

CHAPTER 3.2

Federalism

ONE MARK QUESTIONS

1. Why was States Reorganization Commission formed?

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2016-17]
States Reorganization Commission was formed in 1954 to recommend creation of States on the linguistic basis.

2. How do the Central and State Governments enjoy their power in federal system?

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2016-17]
Under the unitary system, either there is only one level of government or the subunits are subordinate to the central government whereas in federal system, power is distributed between centre and state.

3. In which list of the Indian Constitution does education come? Why?

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2016-17]
Education comes under concurrent list so that both the centre and the states can legislate on any aspect of education.

4. What status has been given to Hindi by the Constitution of India?

Ans : [CBSE 2015]
Official language of the country.

5. Much of the official work in Indian states is done in which language?

Ans : [CBSE 2015]
Much of the official work is done in the official language of the concerned State.

6. Name the country which follows 'coming together' style of federalism.

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2014]
USA, Switzerland and Australia.

7. Which subjects are included in the Union List?

Ans : [CBSE 2014]
Defence of the nation, foreign affairs, banking, currency, communication.

8. Which local body has a 'Mayor' as its head?

Ans : [CBSE 2014]
Municipal Corporation

THREE MARKS QUESTIONS

9. Describe any three provisions of amendment made in Indian constitution in 1992 for making 'Three-Tier'

government more effective and powerful.

Ans : [CBSE 2018]

- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each state to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- The state governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies.

10. "India has a large cultural, regional and religious diversity. But there is unity among people". What factors are responsible for this? Elaborate.

Ans : [CBSE 2016-17]

- Right to equality.
- No discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, region or religion.
- SCs & STs have some seats reserved and do get representation.
- Right to freedom of religion and cultural and educational rights.

11. Explain the factors that make federal government in India so attractive.

Ans : [CBSE 2017]

- Mobilization
- Administrative knowledge of the people at all the levels.
- Efficacy to solve all kinds of issues at respective levels.

12. How has the Panchayati Raj strengthened the democracy in India ? Express your views.

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2016-17]

Panchayati Raj is the best example of decentralisation



of power.

- a. People can get most of their problems solved at the local level.
- b. People can think and plan for themselves.

13. Highlight any three steps taken by India towards making it a federation. [CBSE 2015]

Ans :

- a. Reorganisation of states on linguistic basis.
- b. Centre-state relations
- c. Decentralisation or any other relevant point.

14. Highlight three major distinctions between the federations of 'coming together' type and 'holding together' type.

Ans : [CBSE 2015]

Holding Together Federation:

- a. Large country decides to divide its power between states and the centre.
- b. Central government tends to be more powerful.
- c. Federating units have unequal power.
- d. India, Spain, Belgium.

Coming Together Federation

- a. Independent states coming together on their own to form a bigger unit.
- b. All the states have equal power and are strong.
- c. By pooling sovereignty and retaining identity; they increase their security.
- d. U.S.A., Switzerland, Australia (Any three differences)

15. Differentiate between Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat.

Ans : [CBSE 2015]

Gram Panchayat is a council consisting of several ward members often called panch and a head or Sarpanch. It is the decision making body for the village. The Panchayat works under the overall supervision of the gram sabha. All the voters in the village are its members.

16. Do you take decentralisation as means to minimise the conflicts? Give your view point? [CBSE 2015]

Ans :

Yes, it helps in the settlement of a large number of problems and issues at the local level.

It provides a platform for the direct participation of people in decision making. In another way, decentralisation in the form of 'Local Self government' is the best way to realise principles of Democracy.

17. What are the three lists given in the Constitution? [CBSE 2014]

or

Describe the three-fold distribution of legislative power between the Union Government and State Governments of India.

Ans : [CBSE 2014]

The three-fold distribution of legislative powers:

- a. Union list: Union lists consist of 97 subjects. It includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communication and currency.
- b. State list: State list consists of 66 subjects. It contains subjects of state and local importance

such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture and irrigation.

- c. Concurrent list: Concurrent list consist of 47 subjects It includes subjects of common interest to both such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption and succession.

18. Describe the three-tier system of Indian federation?

Ans : [CBSE 2011]

Three-tier system means three levels of government. The Indian Constitution was originally provided for a two-tier system of government:

- a. The Union Government or the Central Government, and
- b. The State Governments
- c. But, later a third-tier of federalism was added in the form of Panchayats at rural level and Municipalities at urban level. Every level enjoys separate jurisdiction.

19. Do you take decentralisation as means to minimise the conflicts? [CBSE 2015]

or

Describe the significance of decentralisation.

Ans : [CBSE 2011]

Importance of Decentralisation

- a. It helps in the settlement of a large number of problems and issues at the local level
- b. It provides a platform for the direct participation of people in decision-making
- c. In another way, decentralization in the form of 'local self government' is the best way to realise principles of Democracy.

FIVE MARKS QUESTIONS

20. Explain any five features of Panchayati Raj system in India.

Ans : [CBSE S.R 2016-17]

Rural local government is known as Panch ay ati Raj.

