felt that India could not survive as a single country. Others believed that it would come under military rule. Neither of these predictions proved to be true. As many as thirteen general elections have been held since independence, as well as hundreds of state and local elections.

(b) There is a free press and an independent judiciary.

(c) The fact that people speak different languages or practise different faiths has not come in the way of national unity.

Failures:

(a) Deep divisions are still there. Despite constitutional guarantees, people belonging to the lowest castes, such as dalits face violence and discrimination. In many parts of rural India they are not allowed access to water sources, temples, parks and other public places.

(b) The gulf between the rich and the poor has grown over the years. Some groups of people avail all facilities while many others continue to live below the poverty line.

(c) Our Constitution provides equality before the law but in real life this does not happen. Some Indians are more equal than others.

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