

Very Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is secularism?

Ans. Secularism is freedom to live by an individual's religious beliefs and practices. It separates power of religion and the power of the state. The state is neutral and impartial in dealing with religions.

Q. 2. In Saudi Arabia, how are the non-Muslims treated?

Ans. In Saudi Arabia, non-Muslims are not allowed to build a temple, church, etc. and nor they can gather in a public place for prayers.

Q. 3. Explain the meaning of coercion.

Ans. Coercion means to force someone to do something. In other words, it refers to the force used by a legal authority like the state.

Q. 4. Define freedom to interpret.

Ans. Freedom to interpret refers to a person's liberty to develop his/her own understanding and meaning of the religion practised.

Q. 5. What does intervene mean?

Ans. Intervene refers to the state's efforts to influence a particular matter in accordance with the principles of the Constitution.

Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. Mention the two reasons why the separation between religion and state is important.

Ans. The two reasons why the separation between religion and state is important are as follows:

- (i) To prevent the domination of one religion over another religion.
- (ii) To protect the freedom of individuals to come out of their religion and freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

Q. 2. How is secularism practised in India?

Ans. According to the Indian constitution, India is a secular country which means there is no official religion. One religious community does not dominate another, nor the state enforces its people to follow any particular religion.

Q. 3. What is 'Indian secularism'?

Ans. The Indian constitution mandates that the Indian state be secular. It has the following objectives:

- (i) One religious community does not dominate another.
- (ii) Some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community.
- (iii) The state does not enforce any particular religion nor it takes away the religious freedom of individuals.

Q. 4. Indian secularism is different from American secularism. Give one reason.

Ans. Unlike the strict separation between religion and the state in American secularism, in Indian secularism, the state can intervene in religious affairs.

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Describe the various ways to prevent religious domination by the Indian constitution.

Ans. The various ways to prevent religious domination by the Indian constitution are:

(i) It uses a strategy of distancing itself from religion. The Indian state is not ruled by a religious group, nor does it support any one religion.

(ii) Indian secularism works to prevent the domination of religion through a strategy of non interference. This means that in order to respect the sentiments of all religions and not interfere with religions practices the State makes certain exceptions for particular religious communities.

(iii) The third way in which Indian secularism works to prevent the domination of religion is through a strategy of intervention for example; 'Untouchability'. In this case, the members of the same religion, i.e., upper caste Hindus dominate the lower caste within it. In order to prevent this religion based exclusion and discrimination of lower castes the Indian constitution bans untouchability.

Q. 2. Why is it important to separate religion from the state?

Ans. It is important to separate religion from the State to aid the country to function democratically. Most of the countries have more than one religious groups living in them. Within these religious groups, there will most likely be one group that is in a majority. If this majority religious group has access to State power, then it could quite easily use this power and financial resources to discriminate against and persecute persons of other religions. This tyranny of the majority could result in the discrimination, coercion. This would violate Fundamental Rights.

Another reason is to protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion, embrace another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

Example: Untouchability in Hindu religious practice. If state power lies in the hands of Hindus, who believe in untouchability might misuse the power against disadvantaged and it would be a difficult task to abolish this practice.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q. 1. Name the strategies followed by the Indian government to establish secularism.

Ans. The strategies followed by the Indian government to establish secularism are:

- (i)** Strategy of non-interference.
- (ii)** Strategy of distancing itself from religion
- (iii)** Strategy of intervention

Q. 2. What do you know about secularism of the US?

Ans. According to the US constitution, the legislature cannot declare any religion as the official religion. The legislature cannot give preference to one religion and neither the state nor religion can interfere in the affairs of one another.