- a. PRI is rural-based.
- b. Each village has Gram Panchayat.
- c. It has Panchs and a Sarpanch.
- d. He/She is directly elected by the adult population living in the village.
- e. Panchayat works under the Gram Sabha.
- f. All the voters meet at least twice or thrice in a year.
- g. Few gram panchayats form Panchayat Samiti or Block or Mandal.

21. Explain any five provisions of the Constitutional Amendment of 1992 that strengthened the third tier of government in India.

Ans : [CBSE 2016-17]

The Constitution was amended in 1992 to make the third tier of democracy more powerful and effective.

- a. Now it is mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- b. Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for SC, ST and OBCs.
- c. At least 1/3rd of all positions and seats are

reserved for women.

- d. An independent institution called State Election Commission has been created in each state to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- e. The State Governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies. The nature of sharing varies from state to state.

22. Differentiate between 'Coming together Federation' and 'Holding Together Federation', with examples.

[CBSE 2014]

Ans :

Difference between 'Coming Together Federation' and 'Holding Together Federation':

- a. 'Coming Together Federations' are formed when independent states come together to form a bigger state and 'Holding Together Federations' are formed when a large country decides to divide itself into sub-units.
- b. In 'Coming Together Federations' the state governments are strong, whereas in 'Holding Together Federations', the central government is strong.
- c. In 'Coming Together Federations', all states governments have equal powers but in 'Holding Together Federations', this may not be the case.
- d. Examples of 'Coming Together Federations'—U.S.A., Switzerland and Australia. Examples of 'Holding Together Federations'—India, Spain and Belgium.

23. Explain any five key features of federalism. [CBSE 2014]

or

Describe the main features of federalism. [CBSE 2014]

or

Enlist any five features of federalism.

[CBSE S.R 2013, 2012]

or

Mention any five main features which makes India a federal country. [CBSE S.R 2012, 2011]

Ans :

Main Features of Federalism:

- a. There are two or more levels of government. India has three levels.
- b. Each level of government has its own jurisdiction in matters of legislation, taxation and administration even though they govern the same citizens.
- c. Power and functions of each tier of government is specified and guaranteed by Constitution.
- d. The Supreme Court has been given power to settle disputes between different levels of governments.
- e. Fundamental provisions of the Constitution cannot be altered by any one level of government. It applies to India also.
- f. Sources of revenue between different levels is specified by the Constitution,
- g. There is mutual trust and agreement between the government at different levels.

24. Why has federalism succeeded in India? Which were the policies adopted by India that ensured this success? Explain.

Ans :

[CBSE 2014]

Federalism has succeeded in India due to the nature of democratic policies in our country. The policies adopted by India for smooth functioning of a federal structure: Linguistic States: After independence, the boundaries of several old states were changed in order to create new states. The creation of linguistic states was the first and a major test for democratic politics in our country.

Language Policy:

The second test for the Indian federation is the language policy, The Indian constitution did not give the status of national language to any one of the language.

Centre-State Relations: Restructuring the centre-state relations is one more way in which federalism has been strengthened in practice.

Decentralisation of Power:

Power in India has been decentralised to the local government. The local government includes Panchayats in villages and municipalities in urban areas.

25. How is a federal government different from the unitary form of government? Why are federations preferred these days? [CBSE 2012]

Ans :

Difference:

- a. Unitary government has only one level of government whereas a federal government has two or more levels of government.
- b. In unitary government, the sub-units are subordinate to the centre, whereas in a federation, central government cannot encroach on the rights of state governments.
- c. In unitary system, centre can order the sub-units which cannot happen in federation.

A federation is preferred because:

- a. It helps in making administration effective and efficient.
- b. It helps to accommodate all diverse groups.

26. How are the powers divided between the states and centre? Explain with examples. [CBSE 2012]

or

Describe the three-fold distribution of legislative powers between the Union Government and State Governments of India. [CBSE 2012]

or

Describe the three-fold distribution of legislative powers between the Union Government and the State Governments. Who can make laws on the subjects which are not covered under these lists and what name has been given to such subjects? [CBSE 2011]

or

Describe the division of powers between the Central and the State Governments in India.

Ans :

[CBSE 2011]

The three-fold distribution of legislative powers:

- a. Union list: Union lists consist of 97 subjects. It includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communication and currency.
- b. State list: State list consists of 66 subjects. It contains subjects of state and local importance

such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture and irrigation.

- c. Concurrent list: Concurrent list consists of 47 subjects. It includes subjects of common interest to both such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption and succession.

Union Government can make laws on the subjects which are not covered under these lists. The name has been given to such subjects is residuary subjects.

27. Why did the makers of our Constitution declare India to be a 'Union of States'? Why were some sub-political units of India given a special status?

Ans : [CBSE 2015, 2012]

- a. India became a Union of States because it consisted of both British-ruled territories as well as many princely states. Some sub-political units of India have a special status.
- b. French and Portuguese-ruled territories were given the status of Union territory.
- c. Jammu & Kashmir joined India on a special condition.
- d. Some units were too small to become independent states. They were made Union Territories.
- e. States in the north-east have been given a special status as they have a large tribal population with a distinct history and culture.

