

## Revision Notes

### Class - 10 Social Science (Political Science)

#### Chapter 2 - Federalism

##### What is federalism?

- Belgium had a unitary form of government. The regional governments had power but it could be withdrawn by the Central government at any point in time.
- It got changed in 1993 and they were given constitutional powers which changed it into a federal government.
- A system of government in which the power is shared among the central authority and various other constituent units of the country, is called federalism.

Two levels of government exist:

I. One exists at the national or the central level that is usually responsible for the entire country. They take care of few subjects that are of national interest.

II. Others exist at the level of state or divisional provinces and look after the administration on a daily basis.

- In a unitary system of government, only one level holds political power or authority. If other levels of government are present they work as subordinates or under the central government.
- A federal government, in contrast, cannot order the state or the local government to follow the guidelines generated by the central government.

Key features of federalism are:

1. More than one tier of government.
2. There are different defined laws and jurisdictions for different tiers in terms of legislation, taxation, and administration.

3. The Constitution defines the jurisdiction.
4. Courts can intervene and interpret the powers of government at any level.
5. For financial autonomy, the sources of income are specifically defined for each level of government.
6. This form of government has dual objectives: promotes the unity of the nation, along with accommodating regional diversity.

### **What makes India a federal country?**

The Constitution provided for a two-tier system of government: the Union Government or Central Government and the State governments. Later Panchayats and Municipalities were also added.

Since there is a three-tier of government, the Constitution states three lists:

#### **1. Union List:**

- Subjects like defense, foreign affairs, currency etc. are included in the list.
- These subjects are of national importance.
- Laws related to this list are made by the Union List.

#### **2. State List:**

- Subjects like police, commerce, irrigation etc. are covered under this list.
- These subjects are of State and local importance.
- Laws related to this subject are made by the state government.

#### **3. Concurrent list:**

- Contains subjects of common interest to both the Union as well as the States such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption, and succession.
- Both the Central and the state governments can make laws in the Concurrent List.

- Some States enjoy a special status such as Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram under Article 371 due to their peculiar social and historical circumstances.
- Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, the capital city of Delhi, is called Union Territories and the Central Government has special powers in running these areas.

## **How is federalism practiced?**

### **Linguistic States**

- The creation of linguistic States was a significant step for democratic politics in our country.
- In 1947, the boundaries of several old States of India were changed to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same State. Some states like Nagaland, Uttarakhand, and Jharkhand were created to recognize differences based on culture, ethnicity, or geography.
- It helped to make the country more united and the administration was easier.

### **Language policy**

Hindi was identified as the official language but no language was given the status of the national language. Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognized as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution.

### **Decentralization in India**

- The process in which the power is taken from the Central and State government and distributed in the hands of local governments is called decentralization.
- This idea was brought into account as there are many problems and issues that are better resolved and taken care of at the local level than state or central level. Hence several local institutes were set up to take care of them.
- This initiative was taken by the Indian government in 1992 and the Constitution was amended to create a third-tier of government. This made Indian democracy more powerful and effective.

- To bring this to power effectively, the following steps were taken:
- Regular elections for these local bodies was made mandatory.
- Seats were reserved for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other Backward classes to ensure their representation.
- Women had one-third of seats reserved for them.
- State Election Commission was also established to conduct these elections.
- Some share of power and revenue that the state government had was given to these local bodies.
- Panchayati raj is the local government that is present in each village. A gram panchayat is also present in some groups of villages in some states.
- Big cities and urban areas are taken care of by the municipalities.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. State the dual objective of a federal system.

**Ans:** The federal system thus has dual objectives: to safeguard and promote the unity of the country, and accommodate regional diversity. These aspects are crucial for the institutions and practice of federalism. Governments at different levels should agree to some rules of power-sharing and trust that each would abide by its part of the agreement.

#### 2. What are the factors that make the Indian federal government so attractive?

**Ans:** The following are the factors:

- The powers are distributed and mobilized among center, state, and local governments.
- The effective legal system and organized steps to make decisions makes the process transparent and more trustworthy.

### 3. What steps were taken to make India into a federation?

**Ans:** The following were the steps:

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- **Decentralization in India:** The process in which the power is taken from the Central and State government and distributed in the hands of local governments is called decentralization. This idea was brought into account as there are many problems and issues that are better resolved and taken care of at the local level than state or central level. Hence several local institutes were set up to take care of them. This initiative was taken by the Indian government in 1992 and the Constitution was amended to create a third-tier of government. This made Indian democracy more powerful and effective.

### 4. What is Union List?

**Ans:** Subjects like defense, foreign affairs, currency, etc. are included in the list. These subjects are of national importance. Laws related to this list are made by the Union List.

### 5. What is the State List?

**Ans:** Subjects like police, commerce, irrigation, etc. are covered under this list. These subjects are of State and local importance. Laws related to this subject are made by the state government.

### 6. What is a concurrent list?

**Ans:** Contains subjects of common interest to both the Union as well as the States such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption, and succession. Both the Central and the state governments can make laws in the Concurrent List.

**7. What level of government can legislate on the residuary subjects?**

**Ans:** India has a federal government and hence has its power divided between the state, central and local governments. The Union government has the power to legislate on the residuary subjects.

