

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.

Multiple Choice Questions

Previous Years Questions

1. How many times was the constitution of Belgium amended between 1970 and 1993 ?

- (a) Two times
- (b) Three times
- (c) Four times
- (d) Onetime

2. Which of the following government has two or more levels ?

- (a) Community Government
- (b) Coalition Government
- (c) Federal Government
- (d) Unitary Government

3. Which of the following subjects falls under the concurrent list ?

- (a) Defence
- (b) Agriculture
- (c) Marriage
- (d) Currency

4. Which of the following countries is an example of “coming together federation” ?



- (a) U.S.A
- (b) India
- (c) Spain
- (d) Belgium

NCERT Questions

5. The distinguishing feature of a federal government is:

- (a) National Government gives some powers to the provincial government.
- (b) Power is distributed among the legislature, executive and judiciary.
- (c) Elected officials exercise supreme power in the government.
- (d) Governmental power is divided between different levels of government.

6. Examine the following pairs that give the level of government in India and the powers of the government at that level to make laws on the subjects mentioned against each. Which of the following pairs is not correctly matched ?

- (a) State government State List
- (b) Central government Union List
- (c) Central and State governments Concurrent List
- (d) Local governments Residuary powers

7. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists :

List I List II

- (i) Union of India A. Prime Minister
- (ii) State B.Sarpanch
- (iii) Municipal Corporation C. Governor
- (iv) Gram Panchayat D. Mayor

- | | | | | |
|-----|------|-------|------|---|
| (i) | (ii) | (iii) | (iv) | |
| (a) | D | A | B | C |
| (b) | B | C | D | A |
| (c) | A | C | D | B |
| (d) | C | D | A | B |

8. Consider the following statements.

- (i) In a federation the powers of the federal and provincial governments are clearly demarcated.
- (ii) India is a federation because the powers of the Union and state governments are specified in the Constitution and they have exclusive jurisdiction on their respective subjects.
- (iii) Sri Lanka is a federation because the country is divided into provinces.
- (iv) India is no longer a federation because some powers of the States have been devolved to the local government bodies.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

- (a) (i), (ii), (iii)
- (b) (i), (iii), (iv)
- (c) (i), (ii) only
- (d) (ii), (iii) only

Additional Questions



9. Consider the statement:

“Coming together federation” involves:

- (i) the central government to become more powerful.
- (ii) Independent states coming together on their own to form bigger unit.
- (iii) Constituent units have unequal powers.
- (iv) Constituent states have equal powers.

Which of the statements given above are correct

- (a) (i), (ii) and (iv)
- (b) (i), (iii) only
- (c) (ii) and (iv) only
- (d) (i), (iii) and (iv).

10. The Constitution of India

- (a) divided powers between centre and states in three lists.
- (b) divided powers between centre and states in two lists.
- (c) listed the powers of the states and left the undefined powers to the state.
- (d) Specified the powers of the states and left the residuary powers with the centre.

11. In case of a clash between the laws made by the centre and a state on a subject in the concurrent list:

- (a) the state law prevails.
- (b) the central law prevails.
- (c) both the laws prevail within their respective jurisdictions.
- (d) the Supreme Court has to intervene to decide.

12. The System of Panchayati Raj involves

- (a) The village, block and district levels.
- (b) The village, and state levels.
- (c) The village district and state levels.
- (d) The village, state and Union levels.

13. The concept of decentralisation signifies

- (a) The three tier government at the urban level.
- (b) The two tier government at only rural level
- (c) Power taken away from central and state government and given to local government at both the urban and rural levels.
- (d) Autonomy given to the state government.