28. What challenges did centre-state relations in India face before the 1990's? Why is power sharing between centre and state more effective today? [CBSE 2012]

or

Describe the centre-state relations in Indian Federalism. [CBSE 2011]

or

How have the centre-state relations been restructured to strengthen federalism? [CBSE 2011]

Ans :

Challenges before 1990:

- a. Political scene was dominated by one party both at the Centre and in the States.
- b. As and when the ruling party at the state level was different, the parties that ruled at the Centre tried to undermine the power of the States.
- c. The Central Government would often misuse the constitution to dismiss the State Government that were controlled by rival parties.

After 1990:

- a. Now the Centre and majority of State Governments belong to different political parties in coalition.
- b. A number of regional parties have become powerful and play a crucial role at the Centre and States.
- c. The era of "coalition" government at the Centre has inculcated respect for federal autonomy,

29. "Holding together federations" do not give equal power to its constituent units.' Explain the statement with the help of examples in context to India.

Ans : [CBSE 2012]

- a. All states in the Indian Union do not have identical powers. For example, Jammu and Kashmir enjoys a special status and has its own constitution.
- b. Many provisions of the Indian Constitution do not apply here.

- c. Indians who are not the permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir cannot buy land or house there.
- d. Smaller units called Union Territories do not have the powers of a state. The Central Government has special powers in running these areas.

30. Explain five changes towards decentralisation brought in the Constitution after the Amendments made in 1992.

[CBSE 2012]

or

What is the meaning of decentralisation? Explain any four provisions that have been made towards decentralisation in India after the Constitutional Amendment in 1992. [CBSE S.R 2012, S.R 2016-17]

or

Which five provisions of the Constitutional Amendment of 1992 strengthen the third tier of democracy in India? Explain. [CBSE 2012]

or

Explain any four provisions that have been made towards decentralisation in India after the Constitutional Amendment in 1992? [CBSE 2011]

or

What is meant by "decentralisation of powers"? Explain the importance of local self government in the light of decentralization. [CBSE 2011]

or

How has the third tier of government in our country been made more effective and powerful by the constitutional amendment of 1992? [CBSE 2011]

or

Describe any four Constitutional steps taken in 1992 towards decentralisation in India.

Ans : [CBSE 2011, 2010]

Decentralisation: When power is taken from 'Central and State Governments and is given to the local government, it is called decentralisation. The Constitution was amended in 1992 to make the third tier of democracy more powerful and effective.

Provisions of the Constitutional Amendment of 1992 are:

- a. Now it is mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- b. Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for SCs, STs and OBCs.
- c. At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
- d. An independent institution called State Election Commission has been created in each state to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- e. The state governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies.

31. What is the rationale for decentralization of power? Explain the structure of Rural local government in India.

Ans : [CBSE 2012]

The basic idea behind decentralisation:

- a. Large number of problems and issues are best settled at the local level because people have better knowledge of their local problems.
- b. It helps in promoting direct participation.

Structure of Rural Local Government:

1. Zilla Parishad: All the mandals in a district together constitute the Zilla Parishad. Most of the members are elected and headed by a chairperson.
2. Panchayat Samiti or Mandal or Block: The members of this body are elected by the entire Panchayat members in that area. A few Gram Panchayats are grouped together to form this government body.
3. Gram Panchayat: A council consisting of several ward members often called Panch. The president is called sarpanch. It is the decision-making body for the entire village.

- a. Sharing of power between centre and states and local government reduces conflict.
- b. Large number of problems and issues can be best settled at local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.
- c. People have better knowledge of their own problems.
- d. They know better on where to spend money and how to manage things efficiently.
- e. People at the local level can participate directly in decision making.

32. What is a Gram Sabha? Describe any four functions of a Gram Sabha. [CBSE 2012]

Ans :

Gram Sabha: A body comprising of all adult members of a village or a group of villages Functions of Gram Sabha are:

- a. It elects the members of the Gram Panchayat.
- b. The Gram Sabha supervises the work of the village panchayat.
- c. It approves the annual budget of the panchayat.
- d. It reviews the performance of the Gram Panchayat.

33. "Local governments have made a significant impact on Indian democracy. At the same time there are many difficulties." Explain. [CBSE 2013, 2012]

Ans :

Impact of local self government on Indian democracy:

- a. Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy.
- b. It has increased women's representation and voice in our democracy.

Difficulties:

- a. Gram Sabhas are not held regularly.
- b. Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to local government.
- c. State governments do not provide adequate resources.

34. Assess the need for local government.

Ans : [CBSE 2012]

Need for local government: There are a number of problems and issues that are best settled at the local level, because people have a better knowledge of the problems in their localities.

- a. The local people are aware of their needs and can prioritize.
- b. It helps to initiate the process of direct decision making.
- c. It helps to inculcate the habit of democratic participation.

Local government is the best way to realize one important principle of democracy, namely local self government.

35. Explain any five advantages of decentralization of power. [CBSE 2012]

or

Analyse the advantages of decentralization.

Ans : [CBSE 2011]

Advantages of Decentralisation: