



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the key features and significant provisions of the Indian Constitution which encourage unity in diversity in Indian society. Discuss (250 words)

28 Feb, 2023 GS Paper 2 Polity & Governance

Approach

- Start your answer by briefly introducing the rich diversity of India.
- Discuss key features of constitution that aims to encourage unity in diversity in India.
- Conclude accordingly.

Introduction

- India is a country known for its diversity, with a rich cultural heritage, several languages, and different religious beliefs. The Indian Constitution, which came into effect on January 26, 1950, plays a crucial role in maintaining the unity and diversity of the country. The constitution aims to promote fraternity, equality, and justice to all its citizens, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, or gender.

Body

- The Indian Constitution is a remarkable document that reflects the diversity and unity of India. It has **several features and provisions that aim to encourage unity in diversity in Indian society**. Some of these are:
 - **Single Constitution:** The entire country is governed by one single Constitution that applies to all states and union territories.
 - This ensures a **common framework of law, rights and duties for all citizens**. An example of this is **Article 1**, which declares India that is Bharat as a union of states.
 - **Fundamental Rights:** The Constitution guarantees certain basic rights to all citizens, such as **equality, freedom, religion, expression, etc.**
 - These rights protect the **interests and dignity of individuals and groups and promote tolerance and harmony among different sections of society**.
 - An example of this is **Article 14**, which ensures **equality before law and equal protection of laws**.
 - Further, article 15 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. It ensures that all citizens are treated equally under the law, promoting unity among diverse groups.
 - **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):** The constitution also lays down **certain guidelines for the state to follow** in order to achieve social justice, economic welfare, environmental protection, etc.
 - These principles reflect the aspirations and values of the people of India and foster a sense of common good and national integration.
 - An example of this is **Article 39A**, which directs the state to provide free legal aid to ensure justice for all.
 - **Federalism:** The Constitution establishes a federal system of government, where power is

divided between the center and the states.

- This allows for **regional autonomy and diversity within a unified framework.** The Constitution also provides for **mechanisms to resolve disputes between different levels of government**, such as **inter-state councils, finance commissions**, etc.
- An example of this is **Article 246**, which lists the subjects on which each level of government can make laws.
- **Devolution of Power:** The Indian Constitution also recognizes the importance of **local governance** and provides for the establishment of local self-governing bodies, such as **Panchayats and Municipalities.**
 - This provision has helped to promote the participation of people from diverse backgrounds in local governance and decision-making.
- **Secularism:** The constitution declares India as a secular state, where no religion is given preference or discrimination by the state. The state **respects all religions equally and protects their freedom.**
 - The constitution also **promotes religious co-existence by allowing multiple personal laws for different communities.**
 - An example of this is **Article 25**, which grants freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- **Linguistic Diversity:** The Constitution recognizes **22 languages as official languages of India**, while leaving scope for other languages to be recognized by states or regions.
 - The Constitution also provides for **linguistic minorities to have education in their mother tongue.**
 - An example of this is **Article 350A**, which provides for linguistic minorities to have education in their mother tongue.
- **Cultural and Educational Rights:** The Constitution recognizes the importance of preserving cultural and educational rights. **Article 29 and 30** of the Constitution provide for the protection of the interests of the minorities in India. It ensures that every community has the right to conserve its culture, language, and script. The Constitution also provides for the **establishment of educational institutions to promote the interests of the minorities.**
 - Further, Article 371 of the constitution provides for the **special provisions for the development of the Northeastern states and tribal areas.**
 - This provision **recognizes the unique cultural and linguistic diversity of these regions** and provides for their development while protecting their cultural identity.

Conclusion

The Indian Constitution is a unique and remarkable document that reflects the diversity and unity of India. Its provisions for fundamental rights, directive principles of state policy, federalism, local governance, secularism, linguistic diversity, and cultural and educational rights promote unity in diversity in Indian society. The Constitution has played a crucial role in maintaining the harmony and unity of the country and has helped India to emerge as a democratic, secular, and diverse nation.