14. In India’s federal system, the state governments have the power to legislate on all those subjects which are included in the :

- (a) Union list
- (b) State list
- (c) Concurrent list
- (d) Residuary subjects

15. Which of the following subjects is not included in the state list ?

- (a) Law and order
- (b) National defence
- (c) Education
- (d) Agriculture

16. The highest institution of Panchayati Raj in rural area is:

- (a) Gram Sabha
- (b) Gram Panchayat
- (c) Zila Parishad
- (d) Gram Samiti

17. Match the following :

- | Column 1 | Column II |
|--------------------------|---|
| A. Union Territory | (i) Decision-making body for the entire village |
| B. Local self government | (ii) An alliance of more than two parties |
| C. Coalition | (iii) Representatives government body at the district level |
| D. Zila Parishad | (iv) Area which is run by the Union / Central government |
- (a) A – (ii), B – (iii), C – (iv) and D – (i)
 - (b) A – (iv), B – (i), C – (iii) and D – (ii)
 - (c) A – (iv), B – (i), C – (ii) and D – (iii)
 - (d) A – (iv), B – (iii), C – (ii) and D – (i)

18. State True or False :

- (a) The official languages are included in the 10th schedule of our constitution and are therefore called schedule languages.
- (b) Education falls under the state subject.
- (c) The head of the municipal corporation is called the Mayor.
- (d) 1/10th seats are reserved in all local government bodies for women candidates.

19. The distinguishing feature of a federal system is:

- (a) National Government gives some powers to the provincial government.
- (b) Power is distributed among the legislature, executive and judiciary.
- (c) Elected officials exercise Supreme Power in the government.
- (d) Governmental power is divided between different levels of government.

20. A few subjects in various lists of the Indian Constitution are given here. Group them under the Union, State and Concurrent lists as provided in the table below :

- (i) Defence
- (ii) Police
- (iii) Agriculture
- (iv) Education
- (v) Banking
- (vi) Forests
- (vii) Communications
- (viii) Trade

(ix) Marriages

Which option is correct:

- (a) Union list (i), (viii) and (ix)
State list (ii), (iii) and (iv)
Concurrent list (v), (vi) and (vii)
- (b) Union list (i), (v) and (vii)
State list (ii), (iii) and (viii)
Concurrent list (iv), (ix) and (vi)
- (c) Union list (v), (vi) and (vii)
State list (iii), (vii) and (ix)
Concurrent list (i), (ii) and (iv)
- (d) Union list (iii), (vi) and (vii)
State list (v), (viii) and (ix)
Concurrent list (iv), (ii) and (i)

21. Give answer in one word :

- (a) Independent states coming together on their own to form a bigger unit. Block samiti / coming together federalism.
- (b) A large country decides to divide its power between the constituent states and the national government. Holding together federalism / shortening power.
- (c) The area over which someone has legal authority. Specified jurisdiction / Linguistic state.
- (d) A government formed by the coming together of more than two political parties. Local government/ coalition government.

22. Fill in the blanks :

Since the United states is a type of federalism, all the constituent states have equal powers and states are vis- a- vis the federal government. But India is a type of federation and some states have more powers than others..In India, the has more powers.

- (a) Coming together /democratic
- (b) Weak/strong
- (c) Holding together / coming together
- (d) State government / Central government

23. What was the key change made in the constitution of Belgium ?

- (i) Increase the power of the central government.
- (ii) Transfer of powers to the regional government.
- (iii) Reduce the power of the central government
- (iv) Reduce the power of the regional government.

Choose the appropriate otion :

- (a) (i), (iii) and (iv)
- (b) (i), (ii) and (iii)
- (c) (i) and (iii)
- (d) (ii) and (iii)



24. In what way changes can be made in the federal constitution:

- (a) Change can be unilateral
- (b) Changes require the consent of both the levels of government
- (c) Changes can be through judiciary
- (d) Changes require only consent of the people

25. Why have the subjects like defence, foreign affairs, banking, etc., been included in the Union list ?

- (i) These subjects are of local importance.
 - (ii) Require a uniform policy for the execution.
 - (iii) These subjects are of national importance.
 - (iv) Require a separate policy of each subjects.
- (a) (iii) and (iv)
 - (b) (ii) and (iii)
 - (c) (i) and (ii)
 - (d) (i) and (iv)

26. What is the basic idea behind the power sharing of Indian federalism ?

- (a) Centralisation of Power
- (b) Division of Subjects
- (c) Decentralisation of Power
- (d) Distribution of Power

27. The concept of linguistic states of India signifies :

- (a) creation of states on the basis of religion
- (b) creation of states on the basis of different culture
- (c) creation of states on the basis of language
- (d) creation of states on the basis of Topography

28. Which judgment of the Supreme Court made Indian federal power sharing more effective ?

- (a) Central government can dismiss the state government easily.
- (b) Central government can dismiss the state government with the consent of judiciary.
- (c) Central government can not dismiss the state government.
- (d) Central government cannot dismiss the state government in an arbitrary manner.

29. What is the basic idea behind 'decentralisation of power? Consider the following statement:

- (i) To take away power from local level.
 - (ii) To introduce democracy at grassroot level.
 - (iii) To centralise power at union level.
 - (iv) To empower the local government.
- (a) (i), (ii), and (iii)
 - (b) (i), (ii) and (iv)
 - (c) (ii) and (iv) only
 - (d) only (iv)

30. Select the countries that follow coming together federal system:



- (a) The USA, China, Australia
- (b) India, Spain, Belgium, Canada
- (c) The USA, Switzerland, Australia
- (d) China and India

31. Which of the following countries follow holding together style of federation:

- (a) China, Canada, Australia and India
- (b) The USA, Australia, Belgium, Canada
- (c) India, Belgium, Sweden and China
- (d) India, Spain, and Belgium

32. List the countries which do not follow federalism :

- (a) Spain, Sweden, Britain
- (b) India, Belgium, Canada and Australia
- (c) The USA, Spain, Holland
- (d) China, Sri Lanka, France, United Kingdom, Japan, Italy and North Korea

33. Which Indian states have been given special status ?

- (a) Punjab, Haryana, U.P.
- (b) Jammu & Kashmir
- (c) Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Madras
- (d) Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Meghalaya and Delhi

34. In what ways powers are shared between the state government and the central government in India :

- (a) List system
- (b) Decentralisation
- (c) Holding Together
- (d) Coming Together

35. Whose laws prevail if there is conflict between the state government and central government on the subject of concurrent list:

- (a) The laws made by the state government.
- (b) The laws made by both State and Union Government.
- (c) The laws made by the Union Government.
- (d) The laws would be cancelled.

36. How many languages are spoken in India and what is the ratio of Hindi speaking people in India ?

- (a) 114 languages spoken and 40 percent people speak Hindi
- (b) 22 languages spoken and 60 percent people speak Hindi
- (c) 21 languages spoken and 54 percent people speak Hindi
- (d) 114 languages spoken and 60 percent people speak Hindi

37. Select the two bases on which new states of India have been created :

- (a) Religion and geography



- (b) Language and regional
- (c) Culture and religion
- (d) Geography and language

38. Which two Constitutional Amendments of 1992 deal with local self-government ?

- (a) 72nd and 73rd Amendments regarding Rural and Urban
- (b) 73rd and 74th Amendments regarding Rural and Urban government.
- (c) 71st and 74th Amendments regarding Urban and Rural government.
- (d) 71st and 72nd Amendments regarding Rural and Urban government.

39. Who is the political head of the Municipality and Gram Panchyat ?

- (a) Mayor and Sarpanch
- (b) Deputy Collector and Mayor
- (c) Sarpanch and Deputy Collector
- (d) Mayor and Chief Minister

ANSWERS

18. (a) True

(b) False. Education is the subject of concurrent list.

(c) True

(d) False. It is not 1/10th but 1/3rd seats are reserved for women in local bodies.

19. Option (d) is correct option because federal system deals with two or more levels of government.

20. (b)

21. (a) Coming together federalism

(b) Holding together federalism

(c) Specified jurisdiction

(d) Coalition government .

22. (a) Coming together

(b) strong

(c) holding together

(d) central

23. (d)

24. Option (b) is correct because federal constitution ensures provincial autonomy and specific jurisdiction to the different levels.

